Producing the sixth issue of aCADemix seems a good time to look back at our original aims for the magazine. The editorial team wanted to provide its readers with material that was useful, informative and thought-provoking but also easy on the eye and mind. The Centre for Academic Development (CAD) works with the entire University, so we hoped to give you a good idea of who we are, what we do and how you can avail yourselves of our services.

As an amalgamation of groups that aim to support good practice in student learning, academic practice, elearning, information literacy and media production, we work in both practical and scholarly arenas and aCADemix tries to reflect that. People often say aCADemix looks great. That’s a reflection of our photographers and media designers who have an eye for presentation.

The television production studio is featured in this issue. We’ve tried to cover not only its facilities and services, but also how you would go about working with the production team to develop a video. We also welcome ELSAC to CAD. ELSAC has taken this opportunity to provide an insight into how it can help your students. Several articles relate to academic writing and developments in cross-disciplinary research. SLC’s learning disability team offer a diagram with tips for creating accessible text for students with impairments. They’d also like to flag an upcoming EO survey, Creating an inclusive learning environment for students with impairments. Recently we’ve also begun covering some University-wide piloting projects (e.g. clickers and lecture recording).

Is all this useful? In a biannual publication, timing influences content but we welcome feedback and suggestions.

Contact: e.ramsay@auckland.ac.nz
Liz Ramsay
Editor/CAD Learning Designer

The new elearning strategy (see page 15) has several action items. One of the first cabs off the rank is a pilot for recording lectures at this University. Four large lecture theatres have been equipped for this semester, with others to follow. Staff delivering lectures in those theatres have been approached individually, and lectures are only being recorded with the permission of the staff involved.

The recordings capture the lecturer’s voice, any display on Projector 1 (eg Powerpoints, document camera item), and/or DVD or CD presentations. A new web-based lecture recording interface has been developed for the pilot, for access via the e-lectern. Lecturers enter their email address into the interface, and ensure their microphone is turned on. They may indicate in advance that they’d like all of their lectures automatically recorded or use the interface to manually start and stop recording. Later in the day, an email with links to the recorded lecture is automatically sent to the lecturer and the course coordinator, who provide students with access to the files by posting the links in CECIL. A copyright warning notice is automatically added to all recordings, but lecturers are required to observe usual copyright restrictions.

Students who use recorded lectures tend to be positive about the experience; they perceive it supports their learning and helps them to achieve better results. Research shows that lecture attendance is still popular with many students because they find lectures motivating, value the visuals aids helpful (ie those not displayed via projector 1 and therefore not captured on the recording). Some students attend lectures, then review the recorded lectures to supplement their learning by:

• revising for exams
• revisiting complex ideas and concepts
• working at their own pace and place of convenience
• picking up on things they missed
• going back to take comprehensive notes so they can concentrate on what is happening during the lecture

Students can access recordings by streaming them through their computer, or by downloading them for use on a computer or mobile device, like an iPod or mobile phone. All recorded lectures will be deleted seven weeks after the end of the examination period for the course.

The pilot will complement the lecture recording approach the Business School has already tested and implemented.

A steering group from the Teaching and Learning Technologies Committee, including CAD’s Adam Blake, has developed lecture recording guidelines for both staff and students. These can be accessed in the Links on the sidebar of CAD’s website: www.cad.auckland.ac.nz

We’ll keep you posted on developments in aCADemix.
ELSAC joins the Centre for Academic Development

“ELSAC,” we hear you say. “What’s that?”

Step out of the bustling Kate Edger Information Commons thoroughfare into the English Language Self-Access Centre (ELSAC) and you’ll discover, as one recent first-time visitor remarked, ‘a refreshingly calm and welcoming space’. The Centre, here in the heart of the city campus, is a University of Auckland English language resource, free to any of our enrolled students. ELSAC exists for the express purpose of fostering student success in our predominantly English-medium academic environment so its modus operandi is firmly grounded in applied linguistics (e.g. second language acquisition (SLA) and language teaching) and educational research. As such it complements much of the work done at CAD’s Student Learning Centre (SLC).

... ELSAC’s philosophy is to nurture students towards independent, but supported, language learning...

ELSAC comprises numerous English language resources. These fall into three groups: services (S), activities (A) and programmes (P), collectively known as SAP. The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, defines ‘sap’ as ‘the liquid in a plant or tree that carries the food to all its parts’. The SAP in ELSAC provides readily available ‘English language food’ for students to snack, graze or dine on at any stage of their university career. (Hence the ‘self-access’ in ELSAC’s name.) It’s all healthy stuff!

ELSAC staff, all experienced English language teachers, provide students with advisory ‘Services’. Students may initially drop in to the Centre of their own volition or visit on the recommendation of one of their course lecturers, tutors, classmates or the Diagnostic English Language Needs Assessment (DELnA) consultant. On their first visits, they are shown round the Centre and invited to make individual appointments with a staff member to identify their specific English language needs. The outcome is often a custom-designed learning plan, including information about appropriate ELSAC activities and programmes. ELSAC also offers course-specific language advice and advice related to ELSAC-based course portfolios. Whatever the focus, however, ELSAC’s philosophy is to nurture students towards independent, but supported, language learning, so there is always someone on hand if a student needs assistance while using the Centre.

ELSAC also develops ‘Activities’ to meet a growing demand for more interactivity among students and its staff members. Independent language learning does not necessarily mean learning in isolation, and the Centre is finding ways to facilitate collaborative independence; collaborative to meet the social dimension of language learning and independent in that the learners make decisions about how and what they learn. News of new activities is posted on ELSAC’s website at: www.elsac.auckland.ac.nz.

‘Programmes’ include commercially-produced language-based resources. All the language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and systems (vocabulary and language structure) are well-represented, as are resources for self-assessment in these skills and systems. ELSAC also produces its own programmes; e.g. the ‘Self-Study’ series of PowerPoint presentations targeting those aspects of English that pose the greatest difficulty for English as an Additional Language (EAL) students. Presentations include study notes, exercises and answers, and are suitable for reviewing or practising a particular language focus. The current series is designed to enhance language accuracy and writing competence. Additionally, in collaboration with CAD’s eLearning Design and Development Group, ELSAC has written an online self-study grammar module for Enggen 199. (See aCADemix issue 5, P11.) Recent feedback from the first cohort of students completing the course is pleasingly positive. Students most liked the module’s easy access, and the language instruction and practice tasks. They definitely want more, and, as one student commented, ‘It’s all good!’

Other ELSAC ‘success’ stories are being documented through a study entitled ‘From start to (successful) finish: Understanding EAL student access of supplementary English language support at the University of Auckland’. The study aims to identify reasons why students, who initially struggle to succeed, work consistently on improving their English over the course of their university study and subsequently experience positive outcomes. Both the students’ stories and the study’s findings will contribute to improving the ELSAC resource and, ideally, to tempting more students to regularly pick up some ‘English language food’ on their way through the Kate Edger Information Commons. Visit yourself, see what’s happening and where you can direct students who need English language support for their success.

The Centre opens 9 till 5 on weekdays and within those hours students may come whenever and for however long they like.
Time waits for no discipline

Dr Barry White, Postgraduate Co-ordinator at the Student Learning Centre (SLC), is undertaking research on interdisciplinarity. He provides some background to the subject:

Academic disciplines, from an historical perspective, are relatively recent emergences from the fluidity of theory. Inherently, therefore, they are evolving conceptualisations. They were not originally conceived as such. In the intellectual environment of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries disciplines were regarded as accreted slices of knowledge legitimised by the laws of a rational universe. Such was the strength of scientism during this period that research writing throughout the disciplines sought to be minimally expressive in order to present phenomena and opinions as objectively as possible. In this environment writing could, thus, be perceived as an unfortunate necessity.

But it was the very success of disciplines so conceived that served to undermine this perception, for each discipline developed specific discourses to both represent and privilege particular ways of thinking. Instead of a generalised skill, writing in research came to be construed as a transformative process of acculturation: developing scholars learned to reflect the current disciplinary and theoretic perspectives in the manner of writing they adopted, the works and views they referred to and the issues they addressed. Genre knowledge was learned through immersion rather than by analysing its conventions. However, keeping to the style of a genre tends to inhibit originality in writing. It must if it is to fulfil the requirements of disciplinarity: communication needs to be situated so that individuals from a wide range of cultures can readily understand the ‘genre’ knowledge of their disciplinary culture. This is the universal in university.

However, in an institutional setting, disciplines are destabilised when confronted with new understandings and different sets of social needs. During the late twentieth century there was an exponential elaboration of the networks linking an increasingly fragmented yet interdependent global society. It is no accident that this has led the purposes of research to become more diffuse and the number of legitimised ‘ways of knowing’ to increase. It is, therefore, also no accident that qualitative, mixed methods and interdisciplinary research, individually and collectively, also reflect complexity and ambiguity. We have inherited an environment where judgements need to be made within increasingly multiplied and often conflicting frames of reference and where expert knowledge is undeterminable by facts and dependant on arguable assumptions.

Right time, right place, right space?

Geography traversing knowledge divides

Julie Bartlett-Trafford, also at the SLC, takes up the theme:

I am a cross-disciplinary learning advisor at the Student Learning Centre, with a Geography education to Masters level. I see Geography as particularly relevant to this position as it has a successful tradition of contextual, issue-oriented knowledge production that traverses disciplinary and academic boundaries.

Drives towards global knowledge economies have prioritised research and led to a rethinking of what is involved in it – a reconsideration of traditional boundaries. There has been a move from research that is purely academic, investigator-initiated and discipline-centred to ‘knowledge production’ that is context-driven, problem-focused, inter- or trans-disciplinary, and involves contributions from both within and beyond the academy.

Geography is traditionally concerned with the study of borders as lines of separation; and as barriers to movement and communication among natural, political, social and economic spaces. Recently geographers have focused on the processes by which borders are defined, constructed, maintained, permeated, deconstructed and reconstructed. This includes explorations of how, when, where, what and why geographic knowledge is produced in relation to traditional boundaries – a kind of post-structural education. My doctorate explores spaces and places of postgraduate geography research that have emerged in New Zealand since the early 1990s.

Perhaps the most obvious spaces are those between academic disciplines and those between universities and other sites of knowledge production. Other spaces are those within disciplines (such as that between human and physical geography that house explorations of nature-society relations).

“Perhaps the most obvious spaces are those between academic disciplines and those between universities and other sites of knowledge production”

Another significant space is that connecting research and teaching practices, whereby all involved in the research process share in the learning process (the notion of co-learning). These spaces and places are explored from a milieu of geographic, sociological, philosophical and educational approaches and frameworks.

In my work with postgraduate and doctoral students who intend to take advantage of such research spaces, there are some key pieces of advice that I offer. The situatedness (context or location) of the research is important. An in-depth understanding of the home discipline(s) is needed before venturing across borders to consider how theories and approaches from other disciplines might best inform the research. You also need an in-depth understanding of application beyond the academy. Consideration of the researcher’s position(s) in relation to his/her research is also critical. I also encourage students to see themselves, their supervisor(s), and other participants and stakeholders as sharing the roles of researcher, teacher and learner.
Learning the rules - and how to break them effectively

Recently John B. Turner, Senior Lecturer at Elam School of Fine Arts, needed to introduce some of his second and third year students to aspects of digital imaging, in particular computer colour management and scanning. At the time Elam was short staffed so John (who is colour blind) approached CAD’s Brian Donovan. The students need to understand the basics of making good scans, what file format to save them as, and what you can do with them afterwards. For this, you need high quality examples.

John notes that while colour management involves a technical standard of optimisation there’s also an artistic aspect to it. “Sometimes for expressive purposes you deviate from standards, but it’s very important to know what’s normally done. Brian’s work combines technical and artistic accomplishment, so he was an excellent person to talk to the students.”

An unexpected bonus was that students got a lesson on choosing equipment,” John adds. “Brian uses a fairly standard $1000 scanner for most of his work, yet gets wonderful results. The students tend to think they need expensive dedicated equipment so it’s good for them to see that by systematic testing, you can sometimes find something much cheaper that gives quality as good as anybody’s getting.”

One simple but instructive example of digital imaging Brian showed the students was the colour image of flowers (above) that he and a colleague made from nothing more than three black and white negatives. They exposed three frames of black and white film using red, green and blue filters over the camera lens; the negatives were then scanned and assembled using standard image editing software to produce the final full-colour image.

Pompeii comes to Australasia

Opening in June of this year, Melbourne Museum’s exhibition A Day in Pompeii will feature the work of CAD photographer Brian Donovan.

The museum has developed multimedia displays to supplement the exhibition of artefacts from the AD79 eruption of Vesuvius. Brian’s contribution will enable visitors to manipulate ‘movies’ of treasures housed elsewhere and ‘wander around’ Pompeii, using touch screen monitors to explore large-scale interactive 360° panoramas of the sites. Melbourne Museum asked Brian to contribute these elements of work originally developed as part of a collaboration with The British School at Rome and the University of Auckland’s Department of Classics and Ancient History. Brian also assisted with design work for the displays.

Museum Victoria has developed this exhibition in partnership with the Soprintendenza Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Napoli e Pompei. It showcases many treasures from the long-buried city, including over 250 objects from daily life and a number of body casts of the victims of the AD 79 eruption of Vesuvius.

A Day in Pompeii runs from 26 June - 25 October 2009 in Australia and toward the end of the year it will travel to the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

The University’s Classics students are especially familiar with the way Brian’s work makes their subject come alive. If you would like to take advantage of his skills, contact b.donovan@auckland.ac.nz. His services are free to University of Auckland staff.
Dr Sean Sturm: A double life

Dr Sean Sturm recently joined the SLC as a part-time Senior Tutor, working primarily in the Undergraduate Skills Programme. Sean has been teaching at the University in the English Department since 2002, mainly in the Writing Studies Programme, and he continues to work there part-time.

He writes: Last year I completed my PhD in English at Auckland, working in the area of what is loosely called “settler studies,” which explores texts as artefacts of settlement: as both historical evidence and “tools” of the process of settlement. I focussed on the writing of George Chamier (1842-1915), an engineer and novelist who lived and worked in New Zealand and Australia between about 1860 and 1910. I became fascinated by the ambiguous position of people like Chamier in settler society: he was a critic of his fellow settlers, but a settler nonetheless—“an outside insider,” perhaps.

Since I graduated, I’ve started thinking about how we teach and learn writing here, about the practice of writing studies in Aotearoa/New Zealand. I try to put this into practice at the SLC: to demystify the process of academic writing for students and to enable them to develop their voice as writing academics by exploring the limits of their “writing zone” at the University.

I’m currently working with Stephen Turner of the English Department on a book about teaching learning and posting random thoughts about writing on my blog, Crumbling Idols (www.te-ipu-pakore.blogspot.com/).

Dr Penny Hacker: Head of the English Language Self-Access Centre (ELSAC)

‘I was delighted to be appointed Head of the English Language Self-Access Centre (ELSAC) shortly after it joined CAD earlier this year. ELSAC was established in the early 2000s, through the Department of Applied Language Studies and Linguistics (DALS/L), and, as a student in DALS/L at the time, I assisted in ELSAC for a few hours a week. At that stage we occupied a rather tired, windowless basement off Grafton Road. So I’ve really come full-circle, though of course my role is different and the Centre is now housed in a modern, naturally-lit facility in the Kate Edger Information Commons.

In the interim years, while working in DALS/L as a part-time senior tutor, I completed a Postgraduate Diploma, MA and PhD, all in Language Teaching and Learning. My Departmental work included teaching ESOL and various undergraduate and postgraduate language teaching courses, postgraduate advising and giving academic support to undergraduate language teaching students. Life before the University of Auckland also involved teaching and took me to Thailand, Scotland and Poland. I believe those overseas language teaching (and language learning) experiences over many years, the experience of teaching and supporting students in an academic environment here in Auckland, and that of intensive academic study, combine well to help me in my new job. I am passionate about our students realising their academic dreams and ELSAC offers an ideal opportunity for me to work alongside colleagues with a similar vision; to provide a high quality, research-informed student-centred English language support service. My research interests have mainly been in the area of language teacher education, where both my MA and PhD theses were focused. Those studies led me to a deeper understanding of language teacher cognition and language teacher educator learning. With this background I am turning my attention to student learning in our unique academic environment, beginning with exploring factors that contribute to some students’ consistent use of ELSAC and their subsequent academic successes. I hope that the findings will inspire other students to engage in English language learning throughout their academic careers and offer ELSAC ideas for enhancing its service.’

Before I came to University, I made music (and I still do); links to some of the music I’ve written are on my site (www.myspace.com/seansturm).

The screen shot above comes from my band Exiles’s latest video, “I Need” (not yet released), in which I was painted up as a robot.

www.cad.auckland.ac.nz/index.php?p=staff_page&staff=phacker
Is ‘academic style’ an oxymoron? Not according to Dr Helen Sword, Head of CAD’s Academic Practice Group. In her spirited article “Writing higher education differently: A manifesto on style” recently published in Studies in Higher Education, Helen argues that academic writers, whatever their discipline, have ‘an ethical, aesthetic and pedagogical imperative to communicate our work effectively.’ In particular, she calls upon higher education researchers to produce clear, compelling prose that engages rather than alienates academics in other disciplines: ‘We owe it to our colleagues, our students, our institutions and, yes, to ourselves to write as the most effective teachers teach: with passion, with craft, with care and with style.’

In The writer’s diet (2007), Helen offers easy-to-use advice to academic authors wanting to produce leaner, more energetic prose. Now she has turned her sights to academic style. With support from a $12,000 grant from the Faculty of Education Research Development Fund, she is conducting a detailed stylistic analysis of 1000 articles from ten disciplines across the arts, humanities and social sciences. Her goal is to produce an evidence-based book that will affirm the value of what she calls ‘interdisciplinary poaching’: i.e. creative appropriations of stylistic strategies from writers in other disciplines. Her research promises to shatter a number of academic myths. For example, she has found that writers in science disciplines now routinely use first person pronouns (e.g. ‘We performed the research’) while many social scientists still cling to the passive, impersonal, supposedly ‘scientific’ style of an earlier generation (e.g. ‘The research was performed’). For writers who have long been told that writing in the first person is ‘not allowed’, her data provides evidence that academic writers often have more freedom of choice than they realise.

Helen hopes her work will inspire academic writers – including experienced researchers – to rethink their writing practices and challenge stale disciplinary norms. Above all, she urges early-career academics to emulate the best writers, not the worst. The top research scholars in most fields, she notes, are those who work across disciplinary boundaries, borrow good ideas wherever they find them and write with confidence and panache – not the ones who always follow the rules.

Based on her research thus far, Helen has developed a 3-hour workshop on ‘Engaging academic writing’, which takes participants through 15 key stylistic questions that they are urged to ask themselves before, during and after any major writing project. A recent workshop for academic staff at Otago University was fully booked within minutes of being advertised and led to two overflow sessions. To organise a seminar or workshop on academic writing in your department or Faculty, contact Helen at h.sword@auckland.ac.nz.

15 Steps to Stylish Academic Writing

Questions to ask yourself before, during and after

1. A strong thesis: Do you have a compelling central argument that you can express in a sentence or two?
2. A clear structure: Do your paragraphs and sections flow in a logical order? Does your paper have a clear beginning, middle and end?
3. A well-defined audience: Who are you writing for? (Try naming 5 specific people likely to read your article, keep them in mind as you write).
4. Clarity and complexity: Are complex ideas in your work clearly expressed?
5. Voice and identity: Do you use first-person pronouns? If not, why not?
6. Title: Do you want your title to be catchy, informative or both?
7. Opening hook: Does your opening paragraph catch and hold the reader’s attention?
8. The story net: What story are you telling? Why and how?
9. Show and tell: Do you use plenty of examples and illustrations?
10. Verbal fitness: Are your sentences fit and active? (Put several 1000-word chunks of your prose through the Wasteline Test: www.writersdiet.ac.nz)
11. Crafted vessels: Is your prose well crafted, and carefully edited?
12. Interdisciplinarity: Do you read widely and refer to ideas and thinkers outside your discipline?
13. Smart Referencing: Do you use citations thoughtfully and appropriately?
14. Jargonitis: Do you use disciplinary jargon, acronyms or other specialised terminology? If so, why? To help communicate your ideas most effectively, or (perhaps unconsciously) to impress?
15. That ‘je ne sais quoi’: Does your writing convey any or all of the following: Creativity? Imagination? Passion? Personal engagement? Humour? (Study the work of an academic author whose writing you find particularly engaging. What special qualities make that writer’s work so appealing?)
The Kenneth Myers Centre is located at the Kenneth Myers Centre, on Shortland Street. The three-camera studio and associated control room details fully professional location equipment and edit suites, enabling CAD television staff to produce a full range of educational and research video material. But do we hear a plaintive voice saying “If only I had the time or money!” The aCADemix editor spoke to some of your colleagues who’ve recently used the studio to give you an idea of what’s involved.

But first, the time and the money! The financial cost of making a video for teaching or research is negligible for UoA staff but money can buy help. Most of the people we talked to had assistance with larger projects, for things such as research, liaison and organising the many participants for the shoots. If you need actors, you’ll also need to budget for them. You can seek funding from Teaching Improvement Grants, departments and/or related professional organisations or sponsors. Some faculties have education units that may help at no cost. CAD may be able to provide support free of charge and many senior students within your own departments are often only too willing to become involved as a form of professional development.

How much time does it take? How long’s a piece of string? Recently Professor Diana Lennon, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences (FMhS) contacted the television team on a Monday to try and schedule an interview with a man who had an extraordinary story to tell about his experiences since he was diagnosed with rheumatic fever nearly thirty years ago. He was scheduled to be a conference key note speaker the following Friday but circumstances had conspired to prevent him from attending. The interview was shot in the studio on the Thursday and delivered on DVD that evening. Such is the efficiency of a multi-camera studio. The recording was well received by the conference and is now part of the archive and is to be used by the Heart Foundation. Similar simple productions have provided, for example, an archive of New Zealand poets for the English Department.

Whilst these are examples of fast turn around productions, other video resources may be developed as part of a much larger project to redesign or revitalise teaching programmes or address research issues. CAD’s television team are happy to advise at any stage of a project and understand not only educational requirements, but also the many academic constraints inherent within our institution. For example, a project to support students’ studies of bowel cancer was three or four years in gestation. Two years into concept development, Associate Professor Graham Stevens (Oncologist), Associate Professor Roger Booth and Kathryn Siow and Barbara O’Connor (FMhS Medical Programme Directorate) met Richard Smith (CAD television producer) to discuss the best way to develop this unique video resource. A year later, shooting began in the studio with the recording of some five hours of health professional / patient interactions. In Semester 2, three months after completion of shooting and associated post-production, students will be able to get a unique insight into a patients’ experience within the health system, dealing with diagnosis, treatment and counselling through self-directed activities centred around the video clips.

**CAD’s television team are happy to advise at any stage of a project and understand not only educational requirements, but also the many academic constraints inherent within our institution.**

Staff at the FMHS regularly use the television studio’s unique capacity to produce a fly-on-the-wall view of typical patient consultations. Dr Ralph Pinnock (Paediatrics) recently produced a series of 17 video clips for online material that complement students’ experience in their paediatric rotation. The videos show procedures, techniques and, not least, the special way to approach children in order to perform a physical examination. “Watching experienced practitioners interacting with children and their caregivers help students learn how to take a history and perform a physical examination,” says Ralph. Videos are ideal for showing students how caregivers manage children with chronic disabilities. “I wanted the students to appreciate how difficult it is having to care for a child with a physical disability. Students can read about this in any number of textbooks but nothing is as powerful or as moving as watching a video of a mother relating her and her family’s experiences of having to care for a child with cerebral palsy. The result was powerful, insightful and incredibly moving.”

As the old adage says “never work with animals and children” and Ralph is the first to admit that filming children presents its own challenges. Ralph wanted to concentrate on toddlers who, he says, comprise one of the most difficult age groups – both for students and to film. That might explain why he could find no existing material. He says, “They are the hardest children to examine. I don’t think we could have done it without the television studio. Having three cameras catching the different angles and shots made it possible to make videos of me performing a neurological examination whilst playing with a 3 year old. The atmosphere and environment is always going to be critical when dealing with children. In the studio the parents could be there, we could control the setting, who’s coming and going, the many distractions and what the child has access to. Imagine the interruptions if you tried to do it in a hospital!” They did, however,
shoot some sequences on location with one clip shot at the emergency department of Kidz First Middlemore Hospital. Fiona Spence, who worked on the project with Ralph, says, “The child was initially terrified and we thought he might be going to bail out, until Richard distracted him, put him at ease and found a way for him to concentrate on just what he had to do for the filming. In the end he was absolutely fantastic.”

It’s important to get things right quickly with toddlers. Ralph says, “If we hadn’t had the right people, the right crew, the right equipment and the right place, it wouldn’t have worked. No 3 year old is going to repeat an activity just because you didn’t capture it on video the first time.” Nor can you get busy professionals back repeatedly. Being able to review material in the control room enables you to shoot any extra material while the specialist is there in the studio.

Medical students train at five different hospitals and Ralph says all students worry that they might not all get the same experience. The videos help address this by showing a standard way to perform skills. Feedback from the students locally is similar to that of students elsewhere. They find watching the videos helps to prepare them for their clinical experience on the wards and in outpatients. Ralph had funding from a Teaching Improvement Grant and his department, and support from the CAD’s eLearning Design and Development Group for this project. Ralph is planning to publish his research on the project.

Dr Ian Hunter (Director of the Business Case Centre) is currently producing video for business cases for undergraduates. After working with Richard Smith and CAD on various projects, his team has found six-to-ten minutes is an ideal length for case studies for use in undergraduate classes.

Video clips include industry professionals and location shots to convey company scenarios. Ian says, “Not only do you have tried and true guest speakers on screen, so you don’t need to get them in repeatedly, you can add other elements. Students can see a building, as well as managers and professionals talking about their experiences. They quickly get a context and an insight into what it’s like at the coal face. Each clip poses a particular dilemma, a problem that students will solve after watching and discussing the clip in class.” He says “it’s hugely beneficial to have local case studies. Here are New Zealand film clips about entrepreneurs, business figures and the issues they face. It will bring some classic New Zealand brands and stories to life for students in a contemporary way. It’s a huge advantage for the University to have access to the technology and expertise needed to produce the high quality video students demand.”

Some of you may wonder how you’re going to write a ‘script’. None of the people we spoke to had to write what one might think of as a conventional script. They relied on early consultation with the CAD television staff to clarify the best use of the medium and production process. As Richard Smith says “Good television is simply good storytelling, and in many ways that is all good teaching is. The script identifies what the audience needs to know and the simplest way of telling them.” Whilst the bowel cancer videos used experienced actors in the roles of patients and families, the health professionals were simply playing themselves. Kathryn Siow said their team developed an outline for the various scenarios, based on best practice and she and Graham Stevens met the actors to flesh out the characters and hone instructions prior to the studio day, but on the day they just adlibbed their way through the scene and it was captured flawlessly by the studios multi-camera capability. As Richard Smith says “our job is to make you, the client, look good and to make the whole process to be as painless as possible for you, and in that regard the studio can certainly help.”

For many years, town planning students have had an assessed media training day in the University’s television studio.

See bottom of page 11 for ways in which CAD supports teaching in the studio.
Manu Ao: What happened at the first two hui

Ka mate kainga tahi, ka ora kainga rua.
One house alone may perish, while two houses united flourish!

This proverb captures the intent of the Māori Staff Advancement hui held at Waipapa marae on 27 March, to bring together staff from all across the institution. This was the first in a series of three hui taking place in 2009. The series’ objective is whakawhanaungatanga (relationship building) and strategising for better recruitment, participation, advancement and retention of our Māori staff.

Māori staff currently make up between 6 and 7% of overall staff numbers at the University of Auckland. This is slightly less than the percentage of Māori in the Auckland region and well short of the national Māori percentage of the overall New Zealand population (14.6%). Numbers are one thing, but higher on the agenda for the March hui was a discussion of how Māori staff experience the University environment, as general staff, as academics, and/or as employees on long or short term contracts. Within the faculties and divisions what priority is given to implementing objective 10 (Treaty of Waitangi) of the University’s strategic plan? What is the status of Te Reo and tikanga Māori? Within the faculties and divisions what priority is given to implementing objective 10 (Treaty of Waitangi) of the University’s strategic plan? What is the status of Te Reo and tikanga Māori? How relevant and responsive is the University to the wider Māori community and their aspirations? These and other questions were raised by our guest speakers, Tony Trinnick (Māori Associate Dean Education), Colleen McMurchy-Pilkington (Head of Te Puna Wānanga), and Te Kepa Morgan (Associate Dean Māori, Engineering).

The second hui held 17 June at Waipapa featured seminars and workshops for staff on work/life balance, the promotion process, the Treaty of Waitangi and change management for greater Māori staff participation. Evaluation feedback from attendees revealed an appreciation for the opportunity to meet and share the triumphs and tribulations of being Māori in the mainstream, gaining insights into strategies for greater work/life balance, engaging with the Deans on how the faculties are acknowledging a commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi, and developing an understanding of the process for promotion at the University of Auckland. The evaluation also contained useful suggestions from staff as to the focus and process for future hui. The final hui for 2009 will be held at Waipapa on 2 November. Contact k.netana@auckland.ac.nz for information and to registration details.

Administrative staff can do it too!

Working as a Personal Assistant to the Director of the Centre for Academic Development tends to focus your mind on professional development. Last year, Kaye Hodge (the PA in question), decided that she would like to present at a conference both to expand her own professional development and to share what she has learnt from her experience at the University and, before that, Auckland District Health Board. Kaye put a lot of thought and effort into her presentation and her colleagues were very supportive in providing any media and advice she asked for. It has proved a wonderful experience. In 2008, she presented at the Southern Secretarial Summit to an audience of more than 50 Executive Assistants (EAs), Personal Assistants (PAs) and administrative professionals.

As a result, Kaye was asked to take a workshop at this May’s Australian National EA and PA Congress in Sydney. It was particularly helpful and flattering that they paid her conference expenses! Her workshop, How to Enhance the Workplace and became a Value-Adding Employee within your Organisation, received very positive feedback and she has been asked back next year.

The 70 registered delegates came from a wide variety of industries and organisations in both the public and private sectors. While the Sydney Congress naturally attracted a strong delegation from Australia, Kaye also networked with EA’s from Otago and Lincoln Universities and the Canterbury District Health Board.

Kaye’s 3-hour workshop in Sydney included planned activities to encourage good interaction. It focused on four key areas:

• Identify and critique the top qualities that employers seek in an administrative professional
• Take the right steps for your professional development and commitment to your career growth
• Influence your colleagues with a positive attitude to maximise productivity and create a culture for success in your workplace.
• Saying “yes” to new opportunities and responsibilities to gain recognition as a valuable asset to your organisation

Kaye says, “These events provide opportunities to acquire new information and skills and apply them to your own professional environment. I found the variety and depth of the professional speakers at the Sydney Congress inspirational and it was an incredible networking opportunity at the same time.”
Equal reading opportunities for all

1. Provide alternative^ text for: PDFs*, moving text, hovering text, graphics†.
2. Use scalable fonts†.
3. Add a list of links at the end of the paragraph.
4. Avoid blocks of capital letters (whole words or sentences).

1. Numbered points.
2. Active voice.
3. Bold for emphasis.
4. Visuals to break up dense text.
5. Lower or paragraph case.
6. Verdana or Arial fonts.
7. Off-white or cream backgrounds.

1. Justify to the left.
2. Use full stops after bullet points and headings.
3. Provide alternatives to: text boxes, multi-column layout and PDFs.

For more information:
http://www.adcet.edu.au
http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk

The diagram above illustrates ways that you can present material so that it is accessible for students with impairments.

Upcoming Survey: “Creating an inclusive learning environment for students with impairments”
Look out for this anonymous, online staff survey being conducted by the UOA Equal Opportunities Office. It is part of a wider review to gain understanding about inclusive teaching and learning practice within the University. We need your input.

Teaching in the television studio

For two days each week during semester, CAD’s television technical staff support the Film, TV and Media Studies lecturers and students as they undertake practical work in the University’s television studio. And for many years, town planning students have had an annual assessed media training day in the studio.

Lee Beattie (Town Planning lecturer) says, “A lot of town planning is communicating your ideas to the community, so being able to deal with the media is important. Television’s one of the main media forums these days.” The course is about the development of public policy for a district plan. Students work on individual projects like the provision of public open space or increasing densities around transport nodes. Lee provides Richard Smith (CAD Television Director) with information on each issue. He says, “Richard just starts throwing questions at them. It tests their ideas, just as it would in an interview environment and the students really learn from his candid feedback. The studio gives the students an authentic experience, a sense of what really happens when you appear on something like Close Up or Campbell Live. The students really enjoy it. It’s probably one of the highlights of the course for them actually.”
Horses for courses: Using computer-assisted assessment

Technology is offering more and more gadgets and software that can assist with assessment. Many lecturers, drowning in an ocean of students, grasp the lifeline they extend. Within this University, innovators have designed a number of tools to meet the needs of academics and students. But technology is no magic bullet. It’s time-consuming designing assessment that really tests the thinking ‘processes, skills and knowledge’ you are trying to teach. Many teaching staff report, however, that it’s stimulating thinking outside the square.

Cecil can provide variations of scripts by randomly shuffling the order of questions, answers or variables within questions. The examinations office will scan MCQ answer sheets using teleforms and provide you with the marks. They also colour-code four versions of the scripts. The catalyst for this article was a question at high-level: Could this colour-coding prove a boon to cheats? Some lecturers told the editor they disagree. They say they ensure students are well-spaced and supervised and that the colour coding makes this quick and efficient and prevents a potentially catastrophic muddling of question and answer sheets.

MCQs are commonly offered in computer-mediated assessment. They cannot test students’ oral or written skills but they can test more than rote learning. For example, scenarios can provide a context for MCQs to test understanding, interpretation and applications of skills. More and more textbooks include electronic resources integrating MCQs with media and interactive exercises. Mandy Harper and Brendon Dunphy (Biological Sciences) are using Pearson Education’s Mastering Bio with good feedback from students. CAD’s eLearning team can help you develop such resources to answer specific needs.

Professors Chris Wild, Chris Trigg and Dr Maxine Pfannkuch from Statistics have written a thought-provoking chapter (see inset) on MCQs. They point out that in some instances, giving one unit of credit in one place for one idea can be fairer than long-answer questions, where mistakes or gaps in knowledge in early parts of an answer can have serious repercussions. MCQs that test specific skills can also help students identify problem areas where they need to do extra work. Wild et al. say, “the nature of multiple-choice question writing forces teachers to think in a different way. Having to decouple skills and think through a whole series of options forced us to confront many of our own underlying assumptions and analyse in much more detail what it was that we really wanted to teach.” In a nutshell, “The most powerful signal that we have for telling students what we believe to be important is assessment. To a very large extent, what you test is what you get.”

Formative assessment with good feedback helps motivate, focus and monitor learning so you can diagnose and pre-empt misconceptions. Technology can provide opportunities for generic yet focussed feedback or even automate pathways tailored to individual needs. It can also manage – and help avoid potential pitfalls in – peer assessment. It is important that you and your students are clear about what approach they need to take to achieve the goals of any new form of assessment. Below are some tools developed for this University.

Design Strategies for Statistics MCQs
1. Begin by collecting a file of real, context rich data sets and stories.
2. Present the background, data, and a fairly large array of numerical and graphical summaries derived from it as a complete package.
3. Ask as many questions from the same story as possible, letting the story/ data/situation suggest the questions.
4. Incorporate questions: critiquing practical aspects of the research; interpreting data-information and making inferences from it; interpreting and understanding statistical ideas; specifying what techniques should be used in a given situation; and performing mechanical tasks (e.g., calculations).
5. Break down tasks into subtasks and examine each subtask separately.
6. Provide enough information to prevent students wasting time on unproductive rote learning.
7. For questions about interpreting statistical concepts, or for “what to use when?” questions, bury one false statement amongst a collection of true statements. This reinforces teaching and minimises the risk of students absorbing random misinformation when, for example, using old tests in exam preparation.
8. Avoid statistical jargon in interpretational questions.


The Cecil learning management system is used for summative and formative assessment. www.cecil.auckland.ac.nz

Students develop, answer, rate and discuss MCQs. http://peerwise.cs.auckland.ac.nz
Contact: p.denny@auckland.ac.nz

Author interactive problem-solving exercises and analyse usage data to inform teaching. www.bestchoice.net.nz
Contact: sd.woodgate@auckland.ac.nz

Problem solving assessment software initially developed in Engineering for large classes.
Contact: c.small@auckland.ac.nz or c.coghill@auckland.ac.nz

Software for administering students’ assessment of their peers’ assignments. https://aropa.ac.auckland.ac.nz/
Contact: J.Hamer@auckland.ac.nz

Integrate formative assessment in media-rich websites. www.cad.auckland.ac.nz/coursebuilder
Contact: CAD eLearning Group
Dr Ian Brailsford writes: Do you think I’ll look conspicuous sitting in the back row of your lecture? I ask this question when a lecturer requests a teaching observation and the seemingly innocuous tenor of the inquiry reveals the complexities of watching a colleague teach. If my presence is announced by the teacher, will this change the students’ behaviour? If I go incognito am I spying on the lecturer’s students? What happens if a student confronts me and asks me what I’m doing? My guiding principle is that I am an invited guest in a colleague’s classroom so I let them decide whether or not to signal my presence: the observed gets to set the agenda for the observation.

“If my presence is announced by the teacher, will this change the students’ behaviour? If I go incognito am I spying on the lecturer’s students?”       Dr Ian Brailsford

Teaching observations are an effective way of getting informed feedback on lecturing style and delivery, not necessarily the final word nor a teacher’s ‘Warrant of Fitness’ check, but instead a useful professional development activity. The observer can be a colleague or academic advisor but without some careful preparation things can go awry. After completing over 30 teaching observations in the last three years here are some basic tips for both observers and observed. These complement the information on peer observation provided in the new ‘Handbook on the Evaluation of Courses and Teaching’ (p.19); http://web.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/for/staff/teaching/student-evaluation/

• Arrive early and enter the lecture theatre with the students. You can pick up on the atmosphere in the room (noisy or sullen and subdued) quickly and spot what students are doing (are they preparing for class by checking through notes and course-book or idly killing time?).

• Find a seat where you can get a good panorama across the whole lecture theatre.

• What are students on the back row doing 20 minutes into the class? If attention span or engagement is going to lag it will probably start to manifest itself by now.

• See how students are taking notes and on what – the lecturer might have an idea what the keen students near the front do but probably has no idea what the majority of students are doing.

• Pass a critical gaze over PowerPoint slides, handwriting on whiteboards and use of document camera – again the view from near the front (the one lecturers typically see over their shoulders) might not be the same as that seen from the back row.

• After the class, wait outside and ‘touch base’ with the lecturer. Find out from them how they thought it went and agree a time to meet up to discuss. This is not the time to give substantive feedback.

• As a fellow educator, highlight aspects of the lecture you enjoyed and think about elements you could incorporate into your own teaching. Give suggestions or proposals for innovations to the observed teacher. Don’t overdo it; two or three useful suggestions that are doable are better than a complete lecture overhaul.

• Write up your notes and comments as soon as possible after the lecture. Offer the first version as a draft and give the teacher the chance to comment on it. There might be aspects of the lecture that you as the observer misconstrued.

• As the observed, receive the feedback in a collegial manner – the observer has taken the time and trouble to give you constructive commentary on your teaching.

You may also find the following publication useful: Bell M, Peer Observation Partnerships in Higher Education, HERDSA 2005
CAD Alerts

A new eLearning Strategy for the University has been approved by the Teaching & Learning Quality Committee. It reflects international trends away from Learning Management Systems (like Cecil and WebCT) towards external online environments, especially emerging Web 2.0 technologies. You can download it at: http://cad.auckland.ac.nz/content/files/eldd/elearning_strategy.pdf

The strategy states: ‘Use of new technologies to create opportunities for students to engage with one another, and with local and international learning communities, is core to the emerging Web 2.0 environment. The eLearning strategy for the University of Auckland uses these Web 2.0 technologies to enhance the learning experience of students and to encourage staff to innovate with teaching technologies.’

The University’s current strategic plan also pledges to: “Provide support for innovations in teaching and learning, particularly those that involve use of new technologies, and create communities of interest among faculty and service division staff and students that sustain and promote innovation.”

If you are considering using teaching and learning technologies, you may be asking:

- where do I start?
- what’s the rationale?
- what’s involved?
- what sort of tools can I use?
- can I just do this on my own?
- where and how can I get support?
- or more specific things like:
  - how do I manage communication?
  - how could I get a class list with photos?

If you’d like some guidance, you might like to enrol for the Enhancing teaching and learning with technologies workshop on the morning of 4 September. It’s part of CAD’s Teaching Enhancement series and will give an overview of why and how you might integrate online and flexible learning strategies into your teaching. There’ll be particular reference to what our University can offer. It will also introduce you to a framework to help}

scope your project and decide whether you need to seek help or a grant.

For those wanting to find out about ‘web 2 technologies’, CAD offers a Web 2 Tools workshop for Beginners. This workshop, run by staff from the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences Learning Technology Unit, explains how to use blogs, wikis and social/academic bookmarking and even uses social networking purposefully in teaching.

The workshops are supported by a Social Networking site at www.virtuallythere.ning.com/. You can join the site even if you don’t attend the workshops. Joining will let you connect with other educators around the university who are interested in Web 2.0 for teaching and learning. The next workshop will be held later this year. Subscribe to CAD alerts (see above) for updated information.

Workshops supporting the new eLearning Strategy
This programme offers a wide cross section of courses to staff and postgraduate students, using commonly installed software.

All Office courses use Office 2007. Most courses have a limited number of Macintosh places available.

Courses

Word Processing (various levels from introduction through to intermediate level, specialist topics).

Excel Spreadsheets (beginners to advanced).

Presentation packages:

- PowerPoint
- Publisher
- Project
- InDesign
- Adobe Acrobat (full version) for security and form creation
- MovieMaker and QuickTime for creating video movies with sound tracks.

Tables:

- Designing Questionnaires to capture information for analysis.
- Email – using email, customising Outlook, managing contacts, distribution lists through to advanced level including creating meetings, inviting and tracking attendees, assigning tasks to others, sharing email accounts.

On our website, we also have a substantial and up to date library of resources available for free loan.

Enrolling

University staff who have access to the staff intranet should enrol in all UOA development courses using the ASKHR/Peoplesoft HR QuickLink. (Go to: Self service - Learning and Development - Request Training Enrolment). There are four search categories: course name, course number, location and date.

Note that the list above refers to generic categories. If you cannot find a course, please email Lyn Hood (l.hood@auckland.ac.nz) for more information on the search terms. You can also review the status of your enrolment requests or your training history there.

You can download a ‘guide’ listing the programme for the current quarter at: www.cad.auckland.ac.nz/content/files/itlit/it_literacy_booklet_guide.pdf

Employees of affiliated institutions may still enrol through the CAD website or their own CEPD office.

www.cad.auckland.ac.nz/index.php?p=it_literacy

You can download a ‘programme guide’ for the current quarter at: www.cad.auckland.ac.nz/content/files/itlit/it_literacy_booklet_guide.pdf


CAD Staff and Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centre for Academic Development (CAD)</th>
<th>76 Symonds St</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acting Director</td>
<td>Dr Barbara Grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director:</td>
<td>Professor Lorraine Stefani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA to Director</td>
<td>Kaye Hodge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre Manager</td>
<td>Lynette Herrero-Torres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Managers</td>
<td>Anne Lee/Jenny Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT Manager</td>
<td>Amit Bansal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators</td>
<td>Sarah Wright (SLC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Secretary / Reception</td>
<td>Diana Latchman (CAD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>Tessa Sillifant (APG &amp; ELDD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Learning Centre (SLC)</td>
<td>Reception: Ext 88140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Practice Group (APG)</th>
<th>76 Symonds St</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice</td>
<td>Dr Helen Sword (Head of Group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maori Academic Development</td>
<td>Matiu Ratima</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Development</td>
<td>Dr Barbara Grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Observations/Tutors and Demonstrators</td>
<td>Dr Ian Brailsford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Career Academics</td>
<td>Barbara Kensington-Miller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception: Ext 88140</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cadreception@auckland.ac.nz">cadreception@auckland.ac.nz</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>eLearning Design and Development (eLDD)</th>
<th>76 Symonds St</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of Group</td>
<td>Dr Cathy Gunn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Design/Web Development</td>
<td>Tony Chung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT Literacy</td>
<td>Lyn Hoard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Design</td>
<td>Adam Blake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashwini Datt</td>
<td><a href="mailto:a.datt@auckland.ac.nz">a.datt@auckland.ac.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Claire Donald</td>
<td><a href="mailto:c.donald@auckland.ac.nz">c.donald@auckland.ac.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liz Ramsay</td>
<td><a href="mailto:e.ramsay@auckland.ac.nz">e.ramsay@auckland.ac.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Systems</td>
<td>Wen-Chen Ho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webmaster</td>
<td>Craig Housley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception: Ext 88140</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cadreception@auckland.ac.nz">cadreception@auckland.ac.nz</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photography &amp; Television</th>
<th>76 Symonds St</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Photography</td>
<td>Brian Donovan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godfrey Boehlke</td>
<td><a href="mailto:g.boehlke@auckland.ac.nz">g.boehlke@auckland.ac.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathryn Robinson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ka.robinson@auckland.ac.nz">ka.robinson@auckland.ac.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Production</td>
<td>Richard Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neil Morrison</td>
<td><a href="mailto:n.morrison@auckland.ac.nz">n.morrison@auckland.ac.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television Studio Inquiries</td>
<td>Ext 88212 or 88916</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technical Video Services and Advice</th>
<th>76 Symonds St</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graeme Henderson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gl.henderson@auckland.ac.nz">gl.henderson@auckland.ac.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Nelson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:a.nelson@auckland.ac.nz">a.nelson@auckland.ac.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception: Ext 88140</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cadreception@auckland.ac.nz">cadreception@auckland.ac.nz</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Language Self-Access Centre (ELSAC)</th>
<th>76 Symonds St</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of ELSAC:</td>
<td>Dr Penny Hacker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Consultant</td>
<td>Siew Read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Assistant</td>
<td>Rebecca Tsang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception: Ext 88140</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cadreception@auckland.ac.nz">cadreception@auckland.ac.nz</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See also People at: www.cad.auckland.ac.nz