Welcome from the eGSA Director

As the year draws quickly to an end and we tie up loose ends, it is good for us all to reflect on what we’ve achieved over 2012.

In the e-Grad School we’ve had a busy and constructive year. The Master of R&D Management was reviewed and renamed the Master of Research Management and Commercialisation from Semester 2, 2012. The change recognised a significant need for a formal postgraduate award which provides training in best practice management skills and commercialisation to the research sectors. The degree is aimed at researchers and administration professionals in research organisations, universities and the public and private sectors and feedback from students acknowledges the value it provides for them in their workplace as you will see from the student profile below.

The Learning Employment Aptitude Program (LEAP) and Modules Online for Research Education (MORE) modules continued to be popular with students looking for short courses they can do online at a time that suits them. Non-ATN universities who participated in these short online courses during the year included Swinburne, University of Sunshine Coast, University of Wollongong and the Australian Film, Television and Radio School.

I hope you enjoy reading our December newsletter and on behalf of the eGSA team we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Best wishes

Paul Burnett

Did you know.......?

- Enrolments for the Graduate Certificate and Masters in Research Management and Commercialisation close on 18 January 2013.
- Australian Technology Network (ATN) staff and students, ie those from Curtin, RMIT, UniSA, UTS, QUT, are entitled to a 20% tuition fee discount when they enrol in the Master of Research Management and Commercialisation (MRMC) or the Graduate Certificate in Research Commercialisation (GCRC).
- eGSA LEAP and MORE resources are available to non-ATN participants at a cost of $350+GST per person per module.
- The e-Grad School can tailor short (half and one-day) workshops to meet your research administration needs.

Student Profile – Mark Medosh – graduating this semester from the Master of Research Management and Commercialisation

Q: What led you to do the Graduate Certificate/Master of Research Management and Commercialisation?
A: I was looking for a professional development opportunity to build upon my experience in research management. I have considered a number of master courses, and finally decided to enrol in Master of Research Management. It was very closely aligned to my current work so I could draw on my experience and immediately apply the knowledge acquired in the course. My supervisor and mentor at the time, Director of the NICTA research centre was very supportive of this course, and the centre has provided me study assistance.

Q: What are you doing at the moment (ie working? Study-PhD?)
A: In my current role I am managing school operations in the Information Systems School of the Science and Engineering Faculty at QUT. My school has the highest Excellence in Research, ERA 5 ranking and my faculty is strongly committed to world-class research, which is an ideal place for me to utilise my research management skills and the knowledge I acquired in the Master of Research Management course. Prior to this role I managed operations at NICTA QLD, the Australia’s ICT research centre of excellence.

Q: What did you expect from the Masters?
A: I spent a few months investigating the course and getting the key information related to the curriculum, study load, and online type of delivery via Blackboard. I was concerned about managing the study load, full time work and family commitments.

Also I have not studied online before and wasn’t sure if that will suit my learning style, and if I would be able to adapt quickly. Also I expected the course to be suitable for non-researchers, i.e. professional staff involved in research administration and management.

Q: How was the fit between your expectations of the course and what was delivered?
A: I am delighted to say that my expectations were fully met. I very much liked the online delivery style as it provided great flexibility in reading the material and interacting with the other students and the moderator via Blackboard. The course content had a strong focus on research management in the university environment, which was very appropriate for my work.
Q: Any other comments you’d like to make?
A: I would strongly recommend the Master of Research Management and Commercialisation to anyone involved in research and managing research in particular. Enrolling in the Grad Cert program is a good strategy to “test the waters” and experience what it is like. That is what I did - I liked the Grad Cert program so much that I immediately continued towards the full Masters course.

Meet your Moderators

We welcome two new moderators to the e-Grad School.

Simon J.C. Williams
MAICD M.Ent M.Env. B.Ec. AssDipLibSt.
Bachelor of Economics and Accounting; Masters of Environmental Studies and a Masters of Entrepreneurship

Simon is currently moderating the Entrepreneurial Foundations unit being offered over the summer semester.

Simon has extensive domestic and international experience in all aspects of sourcing, evaluating and developing opportunities. He has been a small business owner and has worked in large corporations. Simon’s previous roles include CEO of Itek which is UniSA’s commercialisation company, State Manager of the Australian Institute for Commercialisation and founder of several businesses including the organisational psychology firm, Your Future Edge. Simon has been a director of six companies in the fields of Cleantech, Biotechnology and ICT. Simon has a background in finance and is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Simon brings know-how in managing knowledge transfer, intellectual property and negotiating partner agreements across various research organisations and industry sectors both nationally and internationally and is passionate about early stage companies, knowledge transfer and research commercialisation.

Ms Lynn Gallagher
Certificate of Teaching (Queensland Teachers College); Bachelor of Commerce (University of Queensland); Master of Financial Management (University of Queensland).

Lynn wrote and will teach the new unit, Financial Decisions for Research Management in Semester 1, 2013.

An association with QUT (and its pre-cursor institutions) for over 48 years is Lynn’s claim to fame! Lynn began her working life as a high-school teacher (having graduated from what is now QUT, Kelvin Grove). Teaching did not require a degree at that time, so Lynn studied her accounting degree as a part-time student while teaching. Her life in academia began on completion of that degree, when she commenced work at Brisbane College of Advanced Education ... you guessed it, now QUT! This job enabled her to combine her passion for teaching with her love of accounting. Lynn’s teaching areas in the early days were “Introductory Accounting” and what was generically called “Accounting for Non-Accountants”. She later moved into her principal teaching area “Management Accounting”, and she continued as a Senior Lecturer in management accounting until retiring in 2009.

Since retiring from QUT she has worked as a sessional staff member at UQ and Griffith, teaching both management accounting and accounting for non-accountants. She seems to have come full-circle as she begins yet another association with QUT, and looks forward to the challenge of imparting the mysteries of accounting to non-accounting students in the Masters programme.

Farewell to Inger....

We are sad to be losing Dr Inger Mewburn, moderator of the Contexts of R&D Management award unit, and the non-award Critical and Creative Thinking module. Inger co-wrote the Critical and Creative Thinking module and has just completed a review of the Contexts unit and is leaving RMIT and us, to take up the position of Director of Research Training at ANU.

We wish her all the best in her new role and I’m sure many of you will continue to be in touch with her via her Thesis Whisperer blog.

The new moderator of the Contexts unit is Mr Nigel Palmer. We will tell you more about Nigel’s background in the next newsletter.

Need help in making financial decisions in your research administration role?

The new Masters unit mentioned above, Financial Decisions for Research Management, may be what you need.

This “accounting for non-accountants” unit provides a “toolkit” for research managers or R&D portfolio/company managers to understand the basics related to research financial requirements, management of funding and budgeting processes, the assessment and management of legal obligations associated with management of research and an understanding of the appraisal of entrepreneurial business opportunities and the financial mechanisms associated with their management.
INTERESTING FACTS AND SNIPPETS

Did you know that:

- When the eGSA polled its students on what skills they thought were most important to learn outside of the area of profession over 60% responded that research management skills was an area that they needed training in. (eGSA data presented to ARTA national conference 2012)
- Companies/Industry are less likely to employ PhDs / research professionals who do not have business/professional skills or additional training (Theodosiou et al, 2012, Nature Biotech 30 (4))
- In an international conference work group recently conducted by the European University Association it was recognised that formal training in research management, IP (intellectual property) and knowledge transfer was needed by both academic and administrative staff
- In a national survey across UK universities about student attitudes towards IP, it was found that students thought lecturers/supervisors were key sources of information about IP, and yet only half thought that these academics were well informed about IP issues (2012 IPAN/NUS national survey).

Skills needed in today’s research workforce

Here’s a figure depicting the skills needed in today’s research workforce to meet employer expectations. Each section represents a discrete set of defined skill sets that are required to build overall and interrelated best practice research professional skills and knowledge.

The chart can be used by both researchers and research administrators/managers when considering their skills and training needs.

What skills are you (or your staff) missing?!

For further information on anything in this newsletter please contact: egsacoordinator@qut.edu.au