Welcome from the eGSA Director

Hello, and welcome to the mid-year edition of the e-Grad School’s newsletter, my first as the new Director of the e-Grad School.

I look forward to liaising with you in the role vacated by Professor Rod Wissler who has taken up a new role as Executive Dean in the Creative Industries Faculty at QUT. This newsletter is circulated to past and present students who have participated in the various e-Grad School award and non-award offerings, and to the many research managers, administrators and researchers in corporations, public sector and universities with whom we collaborate from time to time. We hope you enjoy reading about our endeavours.

Best wishes

Paul Burnett

eGSA Non-Award Programs

In this newsletter we draw your attention to the non-award programs offered by the e-Grad School. These are free to all students within the Australian Technology Network universities. The modules are online and accessible by students 24/7. Students can choose to work through the modules independently or join in a moderated offering where available. The beauty of the moderated offerings is the networking opportunities with students from around Australia.

The resources are also available to non-ATN universities who may wish to sponsor a cohort of higher degree research students in the 5 week moderated offerings. Individual registrations in the moderated offerings are also available. Cost is $300 per person per module. Please contact egsocoordinator@qut.edu.au for further information.

Modules on Research Education (MORE):
These modules provide research methodology skills in: Critical and Creative Thinking; Critical Writing; Ethics; Risk Management; Practice-led Research in Creative Arts, Media and Design.

Learning Employment Aptitude Program (LEAP):
Career enhancing skills covering Entrepreneurship; Project Management; Leadership and Communication; Public Policy; Research Commercialisation; Global Sustainability.

Maximising Your Career – building research and academic careers

Teaching at University – an introduction to tertiary teaching for postgraduate research students starting out as tutors.

Feedback from students who have participated in these modules is extremely positive:

…..this type of discussion is precisely what I am after as I am writing up my PhD thesis.

MORE - Critical and Creative Thinking Student

… a base-line of material to assist and to enable a new researcher to be aware of some of the drivers of entrepreneurship and the pitfalls of entrepreneurship.

LEAP - Research Commercialisation Student

It provides … skills that are important, even critical, for careers but ones that might not be specifically taught in any course.

Maximising Your Career Student

Student Profile – Lenka Boorer, BNat, DipEd, MEd, GradCertHE – ATN MORE Critical & Creative Thinking Participant

Q: What are you doing at the moment (i.e. working? Study - PhD? Masters?)
A: Currently, I am working full time at Griffith University as a Learning Adviser in the Health Team on the Gold Coast Campus. I am doing a Doctorate in Education part time at QUT.

Q: What eGSA non-award modules have you participated in and what was the latest?
A: I have just completed the Critical and Creative Thinking Module, the first of many modules I hope to do. I have found doing the module kept me on track with my own research. A nice little interlude that allowed me space to think about how I think and work through things. Working through the unit at the same time as working on my literature review helped me organise my thoughts and kept me on track.

Q: What attracted you to the module and how was the fit between your expectations and what was delivered?
A: My expectations were met and I came away from the module with so much more. In my role I teach Critical Thinking and I really wanted to know how and what other academics defined as critical thinking and how they taught it. This course challenged the way I thought about critical thinking - this is a good thing. I have come away with a better understanding and wider framework of reference. I think as educators it is our job to look at things differently and be able to present information in a variety of ways. I feel more confident that I can do this now.

Q: What do you regard as the strengths of the module?
A: The strengths are that you work at your own pace and Dr Inger Mewburn is fantastic! Inger introduced new material and expected everyone to be finished by the next Wednesday. Inger sent an email each Wednesday notifying us that it was time to move on and revisit the information when we had a chance. I liked this, as I blocked out a 2
Meet your Moderator – Dr Inger Mewburn – ATN MORE Critical and Creative Thinking

Inger says......

My position as research fellow at the School of Graduate Research at RMIT University is a varied role. A large part of my work is to do research on research education, which usually involves interviewing and surveying students and supervisors about their work. The aim of the research is to better understand the issues and complexities of doing a research degree.

As well as teaching in online courses, I co-ordinate and teach into the On Track Program, some 80 odd face to face workshops which assist candidates doing Higher Degrees with many aspects of doing a research degree, from searching literatures and writing to presenting at conferences and managing relationships with supervisors.

I extend this teaching into online spaces through my work with the e-Grad School in the Modules on Research Education (MORE) and in my blog: The Thesis Whisperer. I take up the persona of @thesiswhisperer on twitter where I talk to research students all around the world about their day to day issues.

Since taking up this position I have developed an interest in the nature of knowledge - how we get it, how we use it, how it is communicated to others and how it develops and changes inside communities. My PhD research concerned the use of gesture within architectural communities as a communicative resource. I am currently extending this anthropological approach to investigate the inner workings of PhD student communities.

Attention universities! Are you finding it difficult to spend your remaining CTS money? Use it, don’t lose it....

You will be aware that the Commercialisation Training Scheme scholarships will cease at the end of 2011. For universities who may be wondering how they are going to acquire the balance of their CTS funds you may consider enrolling your domestic higher degree research students in the Graduate Certificate of Research Commercialisation in Semester 2, or the 2011 Summer Semester. The funds are available to students providing they commence before the end of the year. Tuition fees for the Graduate Certificate are $10,000 (or $2,500 per unit).

The e-Grad School Summer Semester will commence mid-November and run for 13 weeks. Further information is available at http://www.egradschool.edu.au/ or by email to: egasacoordinator@qut.edu.au

Did you know.......?

- If you have completed the Graduate Certificate in Research Commercialisation and would like to do the Masters, you’re half way there, taking into account your four-year undergraduate degree!
- eGSA can provide customised face-to-face or online programs, workshops and seminars (or a combination of both), to plug into existing industry and corporate professional development training programs. The following ATEM course is an example of this. The e-Grad School has teamed with the Association for Tertiary Education Management (ATEM) to run Contemporary Issues and Practice in R&D Management workshops for university administrators wishing to gain an understanding of the key foundational principles and practices which are part of university research.
- Research is a significant area of university business. All administrators and managers need to be up to date with the key policy drivers and practices. This workshop aims to contextualise the emerging academic research environment and will examine new policy frameworks and best practice in research management. The workshop will also examine the principles, practices and frameworks that drive university research management. The workshop was offered in Sydney in April and feedback from participants was extremely positive. Participants found the workshop provided helpful information on current research administration issues and enjoyed meeting colleagues from other institutions.

Details of upcoming workshops are:

- Melbourne – Monday 22 August (to be confirmed)

For more information contact egasacoordinator@qut.edu.au

Interesting websites/publications

- PhD comics http://www.phdcomics.com/
- Explorations of style – a blog about Academic Writing http://explorationsofstyle.wordpress.com/
- www.thesiswhisperer.wordpress.com – dedicated to the topic of doing a thesis.
- http://www.ausbiotech.org/spotlight/