Welcome from the eGSA Director

Hello and welcome to the e-Grad School’s mid-year newsletter. We’ve had several changes over the last 6 months – including a review of our suite of online research training offerings and a new website – all positive moves under our control. Looking at the bigger picture and the changes in the sector that are beyond our control, it is clear that research training such as the e-Grad School’s Learning Employment Aptitudes Program (LEAP) and Modules on Research Education (MORE) will continue to play an important role in making our graduates work ready and students are encouraged to take advantage of these offerings which are free to Australian Technology Network (ATN)* students and very reasonable in terms of cost to non-ATN students.

Best wishes
Paul Burnett

*ATN universities: Curtin, QUT, RMIT, UniSA, UTS

What do we offer?

Flexible, short, fully online and easily accessible professional development courses that provide researchers and research sector professionals with skills and development in areas required by employers today.

Cost is $350+GST per person, per module. Online 24/7 from anywhere in the world, the modules provide the opportunity for participants to increase global networks and learn generic work related skills:

For higher degree students:

**Learning Employment Aptitudes Program** (LEAP) – learn professional skills to boost your career:
- Entrepreneurship
- Project Management
- Leadership and Communication
- Research Commercialisation
- Global Sustainability
- Public Policy
- Developing Your Career

**Modules Online for Research Education** (MORE) – skills required for the postgraduate research journey:
- Critical and Creative Thinking
- Practice-led Research in Creative Arts, Media and Design

For early career researchers and supervisors:

**Effective Supervisory Practices** – frameworks and pragmatic issues associated with supervising in today’s research environment - effective and essential tools for the supervisory tool kit.

For professional staff working in the area of research administration:

**Project Management for Professionals** (PMP) – if you manage projects this is for you - skills and experience in defining a project, identifying key components for planning a project and determining specific needs and processes involved in successfully managing a project.

The next offering of PMP commences on 28 July 2014. To register contact egsacoordinator@qut.edu.au

**Leadership and Communication for Professionals** - Leadership Qualities; Effective Communication; Interpersonal Skills; Team Membership; Mentoring and Coaching

We also offer a mix of online and face-to-face, half or one-day courses tailored to your specific needs.

Contact us at: egsacoordinator@qut.edu.au to discuss the possibilities.

Student Testimonials

**LEAP**

**Project Management**

Multidisciplinary participation, flexible learning, discussion board interaction, not an overwhelming workload, therefore suitable for doing alongside full-time PhD study. I now understand what is meant by ‘Project Management’. I have a better overview of the most important elements to consider when planning a research project, or when I may manage one with others in the future.

**Entrepreneurship**

As a final year PhD student, I just wanted to do a module that was different from a physics and mathematics. I am glad that I chose to do entrepreneurship as it has taught me valuable lessons about business that I believe will be helpful for the future.

**Leadership and Communication**

The module was a great eye opener for me. There were issues I had regarding being a leader which I hadn’t really thought about but through this module I’ve started addressing them.

**Research Commercialisation**

It would be very useful to include this subject “Research Commercialisation” in research method courses conducted for students at the beginning of their journey to become a researcher.

**Public Policy**

I really appreciated doing this Policy Subject because it was immensely useful to me in contextualising my PhD research into climate change policy. Particularly the part of the subject dealing with evidence-based policy, which I have extended a great deal into many aspects of my work (evaluating deductivism, induction and the objective theory of evidence).

**Global Sustainability**

I have learnt more insights into sustainability aspects, such as the important role a community/consumer plays within sustainable development, the importance of sustainability education, various approaches for solutions (e.g. decentralise modern service provision systems), the importance of critically thinking. Being an economist I found it interesting to rethink about economics and its concepts and to think about economics as a means to improve society (not grow or destroy).
Sustainability as a concept will be the driving force changing the way we work and live in the 21st century - a primary focus in our intellectual and material work, in our collective and individual lives. The key role education can play in readdressing the human-nature disconnect, which is a central cause of the crisis facing modern society, is broadly accepted. Urgent issues of global poverty, resource scarcity, global warming, excessive consumption, waste, and loss of biodiversity are increasingly recognised for their implications for the whole of society. Thus, all disciplines and professions are implicated. A change in professional practice and behaviour requires us to rethink our perception of reality. Three areas that require reflective thought and action if the self-awareness required for such change is to occur - are our normative, descriptive and practice aspects, which make up the way we view reality. If a change is to occur, we must understand and reflect on the way we:

• construct knowledge (epistemology), or use our ‘heart’ to experience life;
• understand how this shapes our view of reality (ontology), or how our experience influences the way we think, use our ‘head’;
• translate this into the discovery of new knowledge (the tools we identify with/use to facilitate inquiry or action), or how we use our ‘hands’ (Sterling 2004).

The LEAP Global Sustainability module’s aim is to enable students to critically reflect on how their own personal, professional and academic practice relates to issues of Sustainability. The module is led by Sarah Holdsworth, Lecturer, within the School of Global Property Construction and Project Management at RMIT University. Sarah’s work at RMIT has involved her in change projects in relation to tertiary learning and teaching, academic development in higher education, and theorisations of academic identity and subjectivity. Her doctoral degree evaluated the ability of academic development programs to provide educators with the capabilities to deliver sustainability education. It analysed local and international experiences and case studies in academic development, sustainability and higher education. Sarah’s interests lie in the development of long term strategies based on substantial changes to social and technological paradigms. Sarah’s main research focus is the identification of key mechanisms required to turn sustainability innovations into embedded practice in a university context.


Tips ’n Tricks:
5-step strategy for successful online engagement

1. Read the content
   • Read all of the course content
   • Ensure you understand the requirements of the course

2. Plan weekly online times
   • Block out times when you will read & be online
   • Don’t leave it until the last minute

3. Log on a minimum of 3 times a week
   • Consistent online learners do better
   • Get into a habit of regularly checking online

4. Ask questions and contribute
   • If you have a question, ask it!
   • Contribute regularly - everyone has something they can contribute!

5. Make connections with fellow participants
   • Make new connections and networks
   • Comment and ask each other questions to build a learning community


Publications:

Online study debate rages – Campus Review – March 31, 2014: http://www.campusreview.com.au/2014/03/online-study-debate-rages/ (All non-subscribers to Campus Review now have access to a free online trial offer. Alternatively Campus Review can be accessed through your university library).

How to Take Advantage of Online Training Tools: http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/224834