



Monthly e-Newsletter – May, 2011

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EDITORIAL OF SORTS

It's later than usual but here is your newsletter which has somehow got to 11 pages much to my surprise. I squeeze this in around work which sidelined me lately, part of which involved putting together a budget. Well, budgets in fact, as there were seven to do.

Speaking of budgets, the Feds have handed down their budget recently. In terms of higher education, Simon Marginson's [article](#) in the Australia refers to it as '*Politics of the short term*'. Another, not so complementary is Brett Mason's [article](#), '*Labor flunks higher education and research test*'

Various responses to the Federal Budget In **Universities Australia's** [response](#) 'pleased' or 'pleasing' appears 3 times followed by "This is a positive and supportive Budget for the higher education sector, and Universities Australia will continue to study the Budget papers in coming days".

TAFE Directors Australia [response](#) – "TDA cautions \$1.73 billion 'carrot and stick' strategy in Federal Budget"

Best AAIR Paper off to the AIR Forum

Graduate Careers Australia Senior Research Associate David Carroll will be attending the AIR Conference in Toronto in late May to present his paper "Unemployment Rates and Starting Salaries: Are Australian Graduates at the Whim of the Wage Curve?" This is the paper for which David won the Best Paper award at the 2010 AAIR Forum hosted by Deakin University.

Based on data from the 2009 Graduate Destination Survey, this paper presents an empirical investigation into the influence of regional unemployment rates on the wages of recent higher education graduates in the Australian labour market.

Congratulations again David!!

NTEU's [response](#) is generally positive
And so on.....

Of course, universities are happy that receive higher funding under the increased regional loading as per [Latrobe](#) and perhaps thinking about their options if receiving less as per the [University of the Sunshine Coast](#)

Meanwhile, many are probably just wondering how it affects their hip pocket.

And so to another newsletter

Feedback, comments, suggestions and contributions to the Newsletter are, as always, welcomed.

So, read on and sample the varied mix that follows. Enjoy....

Wendy Marchment
Editor
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PLACES TO GO – THINGS TO DO

For more events make sure you check out <http://aair.org.au/pages/events>

If you have relevant events you would like posted please email them to info@aair.org.au

VET Teaching Conference

24 - 25 May, 2011

Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre

The conference, hosted by Queensland's Department of Education and Training, traverses lots of fascinating VET territory, and all from the perspective of the VET teacher – a perspective that sometimes gets a little lost in the argy-bargy. Keynote speakers include: Denise Stevens, CEO of the TDC in Melbourne; Clare Field, CEO of ACPET; and Robin Shreeve, CEO of Skills Australia. The theme for Day One is 'The VET workforce: challenges and solutions'. Day Two will have a go at 'The future of the tertiary landscape'. Details here:

<http://www.vetteaching.com.au/>

e-learning a Realit-e

8 - 10 June 2011

online conference

This FREE online conference showcases how vocational education and training (VET) practitioners, training providers and businesses are using e-learning pedagogy, e-tools and e-technologies to develop and deliver new and flexible training options. On Day 3 Dr Genevieve Bell will discuss the research paper *Getting connected, staying connected: Exploring South Australia's digital futures*, which she authored as an Adelaide Thinker in Residence. Draft Program is [here](#) and further details are at:

<http://networksevents.flexiblelearning.net.au/>



Retention 2011

12 - 14 June 2011

San Diego, CA

This is The Educational Policy Institute's 6th annual International Conference on Student Success.

Details [here](#)

Inaugural Student Satisfaction in Higher Education Conference

21 - 22 June 2011

Rendezvous Hotel Melbourne

The IRU is promoting this Informa conference. For details and the program go [here](#)

iVERG 2nd International Conference

27 - 28 June 2011

Middlesbrough, Tees Valley, UK

iVERG is a group of collaborating academics and professionals from universities worldwide. Research on virtual environments for use in learning and teaching is diverse and complex and draws upon specialisms in education, computing, sociology, psychology and anthropology. The theme of this conference is Immersive Technologies for Learning: Virtual Implementation, Real Outcomes: Details here: <http://www.iverg.com/iVERG/Home.html>



Australian Quality Forum (AUQF)

29 June to 1 July 2011

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

The forum theme is 'Demonstrating Quality'. This year's program includes two plenary colloquies, 'Demonstrating Quality: Looking Back to What's Been Achieved' and 'Demonstrating Quality: Looking to the Future'. These sessions will run in a chat show type format, encouraging lively discussions and audience engagement.

Early Bird registration is open - register online at <http://www.auqa.edu.au/auqf/2011/registration/>

Towards Research Excellence Summit 2011

3- 4 August 2011

Sydney Harbour Marriott Hotel

Another offering from Informa.

Check out the details [here](#)

AAIR 2011 Data Warehouse, Load Management, DEEWR SIG Forum

3 - 5 August 2011

Canberra

For further information contact Fiona Sutherland at ANU, fiona.sutherland@anu.edu.au

Canadian Institutional Research and Planning Association 20th Annual Conference

23 - 25 October 2011

Fredericton, New Brunswick

The theme of this year's CIRPA conference is 'Looking Forward: Institutional Research and Planning in Canada'. Keynote speakers will include Dr. Munir Sheikh, former Chief Statistician of Canada and currently Distinguished Fellow and Adjunct Professor at Queen's University, and Mr. James Knight, President and CEO of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges and Chair of the World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics. All inquiries regarding submissions or the conference should be directed to Conference Co-Chair Elizabeth Lane (elizabeth.lane@dal.ca)

Open Education Conference

25 - 27 October 2011

Utah, USA

How's this for a promo: "Each year the conference serves as the world's premiere venue for research and development related to open education, while simultaneously creating the most friendly and energetic atmosphere you'll find at any academic conference." Check out further details here: <http://openedconference.org/2011/>

Pre and Post AAIR 2011

Wondering what to do before or after the AAIR Conference in November? There's lots of options.

Download a Gold Coast Travel Guide [here](#). Maybe you could learn to surf?



Image courtesy of Gold Coast Tourism



2011 AAIR Annual Forum 9-11 November, 2011 Sea World Resort, Gold Coast, Queensland

On behalf of the AAIR Forum Organising Committee, I'd like to extend a warm invitation to you to participate in the the 21st annual AAIR forum, where we'll "Let the Sunshine in". Registration is now open and the call for abstracts for presenters has gone out.

The first of the keynote speakers has been announced: Professor Sandra Harding, Vice-Chancellor and President of James Cook University has kindly accepted the Organising Committees's invitation and we are looking forward to an interesting and challenging presentation.

The 2011 forum is being supported by staff from institutions across Queensland and Northern New South Wales, and is made possible with the generous support of our Sponsors. The Sea World Resort and the Gold Coast provide a magnificent setting for us to meet, to network and to "let the sunshine in" on our work as this dynamic sector continues to grow, react and develop.

I look forward to seeing you in the sunshine, on the Gold Coast in 2011.

Jeff Holmes
Chair, AAIR 2011 Forum Organising Committee

Information about the forum, including call for abstracts, registration and venue/accommodation details can be found here: <http://leishman-associates.com.au/AAIR2011/>

NEWSLETTER NOTES

1. Longitudinal Assessment for institutional improvement

New Directions for Institutional Research (NDIR) is a quarterly sourcebook published by Jossey-Bass under the sponsorship and policies of AIR. Each NDIR issue focuses in detail on a specific topic relating to institutional research, planning, or higher education management in general. The latest topic and release is *Longitudinal Assessment for institutional improvement*. Unfortunately, it's not available on-line so you may have to convince your library to subscribe or do so yourself [here](#).

2. The Rise of Institutional Effectiveness: IR Competitor, Customer, Collaborator, or Replacement?

This is the latest IR Applications paper from AIR. Abstract: As Institutional Research (IR) moves beyond its fiftieth anniversary, a new profession, called Institutional Effectiveness (IE), is emerging. In some respects, IR and IE are similar. IE, though, appears to be taking the leadership role. What are the structure, purpose, and responsibilities of IE offices? What are the implications for the IR field and its practitioners? How can Presidents and Provosts determine which of the two will best meet their institutions' needs for evidence-based decision-making, assessment, continuous improvement, and accountability? A decade ago, Peterson (1999) proposed that IR's future challenge would go beyond institutional improvement to helping facilitate its redesign and transformation. In the current climate, IR itself may be being redesigned and transformed. <http://airweb3.org/airpubs/120.pdf>



3. Young people in an economic downturn

This LSAY briefing paper considers how young people fared in previous downturns, and discusses how structural labour market changes over the past 20 years have affected the three million young Australians aged between 15 and 24 in the first 12 months of the most recent economic downturn. It also looks at the qualitative evidence from respondents in the LSAY on how they perceived the economic downturn to have affected their work and study intentions in 2009, exploring the themes arising. <http://www.lsay.edu.au/publications/2350.html>



4. Research in Higher Education Vol 52 #3

Research in Higher Education (RIHE) is the official peer-reviewed academic journal of AIR. RIHE is intended for those concerned with the functioning of postsecondary education, including two-year and four-year colleges, universities, and graduate and professional schools. Volume 52, #3, May 2011 is now available:

- *Meta-Analysis in Higher Education: An Illustrative Example Using Hierarchical Linear Modelling*
Nida Denson and Michael H. Seltzer
- *Technology Commercialization Effects on the Conduct of Research in Higher Education*
Joshua B. Powers and Eric G. Campbell
- *Gender Gaps in Collegiate Teaching Style: Variations by Course Characteristics*
Thomas F. Nelson Laird, Amy K. Garver and Amanda Suniti Niskodé-Dossett
- *Disciplinary Differences in Student Ratings of Teaching Quality*
David Kember and Doris Y. P. Leung
- *An Investigation of the Contingent Relationships Between Learning Community Participation and Student Engagement*
Gary R. Pike, George D. Kuh and Alexander C. McCormick

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/110234765238/>

5. Reform of skills and workforce capability

Skills Australia has released the report 'Skills for Prosperity – a roadmap for vocational education and training'. The report recommends a major overhaul of the VET system in order to help raise productivity, and address skills challenges that threaten future economic growth and prosperity.

Download the report [here](#)

6. Review of funding for schooling

Submissions which closed at the end of March are not on the Review of Funding for Schooling [website](#) as yet. The latest communiqué of 29 April is there and you can see the Australian Education Union submission [here](#)

7. What's ATEM up to?

The May issue of ATEM Matters is out and available. Download it [here](#).

Thanks to Gavin Moodie for the following three items:

8. Commonwealth supported load 2008 - 2011

The most up to date statistics on Commonwealth supported student load have been released to the media, but are apparently not published on the web. Accompanying Evans' [media release of 23 April 2011](#) titled 'Record number of Australian students at university' is a pdf the minister distributed to media which has a useful table produced by DEEWR called 'Growth in undergraduate Commonwealth supported places (EFTSL) in public universities' which shows actual Commonwealth supported load at each public university for 2008 and 2009 and estimated load for 2010 and 2011.

9. Higher education applications and enrolment statistics

It is getting pretty poor when standard public statistics and reports have to be prised out of the Australian Government by freedom of information requests, but that is apparently the lengths to which one has to go under current Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Chris Evans.

Applications - student demand

DEEWR has recently published on its web site DRAFT undergraduate applications preliminary data for 2011 - DRAFT because the department released the report in response to a freedom of information request that hasn't had final clearance. DEEWR reports that applications for admission thru State tertiary admissions centres increased by 1.8% for admission in 2011, a considerable slowing in growth on the 8.1% reported over the previous period. The reduced increase in applications is due to a combination of an increase in demand from school leavers of 4.1% and a fall in demand from non school leavers of 1.7%. In comparison, from 2008 entry to 2009 entry during the height of the global financial crisis applications for school leavers increased by 2.5% while applications for non school leavers increased by 5.6%.

For some unexplained reason DEEWR doesn't publish its figures on applications with its other statistical reports but in its section on higher education reports
<http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Publications/HEReports/Pages/PreliminaryData11.aspx>

1st half year student load

DEEWR has also published its DRAFT first half year student statistics 2010, also in response to a freedom of information request. DEEWR reports big increases in proportions of student load above the national average (6.3%) in engineering and related technologies (11.1%), health (10.9%) and natural and physical sciences (8.0%). This demonstrates that student demand and thence enrolments are strongly influenced by employment demand, not by students' choosing easy options as advocates of the sciences, technologies, engineering and mathematics claim when they lose their share of student load.

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Publications/HEStatistics/Publications/Pages/Student2010HalfYear.aspx>

10. Higher education report 2009

DEEWR has finally published its Higher education report 2009, over 4 months late and again in response to a freedom of information request. Much of the information has been overtaken by the introduction of student entitlements and other changes, but the report remains a useful account of the year's developments and publishes new information on HELP debts. The department reports at page 61 that as at 30 June 2009 there were around 1.37 million persons with a HELP debt, totalling around \$18 billion with the average debt being around \$13,000. The department expects that 22% of HELP debts wont be repaid, mainly because HELP debts unlike credit card debts and almost all other debts are cancelled on the debtor's death.

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Publications/HEReports/Pages/HEReport2009.aspx>

11. NCVER launches VOCEDplus

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research has published VOCED, the international database for vocational education and training research, since 1989. Recently it launched VOCEDplus which has been broadened to cover research and statistics on education for work and beyond and thus includes higher education as well as vocational education and training. VOCEDplus now includes reports by the former Australian National Training Authority, some of which haven't been published previously, historical reports on Australian vocational education as well as much international material. The search function has also been improved in VOCEDplus.
<http://www.voced.edu.au/>

Thanks to Rob Sheehan for the following three items:

12. Workforce Capabilities – Case Studies

South West Sydney Institute has produced a new set of case studies, entitled 'Improving workforce capabilities: How TAFE NSW – South Western Sydney Institute effectively assists organisations to develop their workforces'. The case studies (written up by John Mitchell) offer detailed insights into partnership and service approaches that work for both industry and employers. The case studies explore in some detail the kind of partnership practice that South Western Sydney Institute is into, and demonstrates a joined up approach across the Institute to securing valued industry outcomes. The case studies may be found at ::
<http://www.swsi.tafensw.edu.au/files/ES/iwc.pdf>



13. For Skillaroos Followers

The Skillaroos were announced in November 2010 and there are now short bios available on the team members from the WorldSkills Australia website. You can read the bios, and keep up to speed with the Skillaroos preparation for WorldSkills 2011, here:
<http://www.worldskills.org.au/skillaroos.php>



14. Australian Skills Quality Authority Website Up and Running

In case you missed you missed it, the new VET regulator (and sister to TEQSA) has launched its new website. The Australian Skills Quality Authority, as she is known, has issued some fact sheets on the transition from state-based regulation in NSW, ACT and NT. Fact sheets for Queensland, Tassie and SA are due soon, as are those for the non-referring states (Victoria and WA). You can access the fact sheets [here](#), and then take a browse around ASQA's new digs.

15. TEQSA Legislation

Speaking of TEQSA, if you're up for some heavy reading, the TEQSA bill is available [here](#).

16. AUSSE Research Briefings

ACER publishes research briefings on the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE). Recent ones are:

- Dispelling myths: Indigenous students' engagement with university
- Monitoring risk and return: critical insights into graduate coursework engagement and outcomes
- Working on a dream: Educational returns from off-campus paid work

<http://www.acer.edu.au/research/ausse>

17. Tackling the Retention Challenge: Defining and Delivering the Unique Student Experience

Academic Impressions Diagnostic for March-April focuses on retention, always an issue that challenges most institutions.

Download it [here](#)



18. Apprentice Completion Rates

New estimates from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) show that apprentice completion rates are higher when the data takes into account recommencements or 'employer swapping'. Individual-based completion rates for apprentices finds that around one-quarter of trade apprentices recommence their training with a new employer during their apprenticeship, which can have an impact on completion rates.
www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2357.html

19. Review of Student Income Support Reforms

The DEEWR Review of Student Income Support Reforms website is [here](#). Submissions to the review have closed and are not on the website as yet but you can view:

- Universities Australia's submission [here](#)
- National Union of Students submission [here](#)
- TAFE Directors submission [here](#)



Photo: Susan Stewart/ iStockphoto

20. My School, PISA and Australia's equity gap

Do schools determine the performance of students, or do students determine the performance of schools? An analysis by Chris Bonner with some relevant statistics.
<http://inside.org.au/equity/>

21. The shifting demographics and lifelong learning

This paper was presented at the International Symposium on Lifelong Learning for Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Development: Developing a Research Agenda for the Asia-Pacific in Hong Kong, 12-13 January 2011. Tom Karmel suggests that there are four implications of an ageing population: the need to improve labour force participation and productivity; the ageing population will provide a 'demographic dividend' because there will be fewer young people to school; increasing life expectancy changes the arithmetic of the return to investments in human capital and makes investment in the middle-aged more attractive; and ageing populations in developed countries provide an opportunity for developing countries through the export of labour services.
<http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2358.html>

22. Who are You Inviting to Your Graduation Ceremony?

An interesting little article on students at Worcester Polytechnic Institute protesting against the invited speaker to their graduation ceremony,
<http://www.postcarbon.org/blog-post/319561-university-vows-to-lock-out-students>

Thanks to Kathie Rabel for these NZ items:

23. Education Bill brings greater accountability in international education

...As is the title of this NZ Government media release
<http://feeds.beehive.govt.nz/release/education-bill-brings-greater-accountability-international-education>



24. NZ Tertiary Education Commission

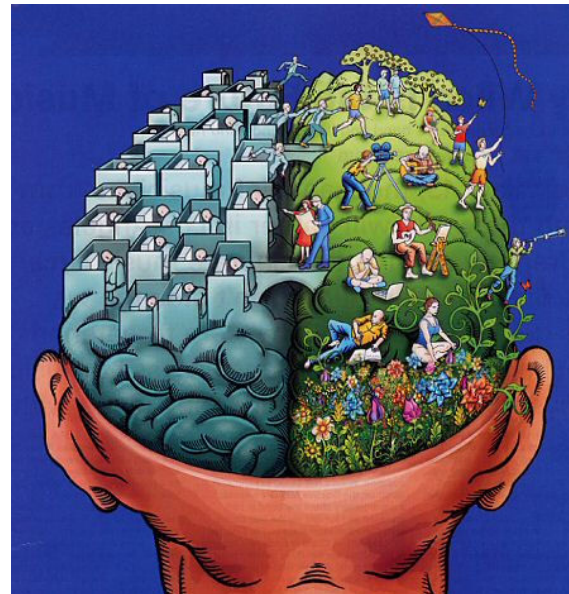
A number of changes announced at the TEC.
[New Chief Executive](#) Belinda Clark
[New Organisation Structure](#)

25. NZ Changes to compulsory student services levies

<http://feeds.beehive.govt.nz/release/changes-compulsory-student-services-levies>

26. The Talents of a Middle-Aged Brain

Maybe this New York Times blog article is just a bit of reassurance for a some of you out there in e-AAIR 'readerland'. Read it [here](#).



TOOLS

Right Brain Versus Left Brain Creativity Test

http://www.wherecreativitygoestoschool.com/vancouver/left_right/rb_test.htm

Analytic Quality Glossary

This site provides an international analytic a glossary of issues related to quality in higher education

<http://www.qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary/>

TOOLS CONTINUED

esect employability toolkit

The Employability Tool and Resource Kit is an interactive website that is intended for use by anyone who is interested in employability and higher education.

www.qualityresearchinternational.com/esectools/

AUQA benchmarking tool.

AUQA has provided benchmarking tools on attrition and completion for NSA-HEPs which may also be useful to SAs as the SA data is included.

<http://auqa.edu.au/qualityenhancement/nsai>

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

For more opportunities make sure you check out <http://www.aair.org.au/pages/training-development>



Association for Tertiary
Education Management

ATEM Leadership as Intervention Webinar: Starts 17 May 2011, 6 Week online program 11.30am to 1pm (Australian DEST)

Participants will gain skills in applying the ARIES framework – Attending, Reflecting, Inquiring, Expressing and Synthesising - in making sense of and intervening with contentious problems. The ARIES framework is described in Don Dunoon's book, *In the Leadership Mode*. Further details [here](#)



Public Lecture: The Great Brain Race: Rise of the Global Education Marketplace 30 May 2011

6pm – 7.30pm

LH Martin Institute, Melbourne

In this public lecture, Professor Ben Wildavsky will discuss his new book *The Great Brain Race: How Global Universities Are Reshaping the World* (Princeton University Press, 2010), which explores the transformation of the global academic landscape in recent years. For more information see [here](#).

Initial VET Teacher Training: A Portrait In A Bigger Picture

31 May 2011

2.00pm – 3.00pm AEST

The webinar will focus on data and other information about the range of initial and other generic teacher preparation courses offered in both VET and higher education. It will look at course characteristics as well as the characteristics of those taking them. It will also consider how current approaches might be improved and, hopefully, draw on the experiences of webinar participants themselves. To register go [here](#)



GCA Survey Manager Information Forum 23 - 24 June 2011

Melbourne

Graduate Careers Australia (GCA) will be holding a two-day Survey Manager Information Forum. This is an opportunity for those of you who manage or work with the Australian Graduate Survey (AGS) to hear about AGS developments, plans, proposals, CEQ data analysis and to share ideas with your colleagues from around the country. For further details, please contact Darren Matthews Darren.Matthews@graduatecareers.edu.au

Annual Institute on Best Practices in Institutional Effectiveness 10 – 13 July 2011

Baltimore, Maryland

The focus of this year's institute is on the assessment of student learning. The Annual Institute, sponsored by the Center for Applied Research, is a three-day intensive training designed to help higher education institutions develop and follow effective strategies to accomplish institutional effectiveness at their institutions. Special attention is paid to accomplishing reaffirmation of accreditation, learning outcomes (establishing, measuring, and using results), program and unit reviews, general education competencies and assessment, strategic planning, and effective assessment methods for academic programs, administrative units, and student services. Attendees leave with a notebook full of templates, processes, presentations, and educational tools to use to accomplish their work. It is strongly recommended that institutions bring a team to the institute if possible.

<http://cpcc-cfar.com/institute-general-information/>

**Certificate in Institutional Research
ONLINE Courses
Florida State University**

The Certificate in Institutional Research at Florida State University is an online graduate-level certificate program, consisting of 18 credits of graduate-level course work, designed to provide academic and professional development opportunities for institutional researchers, administrators, graduate students, and faculty from all areas of higher education. Participants will enhance their knowledge and understanding of Institutional Research, have the opportunity to explore national databases, and apply their knowledge to practical applications.

All courses can be taken individually or as part of the Certificate. Courses are completely online. For more information, please visit <http://coe.fsu.edu/institutionalresearch> or email ircertificate@coe.fsu.edu.

Advice received is that “there are no additional fees related to being non US citizens”.

Course offerings:

**Introduction to Institutional Research:
June 27—August 5**

This course provides an introduction to the theoretical and practical application of institutional research as a discipline in higher education. Institutional research has direct applications to many, if not all, administrative and strategic activities within the institution. Course content addresses local, state, and national issues in institutional research, examines organizational, administrative, political, and ethical issues in institutional research, and exposes students to national databases.

Data-Driven Decision Making for Institutional Research:

June 27—August 5

This course will provide an introduction to the theoretical and practical application of data-driven decision making for institutional researchers. This class focuses on how to collect, analyze, review, and present data and information to decision makers. Higher education leaders are tasked with making hard decisions for which they have incomplete, inaccurate, misleading, subjective information. This class provides structured tools and approaches to help institutional researchers develop materials that will assist higher education leaders make data-driven decisions.

POSITIONS VACANT

Also check out the Opportunities page on the AAIR website
<http://www.aair.org.au/pages/opportunities>
If you know of any relevant jobs and would like AAIR to advertise them, please email the text to info@aair.org.au

**Statistician
Data Management & Analysis Centre
Faculty of Health Sciences
University of Adelaide**

Closes 27 May
<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/jobs/current/16737/>

**Senior Information Analyst/
Information Analyst
University of Sydney**

Closes 29 May
Details at <http://www.aair.org.au/pages/opportunities>

**Various positions
Australian Skills Quality Authority**

Various positions available
<http://www.asqa.gov.au/about-us/employment.html>
Closing date 30 May 2011

A few positions advertised within Planning and Institutional Performance at UniSA as follows:

**Performance Analyst
Planning Officer
Performance Support Officer
University of South Australia**
Closing date 31 May 2011

**Senior Institutional Performance Analyst
University of South Australia**
Closing date 3 June 2011
http://unisa.nga.net.au/bin/fnt_jobs_list_filter.cfm?

**What could you
have
contributed
to the
newsletter
to fill this
space?**

FOR THE PODDIES, VODDIES AND BLOGGIES

1. Turning Trash into Educational Toys

At an Educational Resources Expo last year, I was disappointed to see a many stalls focused on 'tools' for preparing students for NAPLAN tests or electronic technology eg interactive whiteboards. The latter might seem strange, but I often teach in an environment (like the majority of classrooms around the world) where there is no access to electronic technology. Hence, I found this TED talk particularly inspiring - 'Arvind Gupta shares simple yet stunning plans for turning trash into seriously entertaining, well-designed toys that kids can build themselves while learning basic principles of science and design'. I have also created and used 'games' to help students learn. What interactive exercises via 'toys/games' have you used to get your message across?

View the 15min video [here](#).

2. Let's use video to reinvent education

Yes AAIRies, data is relevant in this TED talk, in that it is becoming the key for teachers to know more about how their students learn and who to focus their attentions on ie 'at risk' students. Salman Khan (a former a hedge fund analyst) talks about how and why he created the remarkable Khan Academy, a carefully structured series of educational videos offering complete curricula in math and, now, other subjects. He shows the power of interactive exercises, and calls for teachers to consider flipping the traditional classroom script -- give students video lectures to watch at home, and do "homework" in the classroom with the teacher available to help.

View the 20min video [here](#)

Or maybe you just want to go straight to the [website](#) and brush up on your stats via one of the tutorials.

3. Maralyn Parker on My School

Former teacher and influential education writer Maralyn Parker is interviewed by Richard Aedy on her book 'My School - What Every Parent Needs To Know', as part of ABC's Life Matters. Hear it [here](#).

4. League tables determine universities' research funds

Following on from the release on the ERA earlier this year, Robert Williamson presents a response on behalf of the Australian Academy of Science.

Hear it [here](#).

5. Solving Australia's Skills Crisis

ABC radio with Fran Kelly hosted a panel interview following the release of the Skills Australia report. Panel members were Philip Bullock (Chairman, Skills Australia), Nicholas Wyman (CEO, WPC Group) and Martin Riordan (CEO, TAFE Directors Australia)

Hear it [here](#).

6. Hans Rosling and the magic washing machine

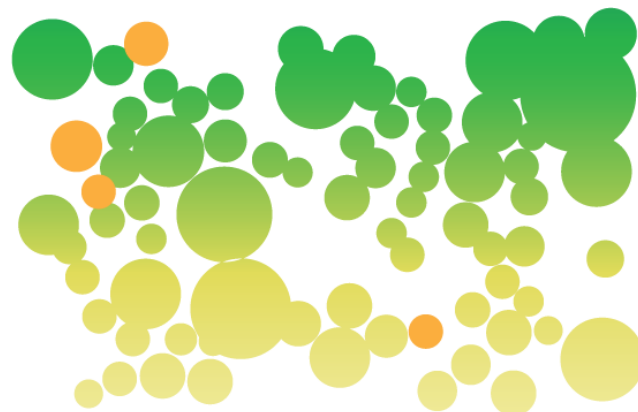
I've given you some Hans Rosling before, and here he is again. It's debatable as to whether I should have put this into 'Distractions' but he does use a few stats, including newly designed graphics from Gapminder.

View the 9mins video [here](#)

7. Let my dataset change your mindset

An older Hans Rosling which I hadn't seen until recently. Great stuff! Talking at the US State Department in the summer of 2009, Hans Rosling uses his fascinating data-bubble software to burst myths about the developing world.

View the 20min video [here](#).



8. Information is Beautiful

Well didn't all AAIRies know that? It happens that 'Information is Beautiful' is the name of a blog by data journalist and design whiz David McCandless. Recently he's put an update of 'Snake Oil?', an interactive visual of the scientific evidence of popular health supplements.

<http://www.informationisbeautiful.net/>

9. Zen Habits

You may pick up some tips in this blog called ZenHabits. For example, *The Really Simple Way to Get Work Done* is [here](#). And no, unfortunately someone else is usually not going to do your work for you!!

DISTRACTIONS

Bonobos: our close cousins

In this TED talk including never-before-seen video, primatologist Isabel Behncke Izquierdo shows how bonobo ape society learns from constantly playing - solo, with friends, even as a prelude to sex. Indeed, play appears to be the bonobos' key to problem-solving and avoiding conflict. If it works for our close cousins, why not for us? See the 7min video [here](#)

If you're interested in knowing more about bonobos and having a delightful read, I highly recommend the book '[Bonobo Handshake](#)' by Vanessa Woods.

Connection to AAIR? – Vanessa Woods is Jacquie Leong's daughter. Jacquie, an AAIR member, worked at ANU for many years and recently finished there. I dare not say 'retired', as for anyone who knows Jacquie, she always has multiple things on the go, including her own fabulous creative writing. All the best Jacquie in your endeavours post-ANU!!



Photo L-R: Brian, Jacquie and Vanessa

PS If you read the book, you'll know who Brian is

No Chicks No Excuses

No Chicks No Excuses is the brainchild of Leslie Cannold, Jane Caro and Catherine Deveny, three women in public life who got tired of event organisers saying they couldn't find good women speakers.

<http://nochicksnoexcuses.com.au/?source=cmail>

LIGHT RELIEF

Lies, damned lies and statistics

In a brilliantly tongue-in-cheek analysis, Sebastian Wernicke turns the tools of statistical analysis on TEDTalks, to come up with a metric for creating "the optimum TEDTalk" based on user ratings.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Totz8aa2Gg>

AND JUST REMEMBER...

It's not because things are difficult that we dare not venture. It's because we dare not venture that they are difficult.

Seneca (1 BC–AD 65)

The meaning of life is a life of meaning.

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Deadline for submissions to the June AAIR e-Newsletter is Tuesday 7 June 2011. Send items to editor@aaair.org.au

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