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FROM THE PRESIDENT

LET'S GET A LITTLE BIT SIGGY...

As reported in the last newsletter, the 2017 SIG Forum was a great success, but what are the SIGs and what happens in these groups? A SIG is a special interest group organised around a particular topic or functional area of mutual interest where members of the group discuss topical issues, produce solutions, or just share knowledge. Apparently, the term was first used in 1961 by the Association for Computing Machinery, which is 'an international learned society for computing' that was founded in 1947 – or so says [Wikipedia](#).

For AAIR, our SIGs have evolved over time, and we have the following active SIGs:

- [Data Warehousing, Business Intelligence and Analytics](#)
- [Load Management](#)
- [Government Reporting](#)
- [Surveys and Evaluations](#)

Each AAIR SIG is organised and lead by an AAIR member.

From time to time, various members of the organisation have proposed new SIGs – a notable example was the establishment of the Load Management SIG, which was spearheaded by Jeff Holmes (who was at the time at QUT).

I vividly remember the early stages of the Load Management SIG, as it coincided with my first involvement with AAIR back around 2009.

We have also talked about the possibility of a Benchmarking and Ranking SIG, and a Quality Assurance SIG, but we haven't yet progressed these too far. As a not-for-profit organisation run primarily by volunteers, we rely on the support of members to take on some of these tasks and offer these services to our members. It is therefore not through lack of interest, but most people just don't have the time to devote to what is needed to run a SIG.

If you're interested in coordinating either the Benchmarking and Ranking SIG or the Quality Assurance SIG and getting them off the ground, please contact our Vice President, Don Johnston by email to don.johnston@scu.edu.au.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our outgoing SIG Coordinator, Michael Cudmore (Load Management). Thank you for stepping up and embracing the opportunity to increase your involvement with your professional association.

If you aren't part of a SIG but think you might like to be involved, or you just want some more information, please visit the [SIG page](#) on our website and [sign up to our SIG mailing list](#).

If you see any gaps in the represented SIG topics, and you'd like to propose a new SIG that we haven't covered, please do not hesitate to get in touch with either [me](#) or [Don Johnston](#). We can support you in establishing a new group by offering you advice and assistance to get it off the ground.



Kathie Rabel
AAIR President



EDITORIAL

Welcome to the September 2017 edition of *The Institutional Researcher*.

September has been dominated again by the Higher Education Reform Package. Four months after being released it finally made its way to the House of Representatives for debate (week starting September 11) with much opposition. The legislation passed the House of Representatives after two solid days of debate and it is now anticipated the package will be debated in the Senate the week commencing the 16th of October. Universities Australia has been vocal, as expected, via social and mainstream media and used the release of the annual [OECD Education at a Glance](#) report to benchmark Australia's position in a global higher education market.

Aside from this, the sector has been busy with plenty of activity internationally, rankings news, and we found out a new data visualisation technique via the use of Data Comics. If you are interested, the [Emerging Genre of Data Comics](#) published by IEEE Computer Graphics and Applications is a good starting point.

The Editors have been fortunate again to snag a rather excellent interview for the [Institutional Researcher's Corner](#) – [Martin Hanlon](#) from UTS. And, there is the usual selection of books, resources and reports.

Happy Reading.

Tracy and Monica

SECTOR NEWS AND VIEWS

Higher Education Reform Package

Science, technology, engineering and maths courses would be hardest hit by the Government's proposed cuts to university funding. New analysis by [Universities Australia](#) has confirmed the STEM disciplines will take the biggest hit of any field of study if the legislation passes, bearing 35% of the brunt of the \$1.2 billion in cuts. Listen to this [podcast](#) to find out more.

Australian Education Minister Simon Birmingham has issued a tough warning to universities to [focus on efficiency and value for money or risk losing public trust and goodwill](#). He said he welcomed new [research](#) from former Australian National University economics and business dean Keith Houghton, which showed that universities had room to boost productivity to more than recoup the \$1.2 billion efficiency dividend which the government wants to cut from universities over the next four years.

And speaking at the *Australian Financial Review's Higher Education Summit* on 30 August, Simon Birmingham has dismissed vice-chancellors' opposition to his proposed budget cuts for higher education, saying that universities can find efficiency savings to allow for the shortfall. Birmingham said while university funding has been increasing over recent years, costs have been growing at a slower rate.

In *Commentary from Carlton*, Andrew Norton asked: [Has the demand driven system largely achieved its objectives?](#) Norton adds that the 40 per cent attainment target "itself shows that long-term planning is difficult ... It would not be sensible to try to push enrolments up just to meet the target. It would be better for enrolments to stabilise or decline (they have grown slowly since 2014)".

Margaret Gardner, Chair of Universities Australia, has warned that universities may be [at risk of collapse if the government's funding cuts go ahead](#). "A number of institutions in higher and vocational education will be at greater risk, creating uncertainty for their staff and students, the communities they serve and the markets in which they operate," said Professor Gardner. The risk was that federal policy would assume the sector could "always be made to wear cuts, that overseas student revenue would cover any shortfall, and that our

universities' strong global performance could be taken for granted."

Tim Cahill, Associate Director from KPMG writes in the [Financial Review](#) that, universities can think more creatively about efficiency: "It is impossible to think about efficiency as a universal measure, and the efficiency solution might not be as simple as reducing university funding. There are a host of alternative policy, governance and funding mechanisms that could be looked at. For example, given all universities effectively are governed by the same regulatory mechanisms, there are opportunities for shared services models across procurement, finance, recruitment, reporting and so on".

Don Edgar, foundation director of the Australian Institute of Family Studies calls on us [to refocus the education debate](#) and to "call out to those who claim having a degree is an individual luxury. Ask them who is teaching their kids. Who is doing their accounts? Who is caring for them in hospitals and surgeries? Or inventing new technology, new jobs, new futures for this country?" After all, the notion that education is a private rather than a public good feeds on a false dichotomy. It is both, writes Mr Edgar.

The tit for tat continues as universities were scrutinised for spending big on advertising, marketing and promotions whilst "[crying poor](#)," writes Stefanie Balogh in *The Australian* on 9 September. As universities run a fierce campaign against higher education reforms that would impose efficiency dividends on the sector, it can be revealed they spent \$300 million on campaigns, slogans and sponsorship last year while competing for domestic and international students, staff and research partners. The spending was \$30m more than in 2015, an increase of 11 per cent. Andrew Norton ([via Twitter](#)) reminded them that 1 per cent of revenue on promotional spending is "not excessive for unis in competitive markets".

And as we get ready to publish the September newsletter, the [Turnbull government's \\$2.8 billion higher education reforms are expected to head to the Senate](#) after the changes were on track to pass their first parliamentary hurdle in the lower house. Education Minister Simon Birmingham will need the support of 10 of the 12 Senate crossbenchers if the Coalition is to be successful in its third attempt at reining in higher education costs and making the sector more sustainable.

Other news



As noted in the Editorial, the release of the [2017 OECD Education at a Glance Report](#) has been used by the sector to highlight the value of education and the comparative rates other countries invest. Writing for *The Conversation*, Megan O'Connell from the Mitchell Institute [argues](#) that spending more money on education does not necessarily yield better student outcomes.

Universities in Australia and New Zealand are investing more in their advancement operations – specifically fundraising and alumni engagement – amid growing institutional awareness of the “powerful impact” of philanthropy, according to a new report. The Charitable Giving to Universities in Australia and New Zealand Survey [report](#) reveals that surveyed institutions increased their overall investment in fundraising and alumni relations by 11% and 15% respectively, in 2016 over 2015.

Study Melbourne has become the latest organisation to issue a counter-Trump message to international students, launching its [“There’s a place for you in Melbourne”](#) campaign last month.

As well, *The Australian* has reported that Australia’s \$20 billion international education industry is transforming the face of southern state capitals. According to ABS figures, [Melbourne’s CBD is facing the biggest cultural transformation in decades](#) as higher education and cheap student accommodation attract mainly Chinese students in record numbers. This soaring demand is also flowing into Adelaide’s CBD, where almost 30 per cent claim Chinese - ancestry, only slightly behind central Sydney in total numbers.

From [The PIE News](#) - A bill has been passed by the Australian parliament allowing [student education outcome data](#) to be made public which can be used to judge the performance of education agencies overseas. The bill, proposed by the Department for Education and Training, was [introduced to improve transparency](#) between education agencies and consumers, but since its announcement it has faced backlash from agents globally. This data was previously only available to institutions.

The [Good Universities Guide 2018](#) has been released (registration required to access online guide). Bond University has topped the Guide again in terms of overall quality. Bond University and the University of Notre Dame take the top two positions on the overall experience measure. The Guide also compared graduate outcomes and starting salaries. A summary is provided under the

Graduate Outcomes and Employability section. Media outlets summarised outcomes around [employment outcomes](#) and [graduate salaries](#).

In his keynote address to the Australian Financial Review Higher Education Summit, Navitas CEO Rod Jones said that [major changes in higher education are on the way](#) which will affect the structure of courses. “Do we need a three-year degrees? How do you structure the learning [students] need to get into the workforce? I think we’ll see more development of shorter courses”.

This month’s decision by Fair Work Commissioner BD Williams to cancel the enterprise agreement between Murdoch University and all three relevant unions could have [profound ramifications for the sector and universities’ rights to hire, fire and restructure academic and professional staff](#), writes Stephen Parker, former Vice-Chancellor at the University of Canberra and lead higher education partner at KPMG. The decision may prove to be a turning point in the history of Australian universities as their traditional business model buckles under numerous stresses and strains. It will allow Murdoch, and other universities that choose to follow suit and can satisfy the public interest and other conditions of section 225 of the Fair Work Act 2009, the freedom to renegotiate restrictive elements within their enterprise agreements.

Campus Morning Mail’s feature story (September 3) was an interview with [Professor Shirley Alexander](#), DVC Education and Students at UTS. Professor Alexander discusses UTS’s Faculty of Transdisciplinary Innovation and the institution’s response to the evolving education market which include campus re-development and mentions their [learning.futures](#) strategy.

Campus news



Reported in [Campus Morning Mail](#) (August 29), Southern Cross University has a new logo, with the constellation gone, colours changed and ‘SCU’ replaced with the full name.

The Australian National University will partner with CSIRO in the [Autonomy, Agency and Assurance Institute](#), which will assemble “the best researchers from around the world” to address “complex problems around artificial intelligence, data and technology and managing their impact on humanity”. The institute will be based in the

engineering and computer science faculty and run by Genevieve Bell, who has recently joined ANU from Intel.

Student surveys

In the UK the weighting of the National Student Survey (NSS) in their Teaching Excellence Framework has been halved. [The Guardian](#) reported on the importance of this student voice adding the “survey now feeds into the teaching excellence framework, meaning it’s driving how university teaching quality is measured. In future years it may even dictate how far they can raise their fees in line with inflation”. Gwen van der Velden discussed this in [WONKE](#) this month raising concerns about tracing the ‘student voice’. Additionally, Michelle Morgan’s [WONKE](#) analysis of the NSS changes noted the importance of understanding student expectations not just the student experience.

VET news

Executives at embattled TAFE SA say they are determined the organisation will remain as one of four training centres in Australia for licensed aircraft maintenance engineers, [despite a serious bungle that has left students in limbo](#). About 90 students have had parts of their licenses suspended after an audit in April by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority found students at the Parafield Airport campus were not assessed to the correct standards and exams had raised questions as to whether they were taught the right skills. An ongoing CASA investigation is expected to be completed this month.

Rankings

QS has a new university ranking for [graduate employability](#). The [University of Sydney](#) has been ranked fourth in the world for graduate employability, coming in ahead of leading institutions such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge University and the University of Oxford. The University of Melbourne is closely behind with a rank of seven, followed by the University of NSW at 36, the University of Queensland at 49 and the University of Technology Sydney at 69.

The release of the 2017 [Academic Ranking of World Universities](#) or ARWU, saw some changes from previous years:

- United Kingdom’s Cambridge University has overtaken the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of California, Berkeley to make it into the top three.
- Among five universities breaking into the top 100, Erasmus University in the Netherlands (73rd) and Cardiff University



in the UK (tie 99th) are making their first appearance.

- This year the number of top 500 universities has risen for Asian countries such as China, Japan and South Korea, with 57, 17 and 12 universities in the top 500 respectively.

Angel Calderon, in [University World News](#), examines the results of the recent Times Higher Education (THE) Latin American university rankings and highlights the dominance of private universities – a consequence of under-investment in public higher education in the region.

Angel has also undertaken a comparative review the 2017 Academic Ranking of World Universities with the 2003 ranking of the top 500 universities, pointing out [significant geopolitical shifts in higher education](#).

Commentary from Miguel Antonio Lim in [University World News](#) (September 8), [How do university rankings maintain their influence?](#) Lim asks "...how these rankings can be so influential given the relative scepticism with which they are perceived by academics".

[University of Sydney Business School hurtles to top of BOSS 2017 MBA rankings](#). For the first time, the University of Sydney Business School's MBA has taken out the top ranking in the biannual [BOSS MBA rankings for 2017](#), knocking off two-time leader the University of Queensland Business school which ranked second. Melbourne Business School fell from second to third place, after losing the coveted top spot in 2013.

In the 2017 THE league table released on 6 September, [Australia is clearly punching above its weight](#), with eight universities in a global top 200 ranking, but funding cuts could make the sector fall behind rapidly rising Chinese institutions, warns Phil Baty, THE Rankings Director: "Australia's leading institutions are already falling behind peers in mainland China and Hong Kong, which receive high and sustained levels of state funding".

All up, [35 of Australia's 40 universities made the THE rankings](#). Out of these, 11 jumped ahead, 14 held steady and 10 fell compared with their results last year. Six Australian universities made it in the global top 100:

- University of Melbourne (32)
- Australian National University (48)
- University of Sydney (61)
- University of Queensland (65)
- Monash University (80)
- University of New South Wales (85)

Meanwhile in New Zealand

THE World University Rankings results: In [New Zealand](#) three universities have slipped (University of Auckland, Lincoln, and Victoria), three have stayed the same (Otago, Canterbury and Massey) and two have improved in this year's global rankings (AUT and Waikato).

University entrance requirements are likely to be tightened because too many students cannot write well enough. The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) will [reassess which NCEA standards count towards university entrance \(UE\) literacy requirements](#), but keep numeracy requirements as is, despite school leavers lacking the maths skills needed for science and engineering study.

With a looming election - A reduction in net migration by up to 22,000 international students was among the [key policies detailed by New Zealand's main political parties](#) as they outlined their positions on international education in the lead up to next month's general election.

Sexual harassment and assault on campus is also gaining attention in New Zealand, with University of Otago students hitting out at the institution, saying there is [not enough support for rape survivors and staff don't take the issue seriously](#).

[Sky News NZ](#) (September 5) reports on the New Zealand's Labour Leader Jacinda Ardern who has [threatened to crack down on Australians studying at universities in New Zealand](#) if Kiwis are forced to pay more across the Tasman. "If they lock us out of tertiary education we'll lock them out here," Ms Ardern said during a Newshub election debate, to applause from a studio audience.

Around the world

The Trump administration announced (via Twitter of course) that it will [end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program](#), or DACA, through which about 800,000 undocumented immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children have gained the right to work and temporary protection against the risk of deportation. The administration said it will phase out the program, which was established by President Obama in 2012, after a six-month period to give Congress a chance to act on legislation that could restore the program.

A number of Chinese returnees have found the reality of coming home after obtaining an overseas degree is falling short of their dreams of a better job and higher salary.

[According to a recent report](#), Chinese students feel the employment edge they expect is being lost to savvy and more resilient domestically educated peers.

According to the BBC and Bloomberg, the [UK is considering allowing EU nationals to freely visit the country](#), however working, studying or settling would require permission. An earlier report from *The Times* said EU citizens would be allowed to travel to Britain to look for a job without applying for a work visa. Companies wanting to hire EU workers would have to apply for sponsorship permits, however.

New figures emerging from the UK suggest that previous concerns of large numbers of overstayers using the student visa route [have been inflated](#), and 97% of international students leave the UK after their studies.

Britain's leading universities are [introducing their own entrance exams](#) in a move which threatens to undermine the authority of the new A-levels. This is the [first time that students received their results for the new A-level courses](#), which were designed by former education secretary Michael Gove as part of a drive to raise academic standards in schools. But several of the elite Russell Group universities have signalled that they can no longer rely on A-levels to select the brightest students and are instead bringing in a raft of new assessments.

[Indian international student body shrinking – AIU report](#). India has the second largest higher education system in the world, with only China eclipsing its 33 million students. But despite liberalisation of rules allowing universities and colleges to recruit as many as 15% of their students from overseas, only 30,423 international students enrolled in Indian institutions in 2016, a drop of nearly a thousand on 2015 (31,126).

Interesting modern perspective on academic conferences in *The Guardian*. [Expensive academic conferences give us old ideas and no new faces](#) shares insights from a survey of one particular large international conference which indicated the event is a "waste of time and money" and calls for different initiatives to be applied to academic conferences.

Academic scholarship and publishing, campus libraries

Canadian universities are struggling with the [Federal Court of Canada's recent copyright decision](#) against York University. The court ruled that York could not rely on its fair dealing policy and per-use licensing to



copy works as a part of course packs, but must pay millions of dollars in licensing fees to [Access Copyright](#), which sells blanket copyright licenses to organisations. [York has announced that it will appeal](#) the decision.

In mid-August, a major [academic publisher in the United Kingdom](#) originally caved in to China's official censors and blocked online access from that country to more than 300 articles in a leading academic journal – *The China Quarterly* or *CQ*. The boycott and general condemnation of what some interpreted as “capitulation” ultimately led to [Cambridge University overruling the publisher's decision and reinstating the articles in defiance of the Chinese demands](#). Kent Anderson, founding editor of *The Scholarly Kitchen*, discussed the implications of this issue in terms of [censorship and academic freedoms](#).

In *University World News*, Bruce Macfarlane noted that “The wider threat to academic freedom within the academic community is self-censorship: skating over or simply avoiding controversial or taboo subjects in teaching or research that might cause offence”.

[Campus Libraries Are Centers of Information, But Not of Diversity \(At Least Among Librarians\)](#). A report from the non-profit US group [Ithaka S+R](#) analyses employee demographics and director perspectives at a group of member institutions of the [Association of Research Libraries](#) (ARL). It's a partial but useful snapshot of how much work the research-library community has left to do to achieve meaningful diversity and equity at all levels of the hierarchy.

Finally, from the *Scholarly Kitchen*, [Should Peer Review Change?](#) Viewpoints from nine scholars who explore how we might approach peer review as volume and scope of academic publications increase.

BIG DATA, ONLINE LEARNING, ANALYTICS & TECHNOLOGY

According to a learned work colleague, Data Comics are the new Infographics (am I always the last to find out about these things?). Recently published in *IEEE Computer Graphics and Applications*, [The Emerging Genre of Data Comics](#) presents an interesting overview. More examples can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Education publishing giant [Pearson](#) has announced it is partnering with leading mobile language app Duolingo to develop

[mobile language learning content](#) for students in higher education.

[Giving Data Meaning: Students Should Have a Say In What Analytics Tell You About Them](#). The desire to understand and improve learning has led many educators to consider the value and utility of this information. But what can these data traces actually tell us about the students who left them, and how do we translate them into meaningful action?

['Smart' Campuses Invest in the Internet of Things](#). In the US, campuses are examining strategies for investment in, and better use of data. Forward-thinking CIOs are exploring the potential of IoT technologies in higher education and heading off challenges along the way.

[Colleges Embrace Data Analytics to Improve Student Retention](#). Also in the US, universities tap data-driven insights to develop personalised interventions that boost student retention. Examples from Temple University and the University of Nevada detail the use of analytics to detect early warning signs.

From LinkedIn, Bernard Marr reviews the [eight best data visualisation tools in 2017](#). Tableau, QlikSense and Plotly are included in the review.

Stephen Few's *Visual Business Intelligence Newsletter* introduces a new chart that bursts the boundaries of what we can ordinarily do with bar graphs and dot plots into the realm of thousands of values. Known as the [Zvinca Plot](#) it uses coloured data points rather than bars and proposes some advantages over wrapped graphs.

Higher education institutions ought to be prioritising digital literacy skills revolving around digital savvy, creativity, and complex thinking, as employers increasingly value these qualities in college graduates. The World Economic Forum predicts 35% of the top ten skills employers say they want will change by 2020, and will increasingly include these competencies, according to a new report from the New Media Consortium: [Digital Literacy in higher Education, Part 2: An NMC Horizon Project Strategic Brief Volume 3.4](#)

GRADUATE OUTCOMES AND EMPLOYABILITY

In [The Conversation](#) this month, former Australian VC Stephen Parker examines the

rolling out an alternative education route in the UK. Degree apprenticeships [were launched in the UK in 2015](#). These are designed to bridge the gap between technical skills, employment and higher education. Parker therefore asks if the Australian higher education system is still “fit for purpose”.

According to the Good Universities' Guide, [The University of Notre Dame achieved the highest level of graduate employment at 80 per cent](#), with an average \$60,000 starting salary. Curtin University recorded the second highest level of graduate employment in WA at 67 per cent, also with an average \$60,000 starting salary. Edith Cowan University recorded lowest rate of graduate employment, with 62 per cent. The average starting salary is typically around \$56,000.

And, perhaps ironically, [the universities that are the hardest to get into may not be delivering the best experience](#) or employment outcomes for their students, according to the Guide. The University of NSW, Sydney University, the University of Melbourne and the University of Western Australia scored below the national average for overall experience and nationally, UNSW, Sydney and UWA ranked among the bottom seven in this category.

A US [Future of Work Symposium](#) hosted at Stanford University with no questions about whether automation is going to take over jobs—but rather when, and how education should respond. A few [consistent themes](#): Online courses will supplement but not completely replace in person courses; arts and creativity will be in high demand; Inclusiveness is imperative to success.

Government policy should [encourage regional and rural students to attend university soon after school and study full time on-campus to maximise chances of success](#), a leading education analyst has told the Coalition's review into rural education. This could include addressing longstanding concerns about the adequacy of the government's income support program to enable more regional students to afford the move to study on campus, according to Andrew Norton, director of the Grattan Institute's higher education program.

Roll-out of the [My eQuals](#) program is picking up pace. The ANZ scheme gives students and graduates digital versions of their academic records for them to share with employers. In addition to universities already operating eight universities are scheduled to go live in September-October, ACU, ANU, JCU, University of Otago, UniSA, USQ, USC and Victoria University. A further nine will follow



over the summer with all 46 participants due to be live in a year.

LEARNING & TEACHING

Blackboard Inc has announced [the availability of the Djambarrupynu version of Blackboard Collaborate](#), its virtual collaborative learning solution. The announcement was made at the Teaching and Learning Conference 2017, Blackboard's annual event that brings together the education communities from Australia and New Zealand (held 6-8 September in Darwin).

The University of Queensland is expanding its suite of MOOCs, [with a four unit micromasters in business leadership, via partner edX](#). The four subjects can all be taken for free, but for \$1500 people who complete them, plus a "capstone assessment" receive a verified certificate. The increase in micromasters, established by MIT and offered in Australia by ANU, University of Adelaide, Curtin and UQ does not seem to be abating.

University of Sydney VC Michael Spence has outlined plans to offer all undergraduates undertaking a three-year bachelor degree the option of a [four-year combined degree to be known as a bachelor of advanced studies](#). According to Spence in his piece in *The Australian*, "In addition to providing discipline area expertise, this course will ensure that students are taught core skills that will set them up for success in any industry, in any country. For some, this will include delivering an ambitious research project; for others, an experience in industry to bridge to their future".

And also in *The Australian* a report on the [casualisation of university positions](#). Less than one per cent of new university positions since 2005 have been ongoing teaching and research jobs, with two-thirds of staff now in insecure employment, National Tertiary Education Union President Jeannie Rea says.

[Are We Recreating Segregated Education Online?](#) EdSurge highlighted growing inequalities in the US education system despite the increase in digital coursework and the expansion of business models from companies like [Duolingo](#) and [Coursera](#).

[Open access textbooks](#) are emerging as the latest tool for keeping students engaged as educators seek to tackle persistent retention rates that have seen one in five first-year students drop out during the past decade. Experts frequently cite financial pressures as a key factor contributing to student attrition,

while student groups continue to criticise the often hefty prices they pay for textbooks. Also of interest, James Arvanitakis wrote about this in *The Conversation* back in June reminding us of the [challenges of first-year students](#) overwhelmed by the costs.

[Harvard Professor Tells Students They Should Come to Class](#). One year after asking students to watch videos instead of coming to class, Harvard University's largest course has asked students to attend all lectures in person. Last year David J. Malan, the Gordon McKay Professor of the Practice of Computer Science, made attending lectures optional. While there was no decline in learning outcomes for the year, student feedback suggested personal engagement was significant factor they looked for.

RESEARCH

On August 22 Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Australian Research Council (ARC), Professor Sue Thomas announced that the ARC has selected Clarivate Analytics [to provide citation information](#) for the 2018 round of [Excellence in Research for Australia](#). Clarivate (previously Thomson Reuters Intellectual Property and Science), provides the bibliometric base for the Academic Ranking of World Universities.

The National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE) has announced its [2017 Research Grants Program projects](#). Thirteen projects have been announced out of 55 submissions with priorities on student financial support; graduate outcomes; equity implications of the increase in postgraduate education; and the impact of local communities on equity participation.

[Supervising international research students](#). Nita Temmerman's blog in *University World News* notes adjusting to life and study in another country can be daunting for international students, and a positive student-supervisor relationship can make all the difference.

[Making a difference: Outcomes of ARC supported research](#). The Australian Research Council has released this publication as a snapshot of some of the research outcomes derived from research projects funded by the Australian Government through the Australian Research Council (ARC) National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP). The publication includes projects generating economic impacts, advancing environmental science and management and developing innovative technologies.

Virgin and student travel and booking agency Campus Travel are combining to [assist women](#) in STEM. Academics and PhD candidates can submit a 500-word proposal about research that requires travel. The winner will receive \$5000 worth of flights and \$1000 for accommodation.

The University of Queensland is set to [maintain its dominance of research commercialisation with a string of new ventures](#) that include health drinks, vaccines and non-pesticide crop protection. UniQuest, the research commercialisation company at UQ, now generates more licence income and holds greater equity in its start-ups than rivals at the Group of Eight universities combined.

The [PhD has been under a lot of scrutiny](#) over the past few years. The fact most PhD graduates do not obtain long-term academic careers has led to the view that we are producing too many. *The Economist* magazine has observed that the length of the PhD, the uncertain job prospects and the lack of a clear financial advantage of a PhD over a professional masters suggest that this may not be a smart career choice.

(MORE) REPORTS AND RESOURCES

EDUCAUSE

Trend Watch 2017: Which IT Trends Is Higher Education Responding To?

Bryan Alexander, Susan Grajek and Joanna Grama (EDUCAUSE Center for Analysis and Research)

EDUCAUSE is in its third year of identifying the influence of major trends on the IT strategy of US colleges and universities. This year's list included 36 trends in the management and delivery of IT services, personal devices and personalised environments, data and analytics, teaching and learning, security and risk, and the Internet of Things. These trends have been highly visible, widely discussed, and broadly covered in publications, blogs, and presentations. But what is actually in place at our institutions, and which types of institutions are most affected by—or leveraging—IT trends that occupy so much mindshare? This report presents data on their actual influence on IT strategy in higher education.



The top 3 trends with the greatest influence (over 61% of colleges and universities) are: (1) continued complexity of security threats, (2) student success focus/imperatives, and (3) data-driven decision making.

Notes: Need to be able to log-in to EDUCAUSE to access PDF, review of trends available at [Inside Higher Ed](#)



Going for the higher fruit: Universities post peak public funding

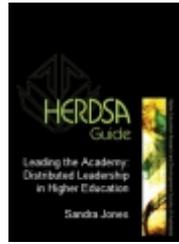
Peter Coaldrake and Lawrence Stedman (This [paper](#) is the basis for current QUT VC Professor Coaldrake's IFE Grand Challenge Lecture on 11 August at QUT)

The metaphor of a "crossroads" has been used several times in higher education, here and in other countries. But there is no doubt that in 2017 we are at a critical juncture with the relationship between government and universities. Society has never needed universities to be more effective and pervasive, but government is clearly equivocal in its support. The former US Ambassador to Australia Jeff Bleich has referred to this as an era of "runaway technology and walk-away government", when unprecedented challenges are confronted by the rise of populism, government dysfunction and widespread disillusionment, not only with the capacity of government and democratic institutions to make a positive difference, but also manifest in the form of distrust of expertise.

[Digital Transformation in Higher Education Report](#)

Navitas

In July 2017, Navitas Ventures conducted an exploratory study to gather a range of perspectives on digital transformation in higher education. The study's participants represent groups who are central to digital transformation in higher education, as leaders and facilitators of change and as those who will be affected by digital transformation. They were drawn from a diverse group of stakeholders, including university leaders, Ed tech founders and students.



[Leading the Academy: Distributed Leadership in Higher Education](#)

Professor Sandra Jones, RMIT

The focus of this HERDSA Guide is upon future leadership possibilities that focus on the need for formal leaders to be active facilitators for the future - to support, encourage, facilitate, guide, mentor, and recognise the leadership contribution of the many experts who comprise higher education institutions. The Guide brings research into the theory and practice of a distributed leadership. The experience of a distributed leadership approach in Australian higher education institutions forms the empirical research. The Guide captures the developmental, sequential process of this research to identify conceptual and organisational development.

Key findings from the latest [Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership ITE Data Report](#) – an annual report on the state of teacher education

Key findings in the new analysis include:

- Teacher education student numbers grew by 30 per cent between 2006 and 2015.
- There was UG retention of 77 per cent, 1 per cent lower than the mean for nine undergraduate programs.
- Commencing students who entered a course on the basis of ATAR of 81 or higher had an 84 per cent retention rate, 5 per cent higher than the all-ATAR entrants while 73 per cent of teacher education commencers with ATARs under 50 continued their course. There was a 75 per cent retention rate for people not admitted on an ATAR.
- Of recent undergraduate degree completers 82 per cent were satisfied with their course, in line with the 2015 all-programmes figure.
- In 2015 94 per cent of new teachers with an undergraduate degree were employed, with 70 per cent teach full-time.

For members of ATEM, the October issue of [Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management](#) (JHEPM) is now available.

ON THE MOVE

QUT has announced their new VC – commencing February 2018. **Professor Margaret Sheil AO** is currently Provost, deputy to the Vice-Chancellor and the Chief Academic Officer, at the University of Melbourne. **Professor Peter Coaldrake** will leave the university after 15 years' service at the end of 2017. *Fun Fact: Professor Coaldrake is currently Australia's longest serving VC.*

Marcia Devlin moves from DVC (Learning and Quality) at Federation University Australia to take up the position of RMIT Associate DVC (Education) and Executive Director of RMIT Studios on 1 November.

Flinders University VC **Colin Stirling** has had his contract extended to seven years from January 2018 – he is currently half-way through his original five-year appointment.

Human Resources director **Nick Rogers** is leaving James Cook University.

David Reeve is confirmed as Chief Innovation Office at Macquarie University, after acting in the position for six months.

Music producer and engineer **Mark Opitz** has joined ANU's music school as a visiting fellow where he will work with staff and students in ANU's new recording facility. Mr Opitz has worked with bands including Cold Chisel, AC/DC and the Divinyls.

UWA has announced **Owen Davies** is its new chief marketing officer.

Geraldine Mackenzie officially took over as vice chancellor at the University of Southern Queensland this month.

ANU is advertising the new role of provost to be the VCs senior deputy. And **Monash University** is inviting "expressions of interest" from Monash staff interested in becoming president of the university's Malaysian operation (A five-year appointment).

Former NSW education minister and deputy Nationals leader **Adrian Piccoli** will quit politics next week to lead a new education research centre at UNSW.

Tim Dodd is leaving the *Australian Financial Review* to become the Higher Education Editor at *The Australian*

Jenny Roberts will become DVC Students at Charles Sturt University in November. Ms Roberts will move from CQU where she is DVC student experience

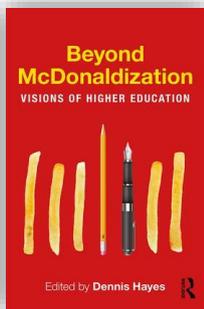


Jodieann Dawe is to head Flinders University's revamped research entity taking on responsibility for IP and commercialisation. Jodieanne joins from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research, where she has managed research and engagement since June 2015.

Vanessa Lemm will become executive dean of the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences at Flinders University in January.

At Monash University **Zlatko Skrbis's** title is changed from pro vice-chancellor (graduate education) to senior pro vice-chancellor (academic).

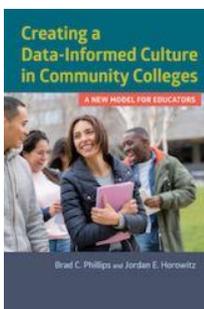
BOOK REVIEWS



[Beyond McDonaldization. Visions of Higher Education](#)

Dennis Hayes

Beyond McDonaldization provides new concepts of higher education for the twenty-first century in a unique manner, challenging much that is written in mainstream texts. This wide-ranging text discusses arguments surrounding the industrialisation of higher education, with case studies and contributions from a wide range of international authors

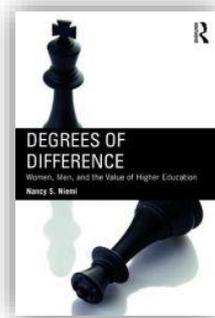


[Creating a Data-Informed Culture in Community Colleges: A New Model for Educators](#)

Brad C. Phillips and Jordan E. Horowitz

The authors offer a research-based model and actionable approach for using data strategically at community colleges to increase completion rates as well as other metrics linked to student success. They draw from the fields of psychology, neuroscience, and behavioral economics to show how leaders and administrators can build good habits for engaging with data constructively

Interview with authors in [Inside Higher Ed](#) (September 14)



[Degrees of Difference: Women, Men and the Value of Higher Education](#)

Nancy S. Niemi

This volume investigates the dissonance between the supposed advantage held by educated women and their continued lack of economic and political power. Exploring the relationship between higher education credentials and their utility in creating political, economic, and social success, *Degrees of Difference* identifies ways in which gender and academic achievement contribute to women's and men's power to shape their lives. [Interview with author in Inside Higher Ed](#)

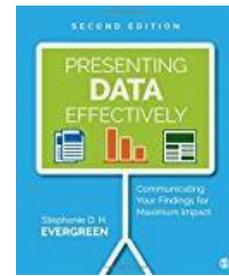
[Higher Education Strategy and Planning: A Professional Guide](#)

Tony Strike

Containing chapters on each of the major functions or capabilities of strategic planners, critiques of global policy trends, framework examples and explanations of the main league tables both in the UK and globally, the book is divided into five main parts:

- Context and Positioning;
- Integrated Planning;
- Centrality, Co-ordination and Connection;
- Analytical Capacity and Capability;
- Insight and Information.

Compact book review from Ant Bagshaw (WONKHE) – who offers a relevant critique of this UK publication (but relevant in light of workplace disruption occurring across Australian campuses).



[Presenting Data Effectively: Communicating your Findings for Maximum Impact](#)

Stephanie D. H. Evergreen

Now in striking full color, *Presenting Data Effectively*, Second Edition by Stephanie D. H. Evergreen shows readers how to make the research results presented in reports, slideshows, dashboards, posters, and data visualizations more interesting, engaging, and impactful. The book guides students, researchers, evaluators, and non-profit workers—anyone reporting data to an outside audience—through design choices in four primary areas: graphics, text, color, and arrangement.

POSITIONS VACANT

Seeking another opportunity in Institutional Research in Australia? Try our [Higher Education Jobs](#) webpage for current vacancies in the profession.

If you are seeking an international career change see our American colleagues [AIR Careers](#) page.

LOOKING FOR SOME TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT?

See our [Training and Development](#) webpage focused on training for institutional researchers.



LOOKING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION CONFERENCES AND EVENTS?

Here is a selection of upcoming events (or past events) that may be of interest. See our [Events/Fora](#) webpage for more national and international events.

[Australian International Education Conference](#)



10-13 October, 2017, Hobart Grand Chancellor, Hobart, Tasmania

AIEC 2017 will explore this landscape in all its variety by embracing our 'diversities'. Whether it be people, cultures, languages, places, partnerships, education sectors, pathways, delivery models, approaches to learning and teaching or careers and employment, we will look critically at what we are achieving.

[ATEM Admissions Conference 2017](#)

'Higher Education Admissions - A Vintage Approach for a Modern Blend?'

19-20 October, National Wine Centre, Adelaide

The ATEM Admissions Conference is now one of the most important conferences for University Admissions and Recruitment staff. Registrations open shortly and we expect up to 100 people to attend from across Australia.

A great selection of [Speakers](#) are already confirmed on the [Program](#) and the [Call for Papers](#) is now open.

View the [2017 draft program](#)

[Service Improvement and Innovation in Universities](#)

19-20 October 2017, Pier One, Sydney Harbour

This year's conference will sharpen the focus on innovation; what innovation is in

tertiary education and skills for creating innovation.

[ITS in Tertiary Education](#)

24th and 25th of October 2017, CQ Functions, Melbourne, Victoria

With a focus on achieving operational excellence during successive transformations, the **ITS in Tertiary Education** conference will showcase leading case-studies and strategies to deliver world-class university ITS in a global service environment.

[Higher Education Standards Seminar](#)

3 November 2017

As part of the NSW/ACT Region ATEM Conference program, this session will cover views from the two peak Standards bodies, the private education sector, two university Academic Boards, the importance of partnering with students, and the role of professional support staff. Two Q & A sessions in the morning and afternoon will give participants full scope for questions.

[Australian Association for Research in Education \(AARE\) Conference 2017](#)



26-30 November, Hotel Realm Canberra, Australia

The theme of this year's conference is 'Education: What's politics got to do with it?' with a focus on the importance of educational research and its ability to effect positive change both in Australia and internationally.

[28th ISANA International Education Association & 22nd Australia and New Zealand Student Services Association Conferences](#)

5-8 December 2017, STAR, Gold Coast, Australia

The theme for the conference is **Widening Perspectives of Student Success**.

The conference will give us the opportunity to explore and discuss the many factors that contribute to the overall student success, both within and outside the classroom. There will be an exciting program of speakers, workshops, social activities and lots of networking opportunities. Delegates will be able to share successful strategies, engage with

key stakeholders and develop important partnerships.

[ASCILITE 2017 Conference](#)



4-6 December 2017, The University of southern Queensland, Toowoomba, Australia

The ASCILITE conference is the leading annual conference for practitioners and researchers committed to best practice and excellence in the use of technologies for teaching and learning in the tertiary sector throughout Australasia.

[Australian Council of Deans of Education Vocational Education Group 3rd Annual National Conference](#)

7-8 December 2017, TAFE Queensland Brisbane South Bank Campus

Hosted by the Australian Council of Deans of Education Vocational Education Group, the 3rd Annual Conference on VET teaching and VET teacher education brings together a range of VET workforce practitioners, policy makers and researchers from across the nation. Together, these committed vocational educators will advance and share the knowledge and projects they are generating to drive the future quality of VET teaching in Australia.

Save the date:

[HERDSA: \(Re\)Valuing Education](#)

2-5 July, 2018, Adelaide, Australia

HERDSA offers an annual international conference on topical teaching and learning issues with opportunities to meet colleagues with similar interests, exchange ideas about teaching and learning and learn about current developments from experienced researchers and practitioners.



INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCHER'S CORNER

Five questions with Martin Hanlon, UTS



What is your job title?

Director, Planning and Quality Unit at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS).

I also have the honour of being the current chair of the Australian Network of University Planners (ANUP).

Briefly, how would you describe your role in terms of your place in your institution?

I'm sometimes referred to as the 'PDRI [Plan Do Review Improve] guy'. Day to day I try to work on transitioning the university's view of the unit as primarily a data vending machine (credit to my team for that nice analogy!) to one of a trusted business partner. And seeking to solve resourcing issues and remove roadblocks that hinder the unit's ability to provide the services our clients expect.

From your perspective, what are the emerging areas of interest in institutional research?

- a) International comparative analysis. In recent years, I've been involved in some collaborations which have given me a global perspective on IR practice. Higher education is now a global commodity, and yet our IR practice in each country tends to remain fairly independent. I think we should start approaching our IR from a collaborative multi-national perspective. Sure, our education systems may be different but there is much commonality in our contexts and missions. There is also an opportunity for IR practitioners to collaborate globally to offer alternative approaches to those adopted by

university rankings and ratings agencies for comparing performance at institutional and national levels.

- b) Developing alternative mechanisms for gathering regular student feedback before survey fatigue, social media and micro-credentials kill off the beloved survey!
- c) Developing predictive models which link together institutional planning in all its flavours: e.g. load planning, curriculum planning, workforce planning, space planning, revenue planning.

What do you believe will be the future priorities for institutional research?

Building on my answer above, comparing government-sanctioned national frameworks for measuring institutional performance in higher education. To my knowledge no country has developed a fully comprehensive approach which measures the teaching and learning, research and external engagement performance of each institution in an integrated framework. (If I am wrong let me know!) Developments in the UK are worth watching as they roll out their Teaching Excellence Framework to complement their Research Excellence Framework.

Complete this statement: *In my role, I can't operate effectively without ...*

My amazing Executive Assistant Leigh! And the impressive team of professionals in the unit with deep expertise across the range of the unit's functions. And a few short black coffees and a few laughs each day.

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The Institutional Researcher Issue 10, October 2017

A great way to get involved with the AAIR community is to share your thoughts and ideas. Do you have something you would like to share with your IR colleagues? The next AAIR Newsletter will be published in late October. Please send your contributions to the editor@air.org.au by Monday 16th of October 2017.



AAIR on Twitter [@AAIRaustralia](https://twitter.com/AAIRaustralia)



Monica Chen and Tracy Creagh
The Institutional Researcher Editors.

