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FROM THE PRESIDENT

What is institutional research?

Almost every one of us working in the institutional research profession can recall a story of being in a social setting and being asked, 'So, what do you do?'

We might give stammering, perhaps even humorous responses to that question. We often talk about data, numbers, and supporting the institution with planning and decision making, which is often met with a neutral response and the conversation moves on. Sometimes I avoid referring to my actual role when talking outside of our environment, and instead occasionally just say, 'I work at Otago Polytechnic'. This generally elicits a response of, 'oh nice, what do you teach', at which point I go back to square one and talk about data and numbers, because people tend to look blankly at me when I talk about institutional data. It is at about this stage that the face of the enquirer becomes lifeless, and I realise they are not passionate about data like I am.

While IR is now more than 40 years old, I like Cameron Fincher's 1978 definition of IR as 'organisational intelligence'. As institutional research (IR) professionals, we have a proud and strong tradition that we all have a responsibility to own.

We all have different foci for the work we do— institutional research, analysis, information, reporting, evaluation, effectiveness and performance. We are also placed in many different parts of an institution—strategic planning, enrolment management, information technology, finance, human resources.

Creating our professional identity is a diverse and complex process. Across the Australasian tertiary and higher education landscape, you will see that at most institutions there are strong connections, if not formal organisational arrangements, that unite the people in the three analytical functions of:

1. institutional reporting, strategic planning
2. enrolment and financial management, outcomes assessment
3. programme review, accountability, accreditation, and institutional effectiveness.

These constitute the golden triangle of institutional research that dominates most of the practice of IR not only throughout Australia and New Zealand, but worldwide.

We support our own professional identity in many ways, including:

- having a clear understanding of the processes of our own institution – from application to graduation
- getting to know and love our IT team
- learning the positives and negatives of our institution's data systems
- demonstrating and using our statistical and research expertise
- knowing how IT and IR interact
- knowing who our data creators and data keepers are
- being excited about institutional data

Above all:

- be patient
- be encouraging
- be confident
- be creative

And most importantly, make use of the networks and opportunities that AAIR creates for all of us to be strong, confident professionals who create the institutional intelligence. Being a member of AAIR provides a breadth of opportunities, so please keep an eye out for our continuing series of short **AAIR e-Vents** and our longer **ConvAAIRsations** that will be taking place shortly.

Mā te wā
(See you later)

Stuart Terry
AAIR President



EDITORIAL

In this issue of our now bi-monthly newsletter, I invited Dr Anand Kulkarni to sit in our Institutional Researcher's Corner. You may recall that, in the Jan/Feb issue, Anand summarised an article on the need for resilience rankings, which he published in University World News in December 2020. I encourage you to read his article 'Resilience rankings, a new lens?' on our blog.

You may also notice that I have made some changes to one of the interview questions. Instead of asking interviewees about 'the emerging areas of interest in institutional research', I have decided to ask them to outline 'the key skills, capabilities, and knowledge required for institutional research moving forward' in Question 3. My hope here is for AAIR members to identify our strengths, as well as explore the need for development at both professional and personal levels. Question 4 has been also been modified to include a perspective on COVID-19.

PS: I don't know about you, but April has not been easy for me personally. So, in closing, I wish to acknowledge those who offered me their ears, shoulders, and shelters, to help, me live through the storms. Thank you! You know who you are.

Lizzie

SECTOR NEWS AND VIEWS

Purpose and community: at the core of universities. If an organisation gets them right they strengthen each other. If

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion are aimed at improving the community and making all members feel valued, and feel they have a secure future in the community, then what is happening in relation to the second big thing – purpose? I see the inexorable rise of Strategic Planning as part of an effort to strengthen and clarify purpose. And purpose is much harder to sort out than community. Community is hard in practice, yes. But in theory, at least, all you really need is the "golden rule" – do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Most cultures have a rule like this. But different communities' purposes are wildly various. In general, higher education provides both purpose and community to individual students. Students like being enrolled with their peers, and they like working towards clear and achievable academic goals. (Merlin Crossley, CMM, 22 Apr).

Vaccine rollout – Concern over international student return: The AU\$40 billion (US\$31 million) a year international education sector is warning it cannot afford to lose a third academic year before international students return to Australia as universities hope rollout delays of COVID-19 vaccines will not further restrict intakes. Western Sydney University Vice-Chancellor Barney Glover said he hopes the vaccine rollout will not affect a programme designed for the safe return of international students in modest numbers. A 'safe corridors proposal' for the return of overseas students to New South Wales would start with small numbers and progressively increase to a maximum of up to 600 each fortnight, pending federal government approval (Anna Patty, the Sydney Morning Herald 18 Apr).

How to help the vast uni workforces that managements under-count: The NTEU wants universities to report the number of people they employ and give causals continuing jobs. A select committee of the Senate is inquiring into job security (no the inquiry into unlawful underpayment of workers (CCM March 10)) and the National Tertiary Education Union submits that two-thirds of university employees do not have continuing employment. The NTEU gave evidence to the committee yesterday, as did representatives of the Casualised, Unemployed, and Precarious University Workers group. "Universities have largely

concealed the true nature of their workforce composition through vague reporting, and usage of outdated Full Time Equivalent measures," the NTEU argues (CMM, 14 Apr).

Tech unis pitch to commercialise research: The ATN+N supports the idea of mission-driven research (CMM March 2 and April 9) in its submission to the government's university commercialisation paper. And it wants the new model to be the main game, to 'align with or supersede other initiatives', specifying the Science and Research Priorities and the Modern Manufacturing Initiative. ATN+ also wants a change to what rates with the Australian Research Council, calling for, "an adjustment of measures of research excellence in activities such as Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) to emphasise innovation and commercialisation (CMM, 12 Apr).

TEQSA warns of "an emerging cyber security" risk: The Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency says there is an "emerging cyber security risk" for Australian HE institutions. TEQSA says it has alerted providers to code being inserted into websites that redirects users to a cheating service site or links to such. There are also lures to fake scholarships and essay contests, "designed to harvest original student work that the commercial cheating services then on-sell." (CMM, 12 Apr).

Foreign student enrolments 210,000 lower than expected: Australia's universities have enrolled 210,000 fewer international students this year than expected, with the loss of AU\$1.8 billion (US\$1.4 billion) in income. More than 17,000 jobs have already disappeared from campuses across the higher education sector. To put the figure in context, according to government data, there were 442,000 international student enrolments in higher education in Australia in 2019, the latest figure available (Geoff Maslen, UWN, 9 Apr).

TEQSA reports uni failings on international student English admission: The agency's compliance report states it, "did not find evidence of widespread systemic failures in relation to English language admission standards." However, it states some "governing bodies," "lacked oversight of admissions practices and could not be confident that admissions policies and procedures were being applied consistently." Other issues TEQSA identifies, "to address risks of non-compliance with the Higher



Education Standards framework, include: "some providers had not reviewed or benchmarked their admissions practices for a considerable period of time"; providers using "waiver" interchangeably with "equivalence" in admitting students who do not meet "documented" English language requirements for courses; not using student-performance "to monitor, test and adjust" admissions policy; and "did not track poorly performing student cohorts and academic misconduct issues back to the student entry pathways, country/region of origin." (CMM, 6 Apr).

QUT achieved a 2020 surplus: Vice Chancellor Margaret Sheil told staff yesterday the university had a \$25m surplus for last year – way better than an originally feared \$100m deficit (CMM July 15 2020). Professor Sheil attributed the result to stopping capital works and IT projects, a pause on recruitment, investment returns and savings from the Enterprise Agreement variation. The university has committed to no forced redundancies this financial year, but advised staff that 174 staff positions may be made redundant, while 102 new roles are created (CMM October 13) – \$38m savings will go to 2021-22 budget shortfalls (CMM, 1 Apr).

Minister Tudge sets-out what's next for international education: In a speech at RMIT this morning the education minister will set Semester One next year as the expected start of international student arrivals "in large numbers." Mr Tudge's text states that by mid-year there will be "more clarity" on vaccination preventing transmission and any system of vaccination certificates. He adds that while he has discussed plans for earlier student quarantine with state and territory governments and university leaders, "to date (I) have not received any concrete proposal." The minister also wants less reliance core country markets and more diversity in what internationals study. And he points to meeting markets through on-line delivery and/or hybrid learning models for full courses and/or micro-credentials "at different price offerings." (CMM, 31 Mar).

VET numbers awful as usual: The September 2020 apprentice and trainee stats are out – they aren't great, but it is hard to tell how bad they are, compared to the last pandemic. September quarter commencements in 2020 were 23 per cent down on third quarter '19, with overall in-training numbers 4 per cent lower. The year-on-year drop was nearly 19 per cent. But this is not new, continuing a trend in-place long before

COVID-19. Commencements for the year to September last were down 25 per cent on 2016, completions were 22 per cent lower and total in-training numbers were 4.8 per cent under September '16. (CMM, 31 Mar).

Ten big questions about how universities are run raised by David Shoebridge, a Greens MP in the NSW upper house asks the minister: what oversight is there of public universities management; does the government know a previous coalition ministry "watered-down" provisions for independent oversight and accountability of university executives; whether staff and student representation is reduced on governing bodies; what has the government done re universities using commercial-in-confidence as a shield; are staff and students consulted on staffing, curricula and expenditure; why is there no state and/or federal legislation requiring consultation; which faculties/schools in universities have the highest average international enrolments over five years; as above for casuals teaching international students; why statistical and financial details previously required in annual reports are no longer included; are there measures to require public universities to conduct due diligence of finances? Answers from Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education Geoff Lee are due on April 14 (CMM, 30 Mar).

Students in 2020; grim and beared it: The findings are from a new survey by study-support platform, Studiosity. The main reason why students thought of stopping study was lost motivation (21 per cent) followed by disappointment at not having the campus experience they expected and feeling unsupported in study. Students in Victoria led for a loss of motivation (27 per cent), closely followed by Queensland 26 per cent) and WA (20 per cent). There is no apparent pattern by age, gender or where they were in their programme. But there is a common factor shared by 50 per cent of those who contemplated quitting but didn't. "They knew they needed to push on, work harder and not give up." (CMM, 30 Mar).

Two Auckland polytechs see biggest jump in domestic enrolments in years: The national polytechnic, Te Pūkenga, says domestic enrolments at its 16 polytechnics have jumped 20 percent. Meanwhile, universities' domestic student numbers are up nine percent on the same time last year, a figure equivalent to about 9000 fulltime students. The increases mean some institutions will exceed the government funding they agreed with the Tertiary Education

Commission and will have to ask for more money (John Gerritsen, RNZ, 29 Mar).

Universities enrol to meet demand: UG commencers are up 7 per cent (11 000 people) according to "early data" from universities. Federal education minister Alan Tudge says the biggest increases are in courses where fees are reduced. However, Learned Readers emerge from deep in the policy weeds to suggest that universities are happy to enrol-up, because some Commonwealth funding for student places is better than none and that some have recruited strategically in IT and engineering, to compensate for the absence of internationals (CMM, 26 Mar).

International ed 2.0 from Swinburne U: Swinburne U opened a Hanoi "location" in 2019 and now announces one in Ho Chi Minh city, starting September. Swinburne academics in Vietnam and Australia will teach school leavers, business, ICT and media degrees. There's a pathway programme to Melbourne. Capacity on the new campus is 1200 students (CMM, 24 Mar).

Short and suite: Curtin U "Credentials": It's a product, for professionals to "up-skill, cross-skill and re-skill". Credentials will, "support learners who seek to continue their professional development, training, and industry-focused study in shorter formats, delivering 'just in time' learning tailored to their professional needs or lifestyle." And Credentials are indeed major on the micro, with some being one-day, in-person for \$599. The first 14 are "in five curated themes" and can stack into a grad cert of professional practice. This extends Curtin U's ambitious plan to expand what, and how, it teaches (CMM, 24 Mar).

Not even near green for go on international arrivals: The Group of Eight has taken the hardest cash hit from the exclusion of international students but has complained the least of the vocal lobbies, regularly announcing that universities must follow medical advice. This is an embrace of reality – neither PM nor premiers is going to open-up to internationals while there is a risk of importing the pandemic. Plus, critics would be quick to complain if student were allowed in while Australians in numbers are still unwillingly offshore (CMM, 23 Mar).

Hiding from (not under) the QILT: When the QILT undergraduate experience survey comes out many universities take cover. Especially institutions which market on their resources and reputation



but whose students reveal they are unimpressed with the quality of their learning experience. It is unconvincing, but understandable. Perhaps university policy-wonks warn management about methodological flaws with the surveys – despite their being professionally produced by the eminent (ANU owned) Social Research Centre. But that can't be right – many universities that do badly on QILT, celebrate their achievement in the Times Higher and QS rankings, both of which include surveys not as rigorously targeted as QILT (CMM, 23 Mar).

[No change at the top for university leaders as men outnumber women 3 to 1:](#) Australian university leaders are nearly three times more likely to be a man than a woman. Of 37 public university chancellors, just 10 are women (27%) and 27 (73%) are men. It's exactly the same for vice-chancellors: 10 are women and 27 are men. Together, this means men hold 54 of the 74 top jobs in Australian higher education (Marcia Devlin, the Conversation, 8 Mar).

[Forget the ideal worker myth. Unis need to become more inclusive for all women \(men will benefit too\):](#) When Australian universities have introduced more flexible and progressive arrangements the results have been positive. For example, "rules" on who gets a car park (such as accessibility based on caring responsibilities), promotion and lecture start times have been rewritten. Increased participation and productivity are among the many benefits that flow from more meaningful work and opportunities for women (and men) across the hierarchy. However, universities need to go further. Academic and professional promotion and reward structures need to measure and recognise the impacts of all the work academics and professionals do beyond traditional measures. Measures of social, environmental, cultural and economic impacts on communities, industries, government and media are vital to ensure we are contributing to equity in society (Leisa Sargent & Elieen Baldry, the Conversation, 8 Mar).



[QILT student survey results: providers waiting to learn how much gloom was in the zoom:](#) Institutions are studying their own performance in the Student Experience Survey for 2020, part of the federally funded, and in all ways essential Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching. But some are nervously waiting on a release of the complete survey, to compare how they went against the system averages, and direct competitors. The market to watch will be Victoria, where students endured the longest and severest isolation experience. For domestic students, the big issues driving satisfaction scores are expected to have been teaching quality, student support and e-learning resources – which all depended on how much gloom was in the Zoom. And that means more than student-teacher comms, how uni platforms went at allowing students to collaborate with each other really matters to many (CMM, 7 Mar).

[International enrolments: the worse starts now:](#) New numbers from the Department of Education, Skills and Employment show total international enrolments were 882 000 last year, over 7 per cent down on the 952 000 in 2019. This is still ahead, just, of 2018 and the first fall since 2012 when that year's 513 000 was down on 554 000 in 2011, and way down on 2009's 631 000. Overall starts were 398 000 last year, 22 per cent below the 510 000 in 2019. HE was 24 per cent lower but again, ELICOS took the hit, with a 44 per cent fall. This is very bad indeed for the future, with fewer numbers on the ELICOS pathway to VET and university study (CMM, 4 Mar).

[What universities require: a culture of openness.](#) It is neither possible nor desirable for university leadership to be involved in these issues at every point, nor can we realistically expect staff and students to make detailed reference to university policy in the course of day-to-day university life. What universities require is a culture of openness based on a broad understanding of free speech and academic freedom. How is such a culture to be inculcated? Here we take some inspiration from the University of Chicago – not from the specific details of the Chicago Principles, but from the way they are given life within the institution. To begin with, the Chicago Principles are a statement of the identity of that university. Commitments to freedom of expression and academic freedom are not guaranteed. On the contrary, they are values that a university community must collectively imbue in all its members.

(Carolyn Evans & Adrienne Stone, CMM, 1 Mar).

International News

[Global HE can emerge stronger from COVID tsunami:](#) COVID-19 had the force of a tsunami in shaking up university international activities, but higher education is likely to emerge from the pandemic with a greater appetite for global cooperation providing it can navigate around the challenges of geopolitics, according to sector leaders. The message from global university leaders in Australia, Hong Kong and the United Kingdom came at Universities UK International's International Higher Education Forum 2021 (IHEF 2021) plenary session on 14 April, which looked at whether systems around the world are radically reforming international activities in response to COVID-19 (Nic Mitchell, UWN, 16 Apr).

[College 2030: A conversation on the future of higher ed.](#) Michael Huseby, the CEO of Barnes and Noble Education, discusses the value of colleges and universities forging strategies over the next decade to meet student needs. Several months ago, Barnes & Noble Education conducted a research study that looked at student, faculty and administrator experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Out of its findings came COLLEGE 2030: Transforming the Student Experience, a future-focused report that offered insight into how higher education needs to adapt over the next decade. At its core were college and university responses to seismic shifts in the delivery of education and supports for students, notably how well-positioned they were to deliver more accessible and more flexible options for students. Many institutions may not have been ready for it, but students were. Nearly 70% said they wanted less rigid learning experiences. (Chris Burt, UB 14 Apr).



[A university's plans to add 200 faculty, 4,500 students by 2025:](#) The pandemic has not slowed Cleveland State's ambitious targets to become a 'beacon institution' in its region. In December



2020, Cleveland State University announced a bold initiative: a 2-for-1 tuition deal to incoming students who maintain a certain GPA through their first semester of study. For an urban public institution whose enrollment and retention numbers have been better than most before and during the pandemic, it was an intriguing strategy but one that foreshadowed something bigger. Student success is just one variable in the visionary plans laid out by Cleveland State, which ranks as the No. 1 public state university in Ohio for social and economic mobility. Sands said a renewed focus on research and faculty also will be crucial to achieving its goals. (Chris Burt, UB, 31 Mar).

Higher education plays a critical role in the post-truth era: K-12 and higher education leaders must prioritize civic literacy and critical thinking. The continued viability of our democracy depends on our ability to equip citizens with the skills to think openly and critically, make decisions based on the best available evidence and remain open to the consideration of alternative points of view based on that evidence, particularly when these views dramatically differ from their own. Indeed, universities are among the few institutions in our society whose core mission is to provide the tools to examine various sources of knowledge, discern truth from fiction, and develop opinions based upon analysis of this knowledge. This “path to truth” is all the more daunting in an environment where “facts” are open to debate. (Harlan Sands and Ronald Berkman, UB, 29 Mar)



Australian University student satisfaction drops to new low in 2020: A new survey conducted during the pandemic shows that student satisfaction with university education in Australia dropped sharply in 2020, reaching its lowest level since the survey began in 2012. On average, only 68.4% of students nationally said they were satisfied with their undergraduate education during the pandemic-hit year, down 10 percentage points from 78.4% in 2019. The Quality Indicators for Learning

and Teaching survey, which has surveyed undergraduates since 2012, polled 565,829 students from 29 universities, and 70,266 from 35 non-university higher education providers. Among the broad decline in satisfaction, students said “learner engagement” specifically suffered. For the first time since the survey began, a minority of students said they were satisfied with learner engagement, at only 43.2% (down from 59.9% in 2019). However, students said that teaching quality itself remained high – dropping only from 80.9% to 77.6%. (Naaman Zhou, The Guardian, 27 Mar).



Universities complain of too much legislation on foreign interference: Australian vice-chancellors say that ‘duplicative’ regulation is counterproductive and provide details on withheld ARC grants, Universities have seen a sea change in national security concerns in recent years and are worried that too many regulations will make it hard to police any breaches, according to vice-chancellors. At a parliamentary inquiry into national security on 19 March, several vice-chancellors said that concerns on security had widened in recent years: whereas they used to be about limiting access to sensitive and military research, they now include broader concerns about social and political influence by foreign powers on university campuses (Jenny Sinclair, Research Professional News, 27 Mar).



3 ways universities are fostering entrepreneurship: Currently, there is a growing number of programs worldwide oriented to entrepreneurship. There is even a ranking from The Princeton Review that evaluates the main universities to study entrepreneurship at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Curiously, these lists of 50 universities at each level are made up of only North

American universities with the exception of Tecnológico de Monterrey, which ranks fifth in the undergraduate category in its 2021 edition. According to the GUESSS 2018 global report, the university context plays a key role where entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial culture are determinants of the entrepreneurial intentions and activities of students. There are three ways in which universities are contributing to the development of the ecosystem where they are established: 1. As a hotbed of talent; 2. As an incubator for business ideas; 3. As a mentor in knowledge transfer. (Allan Villegas, Entrepreneur, 23 Mar).



“Art of the possible”: How one university embraced 2020-21: For High Point University, a little ‘faithful courage’ meant a 5.4% jump in enrollment and a safe but more normal campus experience for its students. When the COVID-19 pandemic turned higher education upside down last year and the majority of institutions shut down, High Point University in North Carolina got to work. It built a medical clinic, rented eight hotels, put in a 6,000-square-foot ice skating rink and held block events each afternoon with food trucks and music ... with social distancing, of course. That formula has led to large donations and the funding of \$2 billion in campus property and projects, including \$500 million on elegant structures such as a new arena and conference center that bears his name and his wife’s name. Most importantly, its focus on the future has included a heavy emphasis on academics – the university has increased its faculty from 108 to 330, launched six additional academic schools and has plans for an \$80 million library that will be completed in 2024. (Chris Burt, UB, 23 Mar).

Can the dual-mission college change higher education? For institutions with a dual mission — that is, colleges or universities that offer a mix of certificate and two-year programs as well as four-year degrees — there is no single category in the Carnegie system that reflects their unique and emerging position. A dual-mission institution intentionally merges a community or technical college and a four-year university under one roof — or a dual-mission institution could also be a community college that offers four-year



degrees. The dual-mission classification is growing in importance given the momentum in higher education toward the creation of “in-house” academic pathways for students, oftentimes aligned with local workforce and labor-market needs (Alison Griffin, Forbes, 16 Mar).



So what are international university networks good for? The lifeblood of a university is its intellectual talent – represented in the academic staff and students to whom it is home. Major universities compete hard for the most outstanding individuals and most such universities are well connected internationally because these connections enlarge their access to talent. It’s no secret that the world’s most successful research universities have on their faculty’s large numbers of researchers from other countries. These individuals in turn develop informal collegial networks, often with partners in other parts of the world. All this makes the successful research university a truly – and necessarily – global enterprise. All are unprecedented, and universities are navigating them with little relevant experience. Global networks like WUN, drawing on the diverse perspectives that arise from the different geographies and cultures of member universities, provide an unusually rich source of comparative information about how universities can best contend with these varied challenges. Far from being diminished in this new world, global networks have more to offer than ever. (Peter Lennie, UWN, 13 Mar)

Ranking and Rating

Aus unis great forces for good: Australian universities dominate the global top ten in the new Times Higher social impact ranking. The measure scores university performances on the 17 UN sustainable development goals. Uni Sydney is the world number two (behind Uni Manchester) with RMIT third, La Trobe U fourth and Uni Wollongong equal sixth, with Aalborg U in Denmark. Another 13 Australian institutions are in the top 100. Uni Sydney is first in the world for SDG Six (clean water), Uni Canberra for SDG

ten (reducing inequalities), La Trobe U for 15 (life on land) and Uni Newcastle is number one for the 17th (partnerships for all goals). (CMM, 21 Apr)

Australian universities do well but there is no room for complacency: The THE Impact Rankings is not designed to measure an institution’s excellence nor its reputation. This ranking is focused on measuring universities’ social, environmental, and economic impacts. It is designed to showcase how institutions are working towards the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Once again, Australian universities have done extremely well, despite the significant increase in the number of institutions submitting data. Of the 24 universities which received an overall score, 17 were ranked in the world’s top 100, compared to 15 out of 21 participating universities in 2020. It is worth pointing out that the movement in standing that we see this year globally is, in part, a reflection of methodological adjustments made by THE and the significant increase in the number of participating universities. It also reflects the way overall scores are calculated, by combining a university’s score in SDG 17 with its top three scores out of the remaining SDGs for which institutions submit data (Angel Calderon, CMM, 22 Apr).

World university rankings are rewarding totalitarianism: The latest Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2021 carried few surprises when it was released in September. The usual contestants led the rankings. Yet among these are some institutions, operating under totalitarian regimes, that do not match our expectation of what universities are about. If one adjusts the top 150 universities in the THE World University Rankings for academic freedom, those from the People’s Republic of China (PRC, including Hong Kong) and from Singapore drop to the bottom of the list. (Carsten A Holz, UWN, 17 Apr).

Review for ERA before ERA: Last year the ARC issued a consultation paper for a review of its performance metrics, Excellence for Research in Australia and Engagement and Impact. Now, a Learned Reader reports, the ARC has released most but not all of the submissions received, with 38 of 112 under wraps. If the council is holding to its original position, the review must be ready to go. If so, it will be a scene-stealer. The new Excellence for Research in Australia

performance review is scheduled for release before July (CMM, 25 Mar).

Australia’s much of a muchness unis produce a solid result in QS rankings:

Overall, it is a good result for the Australian system. “Australia does not have an institution that ranks first globally by subject area. However, Australia has 13 institutions which have at least one subject area ranked in the world’s top 20. Overall, there are 53 instances with Melbourne having the highest number of listings (15), followed by ANU (10), then Uni Sydney (eight), UNSW (six), Monash U (four) and Queensland three. Then there is one instance each for Adelaide, Curtin, Deakin, QUT, RMIT, UTS and UW (CMM, 5 Mar).

End of story for ranking glory: The government wants research that makes it in markets but is less fussed about international research reps. This is good news for the applied research community, indicating no policy change and perhaps-maybe-possibly, new money for translational research in the budget. The likely winners appeared pleased. “The Australian government’s commitment to a funding strategy that maps research and commercialisation will deliver gains for universities, business, our economy and most importantly the Australian population,” the Group of Eight announced. And if, or when, Australian universities start to slide in the more serious rankings, due to less international student revenue to resource all research, VCs will be able to avoid the heat, by blaming the government for its applied focus. (CMM, 1 Mar).

LEARNING & TEACHING

In an AI world we need to teach students how to work with robot writers: Robots are writing more of what we read on the internet. And artificial intelligence (AI) writing tools are becoming freely available for anyone, including students, to use. In a period of rapid change, there are enormous ethical implications for post-human authorship — in which humans and machines collaborate. The study of AI ethics needs to be central to education as we increasingly use machine-generated content to communicate with others. So what does this mean for education, writing, and society? Of course, there’s the issue of cheating on essays and other assignments. School and university leaders need to have difficult conversations about what constitutes “authorship” and “editorship” in the post-



human age. (Lucinda McKnight, the Conversation, 9 Apr).

Postgraduate on-campus courses that aren't viable this year (and next): The expected continuing loss of overseas student enrolments in 2021 and 2022 will undermine the sustainability of several on-campus postgraduate course offerings in most Australian universities. The ongoing closure of Australia's borders to overseas students will have greater proportional impact on the capacity of Australian universities to deliver on-campus postgraduate courses than on undergraduate course delivery. Replacement of some overseas postgraduate students by domestic students will not address fundamental differences in student discipline choices and the mode and type of attendance. The fields most dependent on overseas students are Information Technology with 87 per cent and Engineering and Related Technologies with 78 per cent of all enrolments in these disciplines (Frank P. Larkins, CMM, 7 Apr).

TEQSA reports the largest category of complaints about HE providers tripled last year. There were 470, (32 per cent) about course delivery and teaching, including COVID-19 caused on-line classes. "We expect that COVID-19 will continue to impact providers in 2021 and beyond," the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency," states in its new compliance report (CMM, 6 Apr).

Boom time for industry-focused short courses: An exponential growth in demand for mini, industry-specific and co-designed courses is boosting student numbers in international student-deprived Australian universities but has experts calling for a coherent policy framework, writes Julie Hare for Australian Financial Review. The diversity in approach to the hundreds of short, stackable courses that are coming online could be confounding to students and employers. Professor Beverley Oliver, Australia's foremost expert on microcredentials, said there is a very real danger of confusion as institutions adopt different terminologies and value propositions. "We need to figure out what we are trying to achieve (Julie Hare, Australian Financial Review, 3 Apr)

Group of Eight unis question value of more online education in driving recovery: The nation's leading research universities have played down calls to ramp up their presence in the crowded field of online education, saying studying in Australia is the main drawcard for many international

students. Group of Eight chief executive Vicki Thomson said the coronavirus pandemic had given universities a "proof of concept" that online course delivery was possible but questioned whether this model would play a significant role in the sector's long-term recovery post-pandemic (Lisa Visentin, The Sydney Morning Herald, 1 Apr).



College faculty see increased value in digital learning: Will a full return for students mean a more traditional campus or a 'post-pandemic version of normalcy'. WCET led the most recent Digital Learning Pulse Survey on the impacts of the COVID-19 on higher education learning and engagement. The survey, which polled more than 1,700 faculty and administrators at nearly 1,000 colleges and universities, showed that 51% of faculty members are "more positive" about remote learning than they were last March. Nearly the same number say that their "very different" instruction methods and models are likely to continue. The numbers highlight that success: 76% of faculty said they were satisfied with how they communicated with students, 78% said they were satisfied with how efficiently the technology worked and 68% said they were satisfied with how well students learned. If there's one area to improve, it might be engagement: only half said they were satisfied. (Chris Burt, UB, 26 Mar).



Institutions will not only need to lift the quality and engagement of their online education, they will also need to provide more student support in an on-line context: At the PIE Live conference yesterday, Hamish Coates from Tsinghua University observed that "on-line has move to the academic core." His comments were timely given the latest Quality Indicators for Learning and

Teaching data showing an average 10 per cent decline in university student experience ratings in 2020. It was noticeable that those universities which rated highly on student experience during COVID-19 were mostly regional universities (with a historic reliance on distance/on-line learning) and private universities where a focus on the student experience is a key part of their offering, given students are ineligible for government subsidies and hence pay higher fees. (Claire Field, CMM, 24 Mar).

Enabling Programme graduates hit the ground running: But too many university teachers view them less as less qualified than ATAR entrants. Enabling programs are more than just a pathway into a university degree. These programs provide essential academic skills to future undergraduate students so that they graduate with more confidence, academic acumen and with a greater understanding of how to be successful at university. Enabling programs create opportunities and career ambition for thousands of university students who otherwise would likely not have attended university. Rather than viewing this student cohort as less qualified for university than their peers, I argue that academics should be delighted to admit as many of these students into their degrees as they can. Universities should value the contribution enabling programs make to their institution's success and the value of these programs to the wider community (Victoria Fielding, CMM, 21 Mar).

TEQSA about to act on academic cheating: Last week CEO of regulator TEQSA, Alistair Maclean told the Commonwealth Parliament's Joint Committee of Public Accounts "we will be announcing very shortly court orders blocking websites offering academic cheating services." The public accounts committee also asked about the Australian National Audit Office finding last year that the regulator, "did not meet its targets for re-registration and re-accreditation approvals for low-risk providers." (CMM, 12 Mar).

State of CE: The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the need for higher education institutions to engage and reach students. While some have been innovative in their approaches, many have failed to truly connect with them, according to a new report from Modern Campus. More than 70% of higher ed executives surveyed across North America say digital engagement and their websites are the top marketing tools they have to pique student interest and get them to register,



yet only 10% say they are “very effective” at utilizing them. 90% of colleges struggle to digitally ‘engage’ students. A new Modern Campus report shows that several barriers may be hurting overall retention and engagement numbers. (Chris Burt, UB, 9 Mar).



Less is much the same: Uni Sydney to shorten semester. The university will adopt 17-week semester from S2 this year. It will be preceded by “a light introductory and course guidance week.” There will be 12 weeks of your actual academic content. A university representative says it follows a trial last year. “The experience showed that we were able to provide effective learning experiences and good academic outcomes with 12 contact weeks.” (CMM, 9 Mar).

College students again give thumbs up to online learning: More than 70% say remote was as good if not better than in-person instruction, according to an annual study done by BestColleges.com, which offers tips to keep it going strong. The remote learning experience at higher education institutions might not be perfect, but it is perceived as quite strong by students. And more than 90% believe it provides a good return on investment and would recommend it to others. That coincides with another study released by Sykes Enterprises in February that showed 84% of students saying remote learning environments were effective. (Chris Burt, UB, 4 Mar).



Leveraging Credential Innovation to Drive Meaningful Pathways to Degrees and Careers: microcredentials can start to be a tool by which they get informed of the more implicit and abstract learning they gain, the learning that reflects the

enduring marketable skills employers look for—the skills that will ultimately transfer and translate as students grow through their careers. What learners want to see is how these courses, not just their major classes but the ones required through general education components or graduation requirements, collectively contribute to their future goals and aspirations. Microcredentials have the potential to provide that connection and relevance. (Meena Naik, the EvoLLLution, 3 Mar).



RPI researchers reveal new method to reduce cheating: A testing strategy that is cost-effective and less time-consuming may work in combating collusion. At Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) in Troy, N.Y., engineering researchers say they may have unlocked a method to combat cheating that is more old school than high-tech – and potentially more effective – with something they are calling “distanced online testing.” The strategy focuses first and foremost on collusion among students, the top form of cheating, according to researchers. It involves the simple process of delaying test questions hierarchically to students based on their levels of competency. (Chris Burt, UB, 1 Mar).



Student Retention and Success

Using Innovative Technologies to Improve Transfer Student Success: Arizona State University’s use of innovative technology in response to the changing needs of today’s students, 40 percent of whom begin at community colleges, is successfully building capacity to better serve transfers. Tens of millions of workers will require new skills and new training in the coming years. These

would-be learners -- at both community colleges and universities -- will require a dramatic simplification of intake processes, credit evaluation systems and academic pathways. And if we can support them in enrolling, they’ll join the millions of college students who are already pursuing their bachelor’s degrees in nonlinear ways. At Arizona State University, we’ve found that innovative technology -- when thoughtfully deployed -- can be incredibly helpful in responding to the changing needs of today’s students, including the more than 40 percent of ASU undergraduates who begin at community colleges. Over many years, we have gained considerable insight into what works, as we have partnered with more than 1,000 community colleges across the country to build capacity and better serve transfers (Maria Hesse & Cheryl Hyman, insidehighered, 8 Apr).

5 ways to help students overcome financial aid barriers: Students who most need financial aid are the least likely to have sufficient support. COVID has magnified the challenges first-generation and low-income students face in applying for college and financial aid. A survey of 15,000 high school students conducted this winter by EAB, a student success solutions provider. In fact, nearly 30% of the low-income students surveyed who did not plan to file a FAFSA told EAB they didn’t think they would qualify for financial aid. (Matt Zalaznick, UB, 7 Apr).



5 ways to grow STEM programs into a campus-wide culture: What isn’t often considered is how to create and nourish a STEM culture focused on the whole student. While not every field within the STEM umbrella is experiencing the same level of growth—many, specifically those related to computer sciences, technology, manufacturing, engineering and health sciences, are exploding. Colleges and universities throughout the country are responding by investing more heavily in STEM undergraduate degree programs that prepare students to enter these high-demand STEM fields. However, many are experiencing challenges with enrollment, graduation rates and the



underrepresentation of Black, Indigenous and other students of color, as well as difficulties staying in sync with the ever-changing needs of the workforce. (Patricia Bou & Charles Smith, UB, 19 Mar).

[How one university is fueling diversity in construction management:](#) Roger Williams University in Rhode Island has entered into a partnership on scholarships for underserved students. The Shawmut Scholars Program will give three students \$15,000 four-year scholarships plus paid internships at the company, including housing and transportation, as well as professional development training. Those students will be chosen from this fall's class who are majoring in construction management or engineering. "This program is a representation of our core values and commitment to removing barriers to education for historically minoritized communities," said Ioannis Miaoulis, President of Roger Williams, which had the No. 10-rated construction management program in the nation in 2020, according to GradReports. "For years, Shawmut has been a leading employer of our graduates, recognizing the real-world training that makes them ready to hit the ground running as construction professionals when they enter the workplace." (Chris Burt, UB, 15 March).

[American Rescue Plan gives lift to neediest students:](#) Act provides \$3 billion for historically Black colleges and universities, tribal colleges and universities, and minority-serving institutions. Institutions must spend half of the American Rescue Plan's \$40 billion in higher education funding on emergency financial aid grants to students who may be facing hunger, homelessness and other hardships. Many students, of course, are also eligible for \$1,400 stimulus checks. The plan also makes student loan forgiveness passed between December 2020 and January 2026 un-taxable. Higher ed leaders also hope the Biden administration will continue to support higher ed as it builds the fiscal year 2022 budget and considers additional economic recovery measures. (Matt Zalaznick, UB, 12 Mar).

[Prepare, connect, care: essential steps for new students to manage and enjoy uni life:](#) Starting university is usually a time of hope focused on bright futures. This year feels different. As cities move in and out of lockdown, new students are starting university in the face of significant uncertainty. A number of easily applied, quick-win strategies can help students to

manage stress and succeed in the fluctuating circumstances of COVID-19. There is clear demand for guidance, and the best-practice approaches to enable learning throughout the pandemic. It is important to be able to switch to online learning quickly and effectively, while also making the most of on-campus opportunities to set yourself up well (Jennifer Stokes, the Conversation, 3 Mar).

Staff and Student Wellbeing

[Connection and inclusion vital for regional and remote students' mental wellbeing:](#) Mature-aged regional and remote students need to feel connected, appreciated and supported in their everyday learning experiences to enhance their mental wellbeing and academic success, new research has shown. The report by NCSEHE Equity Fellow Dr Nicole Crawford identifies proactive approaches and inclusive strategies for effective learning and teaching to counter common stressors and support students' mental wellbeing.



[95% of students feel mental health strains of pandemic:](#) A new study shows the deep impact COVID-19 has had on students, including negative academic outcomes. Colleges and universities have prioritized mental health resources throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. From telehealth to peer support services and expanded partnerships, institutions have showed increased compassion and care for students. But even with the promise of vaccines and reopening plans being forged for the fall, those must continue, experts say, because students are still hurting. A report released Monday from BestColleges.com shows that 95% of undergraduate students have had "negative mental health symptoms as a result of circumstances caused by COVID-19" and 97% have experienced some negative outcome at home as a result of the pandemic. (Chris Burt, UB, 12 Apr).



[Faculty: 'Gatekeepers' of Student Mental Health?](#) Students are increasingly relying on professors for mental health assistance. The instructors are willing -- challenging long-standing perceptions that it's "not part of the job" -- but they need and want more guidance on how to help, report says. Maybe more than ever, faculty members are talking to students about mental health. Professors feel a responsibility toward students who are suffering and would welcome better -- even mandatory -- training on the topic, according to a COVID-19-era report from Boston University's School of Public Health, the Mary Christie Foundation and the Healthy Minds Network. At the same time, many faculty members report suffering from some of the same health challenges their students do: nearly 30 percent of surveyed professors report having two or more symptoms of depression. Two in 10 professors agree that supporting students in mental or emotional distress has taken a toll on their own mental health. About half believe that their institutions should do more to support the psychological well-being of the faculty (Colleen Flaherty, insidehighered, 8 Apr).

[Charting the future: 3 universities team up on mental health:](#) Grants from the Lilly Endowment will help more than a dozen institutions in the state of Indiana tackle key initiatives. Three private Indiana universities are combining forces on a not-for-profit mental health initiative on their campuses courtesy of an \$8 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, DePauw University and Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College are forming the MINDful College Connections consortium to help improve students' access to telehealth services, counselors and psychiatrists -- something that many small private institutions struggle to provide because of limited resources. (Chris Burt, UB, 29 Mar).





Mental health concerns remain for US college students, despite reopening hopes:

A new study highlights the stress and uncertainty students are facing as they continue to cope with pandemic fallout. Even with positive pandemic developments appearing on the horizon – from large-scale vaccination efforts to colleges considering fully reopening for in-person learning – students are still expressing mental health struggles. Although students remain hopeful about the future, the majority (56%) say in the TimelyMD study that they are concerned about “what life may look like once a new normal is established.” (Chris Burt, UB, 16 Mar).



GRADUATE OUTCOMES AND EMPLOYABILITY

Three positive ways to redefine disability as a source of career strength: There’s nothing inevitable about exclusion, but students with disability still experience exclusion from the labour market when they leave university. There’s nothing inevitable about exclusion, but students with disability (SwD) still experience exclusion from the labour market when they leave university. Compared to their mainstream counterparts, they are more likely to be unemployed or in jobs that don’t use their university education (QILT, 2020). A new university disability careers community of practice is considering such matters and will provide resources to help participants progress disability-inclusive careers support at their own universities (CMM, 5 Apr).

Monash VC proposes more secure employment for PhD students: Monash U was in thumping surplus last year (\$259m) but while VC Margaret Gardner counsels

caution there’s good news for staff – including some sessionals. Professor Gardner warns staff of the “anticipated further declines in student revenue we will face this year and in 2022 and 2023.” And now that campuses are open, unlike last year, non-salary expenditure will unavoidably increase. “We will never face such a low level of non-salary expenditure again,” she says. And Professor Gardner proposes reducing the insecurity of insecure employment, at least for PhD students who are sessional teachers or do research-support jobs. She suggests fixed-term appointments, which would give them incremental salary rises and sick leave. She also raises the possibility of contingent continuing employment for “many of our research-only contract staff.” (CMM, 1 Apr).

QILT reveals employers happy with hires:

Employers are overwhelmingly enthused with the quality of new graduates they hired, according to the second major 2020 survey in the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching suite. Overall satisfaction last year was 84.7 per cent, in-line with annual figures since 2016, which ranged from a low of 83.6 per cent (2017) to 84.8 per cent (2018). Levels of satisfaction with the five-subordinate skill sets surveyed were all equally consistent over time. Across the period graduates’ immediate supervisors are least happy with general employment skills (“perform and innovate in the workplace”), 86.8 per cent in 2020 and most impressed with their technical skills, “application of professional and technical knowledge and standards,” which is presumably what they are hired to apply (CMM, 23 Mar).

Counting employment barriers in maths and stats: Jessica Kasza (Statistical Society of Australia) and Ole Warnaar (Australian Mathematical Society) point to difficult circumstances for people with insecure employment and caring responsibilities, which are a double-burden for women, “in-particular.” People from backgrounds that are under-represented in maths “have seen increased structural barriers” for employment. “The pandemic has impacted many people from diverse backgrounds in ways that are as varied and nuanced as people are different and nuanced. We exhort colleagues, managers and organisations to genuinely listen, to treat each case, thoughtfully, on its merits, and be prepared to work on suitably varied and nuanced solutions” they write (CMM, 22 Mar).

Ticks all the boxes: new lists of what jobs need (including academics). The National

Skills Commission announces a collection of classifications that “for the first time in Australia,” “provides a connection between labour market analysis and skills needs.” The beta version includes skills for 600 occupation, with elements, core competencies, specialist tasks and technology tools. “Rather than using occupations and qualifications as proxies for skills, the Australian Skills Classification offers a new way of identifying the range of skills linked to occupations,” National Skills Commissioner, Adam Boyton announces (CMM, 19 Mar).

The good news is more grads: Thirty years of HE policy reform have met objectives, with, “a significant rise in the number of people graduating with HE qualifications,” Lynlea Small, Ruth McPhail and Amie Shaw (all Griffith U) report in a new qualitative analysis, designed to provide a, “knowledge base for all stakeholders in the HE sector to draw from in terms of policy and planning, with the end goal to enhance the employment prospects and employability.” The stats and other evidence suggest “that universities, to some extent, have not been successful in preparing students for the workforce. “More needs to be done to create better outcomes for students, their families and the broader HE stakeholders, including employers, governments, and the communities they serve” (CMM, 3 Mar).

BIG DATA, DATA ANALYTICS BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

New to AI Adoption? Don’t Let Data be Your Achilles Heel. The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically shifted consumer behaviour, and thus the data associated with it. In fact, McKinsey recently found that 32% of executives at companies that adopted AI in sales and marketing during COVID-19, reported the failure of their machine learning models because they relied on data collected before the pandemic. So the question becomes, “how do I learn what the current reality is to build new training sets and models?” The answer lies in devoting the necessary cycles to sourcing and evaluating the data you’ll need to train your algorithms. That involves considering these four critical elements: Transparency — How is the data sourced? What are its attributes? Can you segment the data used for your analyses as needed? Precision — How is the data verified/qualified for inclusion in the data set? What metadata does the data set



include? Size — How large is the data set? Is it sizeable enough to accurately represent the population and your customers? Timeliness — How recently was the data collected, and how often is it refreshed – to both add new data points and remove data that's stale? (insideBigData, 2 Apr).

[5 benefits, 5 challenges of cloud computing in higher education:](#)

Administrators should weigh the benefits against their needs and determine which solutions will provide the best outcomes. With the recent push for online courses, digital lesson plans, and remote learning, cloud-based platforms are more important than ever. Cloud computing offers significant advantages to education, from K-12 schools to university students. But what do administrators need to know before moving forward? (Chuck Ma, UB, 2 Apr).



The Big Data Dilemma: The Big Data Dilemma made a huge splash in the last Fundata Film Festival – the best-kept secrets of both the film and data industries – and grabbed the Official Selection designation of 2021. Shattering the 'data-driven' hype and revealing the coin-flipping truth, The Big Data Dilemma brings together global data anti-vangelists to tell it as it is, or at least as they believe it is. To quote Ashit Yunot, a data science PhD, "Data means nothing. And I have tons of data to back it up." (insideBigData, 1 Apr).

[New Research Suggests Young Digital Natives Lack the Data Literacy Employers Crave — But Is It All a Big Misunderstanding?](#)

Exasol, a leading high performance analytics database company, launched the findings of its new study into the attitudes and understanding that young people currently in higher education or just entering the world of work have towards data. The study of 3,000 16- to 21-year-olds (coined D/NATIVES by Exasol because of their everyday digital skills) finds that despite over half of respondents believing that their ability to understand data will be as vital to their future as their ability to read and write —

only 43% actually consider themselves to be data literate. Interestingly, a higher proportion (55%) said they can read, work with, analyse and argue with statistics— which are the required skills for data literacy according to MIT's definition (insideBigData, 28 Mar).



Financial Chief Data Officers Making Advances in Data Management and Compliance but Over Half of Manual Processes Remain: Risk data aggregation is the top compliance concern for chief data officers (CDOs) within financial services firms, with 88% of these organizations devoting 40% or more of their total data practice budget to compliance functions, according to new research launched ahead of the leading data management event for financial services, FIMA. The survey, conducted by WBR Insights among data and information technology executives within the financial services sector and sponsored by InterSystems, highlights that financial organizations are allocating significant portions of their budget to compliance initiatives, and that 54% of those surveyed further revealed that at least half of these functions are still performed manually within their organization. The research also provides CDOs with insight into how their peers are leveraging new data management technologies and architectures, such as data fabrics, automated governance, machine learning, data lineage, and blockchain to enable them to meet their myriad business requirements (insideBigData, 27 Mar).

Data-Centric Transformation in the Age of Disruption: In order to get closer to customers, gathering intelligence related to how they behave has never been more important. As a result, insights must

quickly migrate from being a marketing tool, to one of the most critical currencies fuelling the future of business transformation. Additionally, as we enter the new age of consumer permissioning, the end game of it all will be creating the type of brand experiences that make people want to opt in and share their data. This is where CMOs must foster collaborative synergy with their Data Science team to effectively operationalize data, all with the goal of best advocating for customers to create the winning experiences of tomorrow. Integrating first-party data with alternative data from other providers can unlock patterns and insights which are sometimes unexpected and can help drive effective transformation (insideBigData, 24 Mar).

Colleges a 'Juicy Target' for Cyberextortion: Cybercriminals using ransomware increasingly focus on colleges and universities. Using phishing emails and stolen credentials to access IT networks, criminals leveraging the ransomware are stealing sensitive information and blocking access to essential data and systems through encryption. They are then demanding payment in exchange for returning access to the targeted institution. In a double-pronged extortion tactic that has become increasingly common in recent years, hackers are not only demanding payment to restore access to encrypted information. They are also taking sensitive data and threatening to sell or publish it on the dark web if their demands are not met. What steps can institutions take to minimize their own risks -- and threats to the sector? (Lindsay McKenzie, inside Higher Ed, 19 Mar).

The Next-Level of Operationalizing Machine Learning: Real-time Data Streaming into Data Science Environments. New Stack's Streaming Data and the Future Tech Stack report (2019) show a 500% percent increase in the number of companies processing data in real-time for AI/ML use cases. And experts posit a more massive increase in the number of companies following this trend as we approach 2021. Streaming analytics is the linchpin that makes it possible for enterprises to achieve such intelligent analysis and data-driven decision-making in real-time. Incorporating real-time data streaming into their workflow means that companies can achieve adaptive learning and continuous calibration of models based on the newest data flowing into the pipeline to enhance operations and extract further business value. Special

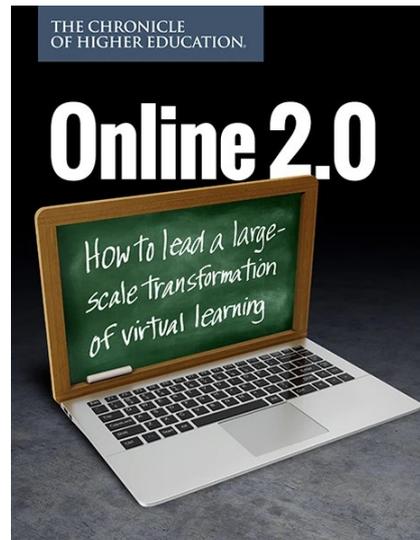


algorithms can also be applied to simultaneously improve the prediction models in real-time and avoid concept drift. However, a different architectural, technological, and analytics approach is required when working with data in motion as opposed to data at rest (insideBigData, 18 Mar).

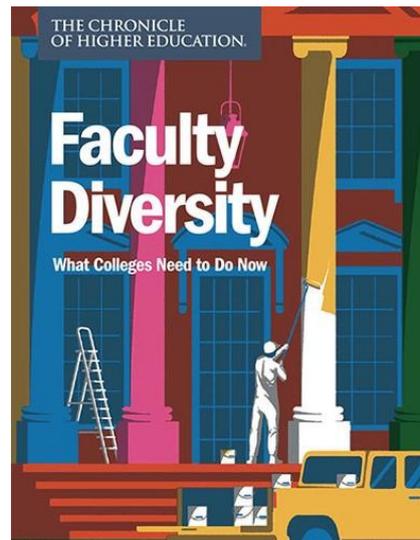
REPORTS AND RESOURCES

[Industry's role in VET governance: using international insights to inform new practices.](#) Social partnerships negotiated between governments, employers, unions, and training providers are key to effective VET governance and improved outcomes for learners according to recent research. Drawing on selected international country comparisons, good examples of social partnerships and industry engagement in VET governance were found in Western and Northern European countries such as Germany, The Netherlands and Finland. In these countries, 'industry' plays a peripheral rather than lead role in the top-level governance matters of planning, investing and decision-making.

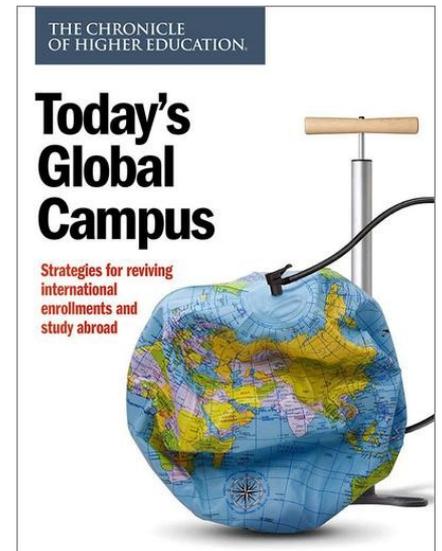
[Online 2.0:](#) This Chronicle report explores how institutions can take remote learning to the next level. How can academic leaders and faculty members rethink their face-to-face courses so that they are fully adaptable to an online environment? What is the best way to make an online-learning experience coherent, educationally meaningful, and attractive to potential and returning students? What is the science behind online learning? And what are the best ways to provide faculty development, evaluate remote courses, and ensure equity for all students? This report also includes the findings of an original survey of faculty members and administrators about the experience of shifting to online learning and how well-prepared institutions were for the move.



[Faculty Diversity:](#) The growing racial-justice movement has led colleges to rethink diversity on many fronts, including in their faculty ranks. This collection includes many of The Chronicle's essential reads on how colleges can diversify their faculties and help minority scholars thrive.



[Today's Global Campus: Strategies for reviving international enrollments and study abroad.](#) This Chronicle issue brief provides an in-depth look at how colleges are adapting to new realities when their usual means of recruiting students or giving them an international experience is no longer feasible. In some cases, making do has led to thinking big: Colleges are using the pandemic pause in mobility to rethink and revamp their practices. That might mean helping international students better adapt to U.S. campuses and improving career services for such students. It could also mean finding ways to provide "internationalization at home" — helping American students explore cultural and global diversity in their own communities.



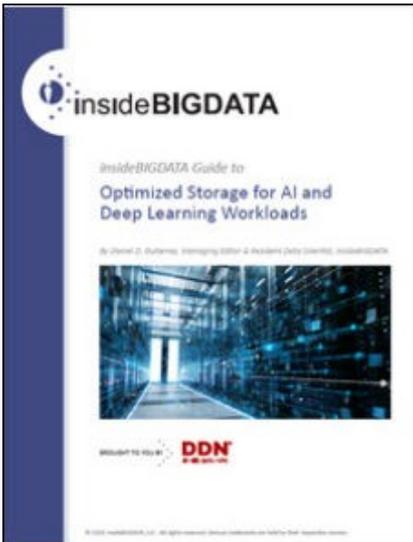
[The Trends Report, 2021:](#) Covid-19 has upended everyone's plans and reshaped the higher-education landscape in ways that we continue to try to make sense of. The disruptions felt across the economy -- not least by students and their families -- have amplified trends we described in 2020, among them the rise of odds making on colleges' survival and the scramble to attract and enroll students. Leaders need to move from performing triage to considering the long view. When the pandemic has passed, what will higher education look like? This report on five key trends, with expert analysis, data, and case studies, will help you answer that question and make strategic decisions for a future in which your institution can not only survive, but grow.



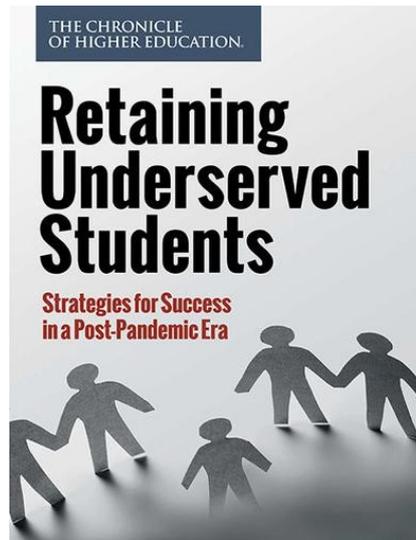
[insideBIGDATA Guide to Optimized Storage for AI and Deep Learning Workloads:](#) Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Deep Learning (DL) represent some of the most demanding workloads in modern computing history as they present unique challenges to compute, storage and



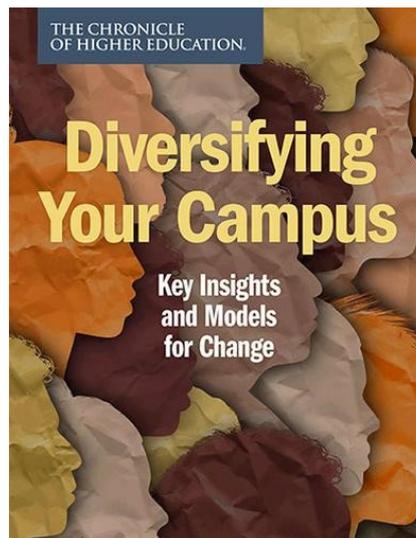
network resources. Optimized storage has a unique opportunity to become much more than a siloed repository for the deluge of data constantly generated in today's hyper-connected world, but rather a platform that shares and delivers data to create competitive business value. Optimized storage is designed for the needs of a broad range of problem domains including FinTech, life sciences, design, HPC, government, smart cities, media, energy, and many more.



Retaining Underserved Students: Administrators and professors committed to student success are thinking from all angles about how to retain their students before it's too late. This in-depth Chronicle report explores what colleges are doing to support the students who have been most affected by the crisis. How are they helping students with limited access to the internet, those who have lost their campus jobs, or those made homeless by the pandemic? What new academic practices are colleges adopting? And how can colleges strengthen relationships with students in a virtual world? Learn how your institution can best support and retain struggling students.



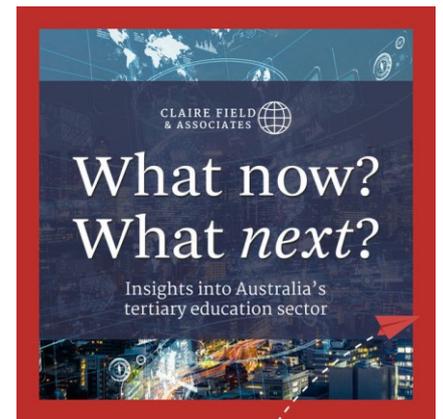
Diversifying Your Campus: Diversifying colleges is a complex undertaking that requires taking into account history, structural inequity, and institutional will. But diversifying higher education can't be done without a complete understanding of the barriers that have historically inhibited progress; institutional leaders must learn from that history in order to consider new approaches to equity and inclusion. This report examines key questions surrounding the lack of racial diversity in the academic workforce, shares key insights from campus leaders who have made changes to the status quo, and showcases more than a dozen institutions that have successfully diversified some aspect of their campuses, from the faculty to the boardroom.



PODCAST

What now? What next? Insights into Australia's tertiary education sector: Claire Field talks with leaders and experts from within the Australian tertiary

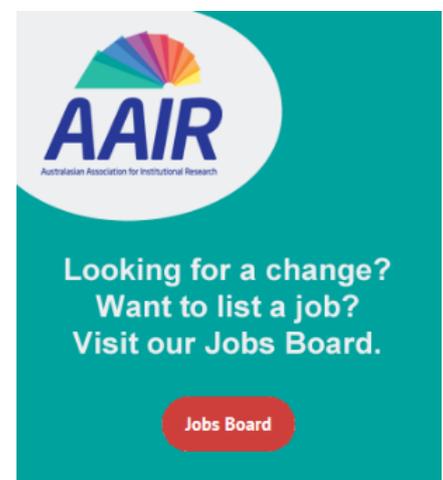
education sector and across the global ed-tech sector.



How to Educate With Resilience When Everything Changes With Crystal DeJaegher: The pivot from face-to-face interaction to online interaction is happening across many industries, especially in education. There are ways that technology can enhance your online teaching, but it can be difficult to know where to start if you're not sure how to adapt your in-person strategies to on-screen learning. In this post, education and technology professional, Crystal DeJaegher, shares advice for developing a virtual teaching practice that works for you.



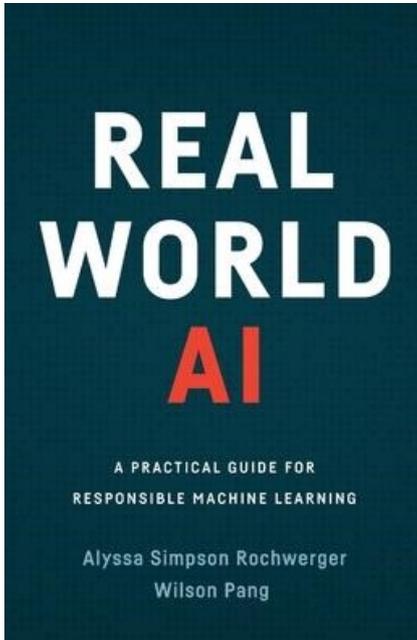
POSITIONS VACANT



GOOD READS

[Real World AI: A Practical Guide for Responsible Machine Learning](#)

Alyssa Rochwerger & Wilson Pang

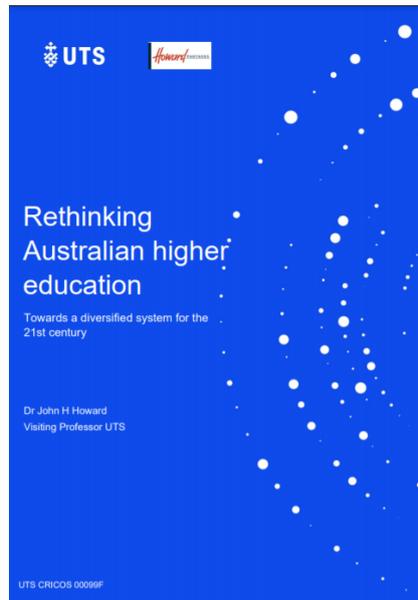


In Real World AI, Alyssa Simpson Rochwerger and Wilson Pang share dozens of AI stories from startups and global enterprises alike featuring personal experiences from people who have worked on global AI deployments that impact billions of people every day. AI for business doesn't have to be overwhelming. Real World AI uses plain language to walk you through an AI approach that you can feel confident about-for your business and for your customers.

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[Rethinking Australian higher education Towards a diversified system for the 21st Century](#)

John H. Howard



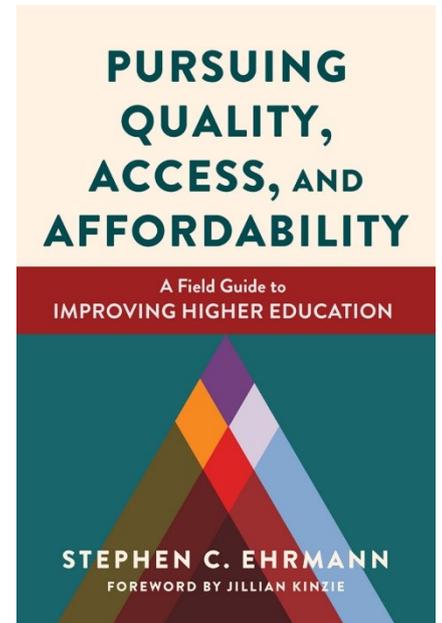
The Australian higher education system must deliver superior value for Australian students, businesses, government, and the broader community. Providers must respond to the changes occurring in student preferences, including preferences for multi-modal delivery and the shift in employer demand towards technically qualified graduates. As such, providers must get better at collaborating with TAFE to deliver the sought after combination of academic and occupational learning. The system must also work out ways to develop new revenue streams, above and beyond research commercialisation, by using its education, research and property assets in new ways to create wealth. In other words, innovate.

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[Pursuing Quality, Access and Affordability: A Field Guide to Improving Higher Education](#)

Stephen C. Ehrmann



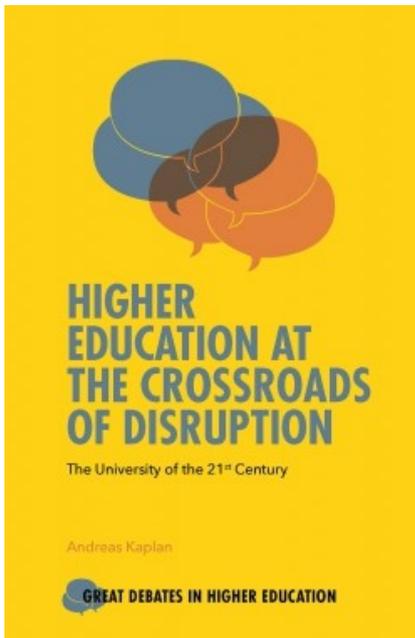
A large majority of college graduates are weak in capabilities that faculty and employers both see as crucial. Extend more equitable access to degrees: Too often, students from underserved groups and poor households either don't enter college or else drop out without a degree. The latter group may be worse off economically than if they'd never attempted college. Make academic programs more affordable (in money and time) for students and other important stakeholder groups: Many potential students believe they lack the money or time needed for academic success. Many faculty believe they don't have time to make their courses and degree programs more effective. Many institutions believe they can't afford to improve outcomes.

Buy Now



[Higher Education at the Crossroads of Disruption: The University of the 21st Century](#)

Andreas Kaplan



Higher Education at the Crossroads of Disruption: The University of the 21st Century looks at the various areas of higher education that will likely undergo radical changes. Learning and teaching approaches will increasingly move into the digital sphere; advances in artificial intelligence as well as (big) data availability, will change the way academia works. This book examines how teaching formats will vary, and how curricula and course content will evolve. Higher education will most likely focus on skills development, with a stronger emphasis on inter- and multidisciplinary study content, and a steady turn toward society's well-being and sustainability.

[Buy Now](#)

[Data Science for Decision Makers & Data Professionals: Creating an Intelligent, Data-Driven Organization with AI, BI & Big Data](#)

Edited by Eric Van Der Steen



This book tackles every question relevant to implementing data science. Many organizations start by collecting data without a goal, but that data science approach is doomed to fail. This book takes you through the process of implementing data science from the ground floor all the way to the top. It all starts with the question: what do we want to achieve? It covers all the subsequent steps on a macro and micro level, from the process of registering data, to processing it, to the organization's response. All the relevant data science techniques and technologies are discussed, from algorithms and AI to the right management strategies. Based on many practical case studies and best practices, this book reveals what works and what doesn't. Benefit from the author's many years of experience in making organizations more intelligent and data-driven as a consultant and an educator.

[Buy Now](#)

ON THE MOVE

Tamara Martin becomes director of education and training at the Naval Shipbuilding College.

Hilary Winchester is joining Charles Darwin U as University Secretary.

Leigh Petschel will join Monash U in August, as CFO and senior VP.

Deakin U VC **Iain Martin** is the new chair of the Australian Technology Network (Deakin U, UTS, RMIT, Uni SA and Curtin U).

Michael Sankey is moving to Charles Darwin U as Director of Learning Futures and Lead Education Architect.

Sally Male will join Uni Melbourne next month as learning and teaching director for Engineering and IT.

Inga Davis joins Tim Cahill's Research Strategies Australia as principal.

Rachel Huang is Uni Queensland's new Chief Student Entrepreneur. The position "leads and mentors" students to engage with entrepreneurship opportunities on campus.

Dawn Bennett is to join Bond University as assistant provost.

Clare Pollock takes up the position of Senior DVC At Western Sydney U.

Renee Hindmarsh is South Australia's first skills commissioner.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

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

[Data Science Melbourne](#)

This is a group for anyone interested in 'Data Science'. We are not quite sure what the exact definition of a Data Scientist is, but if you deal with something generally related to converting data into useful insight then you will hopefully benefit from joining the group. Please follow the link to join in the group and [follow the events posted on Meetup](#).



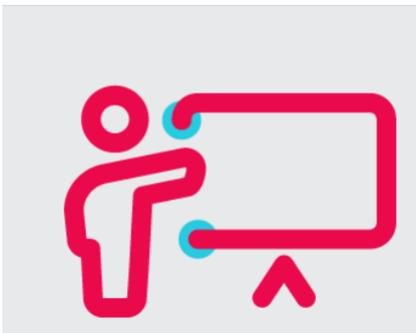
AIR Webinars

AIR provides online resources, innovative practices, professional development opportunities, and training for AIR members and non-members and the higher education community, including professionals from IR, effectiveness, assessment, planning, and related fields.



Professional Development

The Association for Tertiary Education Management provides high quality professional development and leadership programs for the tertiary education sector in Australia and New Zealand. Professional development events can be found by [Browse the ATEM PD Programs Calendar](#) or [Search Programs and events by Region](#).



Altis Public Training Courses

Build your Information Management knowledge and hone the skillsets required to manage the proliferation of organisational data. From strategic planning to implementation and management, our extensive suite of training courses provides you with critical insights and structured learning across the IM value chain.

National Careers Week webinar

Careers and student equity: Key influencers and careers advice for students from disadvantaged backgrounds

Zoom webinar

21 May 2021



As part of National Careers Week, the NCSEHE will host a virtual event on Friday 21 May 2021 (national times listed below), showcasing major NCSEHE-commissioned research on key influencers and careers advice for equity students.

HIGHER EDUCATION CONFERENCES & EVENTS

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

MTM Impact Symposium 2021

Chicago, IL, USA
28–30 July 2021

The MTM Impact Symposium is evolving to meet changing workforce talent needs. At its core, it remains the industry's premiere event for HR L&D leaders, professionals, and learning providers – particularly those professionals who are using Explorance's MTM and Blue suite of products and solutions. Based on feedback from attendees of the MTM Impact 2020 Virtual Experience, the 2021 symposium expands its topic coverage to include a selection of broader talent capability and innovation, re-imagining a post-COVID future.

2021 Student Service Centres Conference

31 May – 2 June 2021
Wellington, New Zealand



In planning for next year, we can confirm that the cancelled SSCC will re-emerge next year and be on in Wellington. At this stage, we hope to make it face to face depending on COVID restrictions, but it will certainly have an online element either way. In the meantime, we have been keeping people working with the student experience in touch with other program(me)s.

HERDSA 2021 Annual Conference Brisbane Australia 7–10 July 2021



HERDSA Executive and the Queensland Branch invite you join us at HERDSA 2021, the 43rd annual conference of the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA).

The Tertiary Education Management Conference (TEMC) Online 11–13 October 2021



It will be fabulous to have everyone together again and by then who knows, international students might start to reappear, COVID will have receded even further, and vaccines will be commonplace for everyone. So, let's be optimistic! The Call for Abstracts will open shortly. We look forward to your involvement and contribution and to meeting you in Brisbane. Registration will also open soon – click here to join the [TEMC mailing list](#) and keep updated.



INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCHER'S CORNER

Five quick questions with Anand Kulkarni



What is your job title?

Deputy Director, Planning, Performance and Risk at Victoria University, Australia.

Briefly, how would you describe your role in your institution?

I work with colleagues to drive short- and longer-term planning in the organisation, and develop and monitor key performance indicators for the university as a whole, including institutional rankings, and identifying strategic and enterprise risks.

From your perspective, what are your expertise in institutional research?

To be able to see how everything fits together and connect the dots. Higher Education is a complex, multifaceted sector requiring both a helicopter view and a detailed understanding of the factors that shape institutional competitiveness, and engagement with the broader society.

What do you believe will be the future priorities or the emerging areas for institutional research, in particular since COVID-19?

I think the core priorities will centre on:

- what will drive competitive advantage for institutions in the post-COVID-19 world with a focus on innovation?
- how do we understand institutional resilience?
- what will student mobility look like in the future?
- how can institutions contribute to broader economic and social recovery post-COVID-19?

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

... the 24-7 IT support provided by my family members while I was working from home during the lockdown.

Those who know me will understand!

Connect with Anand on LinkedIn

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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? Please send your contributions to the editor@aaair.org.au.

A reminder about the organisations' social media links to keep you up-to-date and in touch with all the latest news and events.



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



[Lizzie Li](#)

Editor, *The Institutional Researcher*

DISCLAIMER

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