

CULTURAL TRANSFORMATIONS: Annual Report

In 2006, the Cultural Transformations program embarked on a three-strand approach to building research capacity and developing collegial networks within in the Faculty: Transforming Praxis, Research Seminar Series, and Research Assistance.

I. Transforming Praxis

Rationale

Transforming Praxis is an initiative of the Cultural Transformations Research Program, coordinated by Ann Heirdsfield, Delia Hart and Kerry Mallan. It is informed by key system and faculty policies for enhancing research, teaching, learning and new technologies.

- QUT Learning and Teaching Plan 2007-2011
- QUT Learning and Teaching Capabilities Framework
- QUT Information Technology Strategy 2007-2011
- Faculty of Education Strategic Plan 2005-2007

The Transforming Praxis initiative focuses specifically on further developing the nexus between teaching and learning and research within the Education Faculty's online teaching community.

Aims and Objectives

- Showcase Faculty based research into online teaching and learning – specifically online engagement
- Share and respond to online learning and teaching practices across multiple disciplines
- Explore contextual issues surrounding online learning and teaching practices across multiple disciplines
- Facilitate and *promote* collaborative and productive engagement with the learning and teaching research nexus
- Disseminate learnings from and outcomes of Teaching and Learning Grants

Actions and Strategies

(a) Transforming Praxis Seminar Series. Feedback from each seminar informed selection of seminar topics and format of presentation

Date	Topics explored	Presenters
April 7	<i>Engaging Online</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pedagogical possibilities of case studies to engage students in online discussions• Characteristics and needs of off-campus students learning online and the support they require to engage effectively with OLT.	D. Hart, J. Brannock A. Heirdsfield, J. Davis Respondent: K. Lee
June 6	<i>Making sense of the theory informing pedagogies of OLT</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New learning demands made on teachers/students in online courses?• Design features optimise the teaching and learning process in an online delivery mode?	S. Dawson, G. Winslett Respondent: D. Hart
Aug 21	<i>Engaging Learners – constructivist approaches to online learning and teaching</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reflective and social computing tools such as chat, blogs, wikis and e-portfolios lesson and task templating	D. Hoven

	<p>software (such as Swarthmore Makers, Hot Potatoes, and WebQuests, and webpage creation software such as Dreamweaver).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authentic tasks and assessment, the integration of reflective ePortfolios and the scaffolding of generic skills, such as teamwork, visual communication and career planning, through online and interactive learning resources. 	<p>J. Smith (CI)</p> <p>Respondent: F. McCardle</p>
Sept 21	<p><i>Work-integrated learning – Four Approaches</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Pre-service anxiety, uncertainty about teaching, ICT integrated learning and teacher professionalism at work, by bringing flexibly delivered and accessible, digital examples of work-integrated, authentic experiences from schools to students' undergraduate classrooms.</i> 	<p>M. Campbell, A. Black. S. Nyvkist, A. Jetnikoff, W. Morgan</p>

(b) Development of Transforming Praxis website and wiki

The website for Cultural Transformations Research Program facilitated the development of a website and wiki for Transforming Praxis A range of resources were thus made available to support engagement with online learning, teaching and research Feedback from attendees at Transforming Praxis seminar series informed the selection of resources.

Web site	Wiki
<p>Ed Faculty home page – news & events</p> <p>Work-integrated learning: Four approaches in education http://education.qut.edu.au/news/news-event.jsp?news-event-id=10091</p> <p>Education Staff Discuss Engaging Learners http://education.qut.edu.au/news/news-event.jsp?news-event-id=9613</p> <p>Transforming Praxis seminar held at Kelvin Grove campus http://education.qut.edu.au/news/news-event.jsp?news-event-id=8532</p> <p>Transforming Praxis launch http://education.qut.edu.au/news/news-event.jsp?news-event-id=8094</p>	<p>Talking Praxis -pdf files</p> <p>Journal articles on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical evaluations of E-learning eg LMS, and SOTL Constructivist Learning Tools Quality Assurance concerns about teaching and learning
<p>Transforming Praxis Main page</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of aims and objectives Link to ppt used in seminar presentations 	<p>Transformers Glossary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides descriptions of online technological terms an entry point for 'digital immigrants' new to language of online technology to collaboratively develop a shared language for and understanding of terms
<p>Each seminar page has</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> feedback on seminar from attendees power points used in seminar presentation discussion topic – question and answer 	<p>Online Resources</p> <p>facilitates the sharing and recommendations of other resources</p>

Achievements

There is evidence to suggest that this initial program has succeeded in establishing and engaging a community interested in 'transforming (online teaching and learning) praxis'.

- Total number of attendances for Transforming Praxis Seminar Series = **80**
- Feedback indicates that attendees valued most highly the following aspects of the TP Seminar Series.
 - Format of sessions- productive and time effective
 - Cross-Faculty Engagement range of inspiring presenters
 - Practical examples, eg. variety of approaches that show what 'ordinary' people can and are doing.
- Most requested topics (readings and presentations):
 - Constructivist/collaborative learning environments
 - Online technologies for problem/inquiry based learning
- Hits on Transforming Praxis Website as of October 2 2006
 - 751 visits** to front page of TP which contains links to seminar ppts
 - 658 visits to wiki** – Talking praxis readings and other resources
- Successful dissemination and awareness strategy of having a hot link on Faculty Home page to News and Events

Collated Feedback

What participants found worthwhile about seminars

- Stimulating in terms of getting students to be engaged with online teaching and learning. The format is good – ie critical friend
- More of the same please.
- See how others address learning needs of students online – great feedback
- I really need to find out more about the theory behind online design pedagogies. Would appreciate info on the CT site about this.
- Insight into different practices, applications – critique of OLT tools, approaches. Would like an online discussion list for OLT users – tips, ethical issues etc.
- Food for thought to inform more effective teaching and interaction/engagement with students. Critique was worthwhile!
- Most things! The format of the presentation with critical friend was very effective
- Very valuable and informative session. Interested in learning about demographics of internal/external students and possibilities for further engagement of students. Great job.
- Discussion was most interesting
- Interesting/engaging- especially as lads weren't eulogising OLT
- Speakers provocation of thinking about new context and effective pedagogies for new context
- Speakers subverting the questions – great. Sense of humour.
- Engaging speakers – raising /highlighting significant issues. Useful links to follow up eg OLT site
- Thought provoking discussion, entertaining and engaging
- Discussion of context – dilemmas facing QUT's OLT in terms of economic imperatives driving online learning and the corporatisation of QUT (and other uni's)
- Excellent variety – exciting developments
- Great ideas – very useful – practical
- Good to see what 'ordinary' people can do
- Explanation and practical examples of work carried out on these linked projects

- Good to hear about such innovative projects and work in the Faculty
- Format is good – presentations were a little rushed – could have listened for longer
- Excellent information provided as a starting point for follow-up
- Lots of stimulating and thoroughly worthwhile links to learning/teaching and research informing teaching
- It was useful to hear about the different approaches
- Inspiring to see commitment to teaching and learning and the different ways in which we can all improve our practice.

II. Research Seminar Series

The program of speakers for 2006 included:

Date	Speaker	Topic
29 th March 2006	Professor Jim Coleman	Maximising the benefits of overseas language immersion for second language learners
7 th Sept 2006	Karen Martin	Indigenous researchers and Indigenist: research paradigms infiltrating the research academy
Forthcoming Oct 2006	Clare O'Farrell	Foucault and Postmodernism

III. Program Research Assistance

Angie Dwyer and Delia Hart were employed as RAs for the Program. Angie's role was to provide research assistance to program members focussing on assistance with grant sourcing, grant writing, publications, and literature searches. Delia's role was to provide administrative assistance with seminar series and general duties associated with Program management, conceptual and administrative input to the Transforming Praxis series.

IV. CLI Showcase and Postgraduate and Research Showcase

The Program featured in both these showcases by promoting the publications, research projects, and current doctoral studies of its members.

V. SCERG (Socio-cultural education research group)

This initiative of Cultural Transformations members (Rahda Iyer and Cathie Doherty) has provided an important reading and discussion forum. For further information about aims and objectives, meeting times, etc. visit the link on the Cultural Transformations website:

<https://olt.qut.edu.au/edu/cli/sec/index.cfm?fa=displayPage&rNum=3224221>

VI. Recommendations/Feedback (Please email your suggestions to:

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