Everything looks set for the Social Work degree to receive full accreditation from 2010. This means that all the School’s courses are now fully accredited.

The College of Arts Conference took place on 2-3 November, with many SoSS academics and postgraduates involved.

The new Urban Planning Program was launched by Professor Wayne McKenna, Dean of the College of Arts, on 5 November. A unique four-year degree with an emphasis on the Greater Western Sydney region, this program positions UWS and the SoSS as the ideal training ground for the next generation of urban planners.

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SoSS Publications & Presentations


Brenda Barlett presented *The Future of Youth Work* to the Youth Homelessness Matters Conference.

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SoSS Travellers

Sheridan Linnell heads to Geelong from 30 October - 7 November to present at the biennial conference of Australian & New Zealand Art Therapy Association (ANZATA) conference. Sheridan’s paper is titled *Honouring risk in the context of uncertainty*.

Kevin Dunn is off to Perth to present at the fourth State of Australian Cities (SOAC) Conference being held from 24 - 27 November.

Irene Veljanova, SoSS HDR student, travels to Austria from 6 - 14 November to present at a conference.

Tim Griffin is travelling to Auckland to present *Role of the Online Tutor in a Large-Enrolment Unit* at the Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education (ASCILITE) Conference. Same Places, Different Spaces. December 6-9, Auckland.
SoSS Seminar Series

Peace Journalism and a Global Standard for Reporting Conflict

Associate Professor Jake Lynch
Director, Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Sydney

Monday 16 November, 1-2.30pm
Location: Kingswood Rm 0.2.02 with video link to Bankstown Rm 1.1.114

Journalism is unaccountable because unassessable, according to the Oxford philosopher, Onora O'Neill, delivering a BBC Reith Lecture. Many involved in conflicts around the world have cause for complaint about media influence, from Rwandan hate radio to the distortions of the New York Times and Washington Post in covering the debate over the invasion of Iraq. Prime movers in Radio Mille Collines have been tried for war crimes; the two US newspapers had the good grace to apologise. But how could accountability be increased? Not by strengthening regulation, perhaps, but by devising a global standard for assessing the reporting of conflict. Jake Lynch puts forward the credentials of peace journalism, as the basis for such a standard, and explains how it could work.

SoSS Conference Reports

Blackboard Summit Australasia

Tim Griffin and Kathie Hill attended the Blackboard Summit Australasia ’09 in Brisbane on September 15 and 16. Blackboard is the Learning Management System (LMS) at UWS, branded as vUWS. Incidentally, UWS runs Campus Edition 8 and one of the interesting facets of the conference was finding out the differences between versions of Blackboard. Blackboard 9 is being developed which will better integrate other applications, including Web 2.0 and provide an interface that will allow students to switch between them and will have a more usable and flexible interface for both teachers (e.g. drag and drop, drop down menus) and students: for further information see www.blackboard.com/Release9/Whats-New.aspx.

Keynotes and papers were diverse as the conference catered for those across academic, technical support and systems management roles and ranged across secondary, technical and university educational institutions. Innovative applications of technology or innovative solutions to problems faced by institutions featured in many papers. Tim presented a paper on the benefits of an LMS (i.e. Blackboard) in efficiently managing large-enrolment units. The session was well attended and some attendees shared their practice tips, some of which were quite useful and have gone into the ‘toolbox’.

One keynote speaker was former Young Australian of the Year and Indigenous Youth Advocate, Tania Major who talked about ‘IT and Remote Indigenous Communities - Challenges and Possibilities’. She talked about education as liberating and how the digital world has reached even the remotest communities in Cape York, but the potential has fallen far short of the reality with breakdown in the infrastructure and technical support. She said that wiring IT is easier than ‘wiring’ communities and people, which are the real challenges.

As with all conferences, there was a great chance to network and Kathie has already followed up on some of her contacts.

UWS Sustainability Research Symposium

Dr Awais Piracha and Robyn Bushell both presented papers at the College of Business 2009 Sustainability Research Node Symposium, held at Parramatta on 30th October. Awais presented his ongoing research into the effects of the Australia tax laws on sustainable behaviour, in particular the Fringe Benefits Tax, which currently actively encourages excessive milage to receive larger tax breaks through car leasing. Robyn presented work with Bruce Simmons from the School of Natural Sciences on their values based planning methodology and work with all levels of government and SMEs to encourage socially and environmentally responsible business practices.
Postgraduate News

Ashley Harris has recently been appointed Postgraduate Liaison Officer. He is based at the Kingswood Campus.

Ash sees his role as raising awareness of the resources and funding available to postgraduate students. Having gone through the PhD process himself, Ash knows what it’s like having to worry about finding the right funding application form let alone filling it out. Ash hopes to take a little bit of the stress out of this process so students can continue to focus on their studies. He urges students to contact him if they are having difficulties or are unsure what assistance they could be getting.

He has already introduced a new funding form called the Candidate Project funds application form which is now available on the School of Social Sciences website in the Research & Higher Degrees section. Thanks to Kathie Hill. There you will find links to other relevant forms as well saving students the trouble of scouring the UWS website.

Organising the specific details of the upcoming postgraduate retreat is in full swing and in the next edition we will have a full wrap up of the two day event!

SoSS Postgrads at the College of Arts Conference 2009

Emily Burns presented a paper that looked at Understanding Culture through Guesthood.

Robbie Lloyd spoke on the topic, ‘Shake it all about in the centre’: How Headspace Central Australia uses Multicultural Elders and Youth to Model Empowerment and Transformation.

Yulia Maleta presented on Considering the Theoretical Implications of Agency and Competence in the Context of Women’s Environmental Activism.

Clare Power presented on The Transition Model; Creating Resilient Communities.

Shanna Robinson, from the Tourism & Heritage Group, had a website display entitled, Experimental Travel and Anti-Touristic Encounters.

Brian Salter presented on The International Society for Krishna Consciousness: Religious Intentional Communities as States Within a State.

Kumara Tarr spoke about Action/Participant Research and the Arts with Early Childhood Educators.


Four SoSS postgrads presented in a panel session, ‘Travel, Tourism and Worldmaking’.

Ashley Harris presented Everyone Has a Story to Tell: Exploring the Associations and Connections Made by Visitors at a Zoo, Art Gallery and Two Museums.

Garth Lean spoke about Landmines, Rebels, Voodoo Gods and a Website: An Exploration of Transformative Travel through Mobile Methods.

Erika Smith introduced her doctoral research, Excluding You! Representations of the Kokoda Track from 1990-2009.

Adam Trau looked at Community-based Cultural Tourism in Vanuatu’s First World Heritage Site: A Case-Study of ‘Roi Mata Cultural Tours’.

A session on ‘Cultural Diversity, Racism and Belonging in Australia’ included presentations from:


Jacqueline Nelson looked at working Towards a Theory of Anti-Racism.

Brigid Trenerry explored Anti-racism: Building Evidence and Utility for “What Works”.

Irena Veljanova talked about Ethnic Category and Power: The Case of Macedonianness in Australia.

(L-R) Garth Lean, Robyn Bushell & Adam Trau
College of Arts Conference 2009
Indigenous Tourism in Chile

The Fundacion Minera Escondida, which is funded by BHP as a component of their corporate social responsibility in Chile, identified within its strategic objectives the need to assist the development of the Atacameño Indigenous communities in the San Pedro de Atacama region. In the last 15 years tourism has seen good growth in San Pedro, which is now the second most important destination in Chile in terms of visitor numbers. However the development has been unregulated, with no strategic policies in relation to the Atacameño people, their rights and control of their heritage or the development of Indigenous Tourism.

Robyn Bushell and Juan Salazar were invited to undertake a scoping study to identify key issues and needs and potential roles for FME in Indigenous Tourism in the San Pedro de Atacama region. They have just returned from a second trip to Chile where they conducted workshops with local stakeholders, government departments and FME. Utilising a values based method they have been identifying common purpose and shared values that can form the basis of consensus building, partnerships and strategic tourism development that will protect the important values of local people - maintaining the integrity of the natural and cultural heritages but enabling economic growth in a sustainable manner.

Q & A with Natalie Bolzan

Natalie is Associate Professor and leader of the Community Welfare and Social Work Group. In September this year she was appointed Research Studies Convenor.

1. What was the last book you read? Hillary Mantel, 'Wolf Hall'. It is a great read, as thick as a phone book and better than lifting weights.

2. What was your dream job growing up? I was going to be a documentary film maker. The idea of travelling to exotic places and watching other people doing work, such as digging up archaeological sites, or tagging penguins really appealed to me.

3. What do you do to relax? I'm a reader. Bliss is reading in a Badedas bath with a glass of wine and some soggy proof nibbles on the edge of the bath.

4. If you could have a free ticket to anywhere, where would it be to? This week I think Antarctica looks nice.

5. Most interesting topic you’ve researched? Believe it or not, depression in middle aged women, years before I even dreamt that I would be a middle aged woman one. When I get there I'll let you know what its like.

6. What is the first thing you notice about someone when you first meet? Whether they smile or not.

7. If someone made a film of your life, who would play you? A very young Katherine Hepburn. Others have suggested Annette Benning but I'm going with Kate.

8. What three words would you use to describe yourself? Lucky, happy and gorgeous. (Well if I don't say it who will?)

9. Advice for SoSS postgrads? This too will pass... so you might as well enjoy what you can of it and realise you are becoming a world class expert at something.

10. The book that changed your life was... Willkie Collin's 'the Woman in White', I think it was the first time it really occurred to me that there were many versions of the truth and that most people really believed they had the right one, and it was a murder mystery to boot.