

Newsletter No 25

June 2010

## Emeritus Faculty Australian National University



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### The ANU College structure – realigning excellence in research and education

**By Professor Ian Chubb AC,  
Vice-Chancellor and President  
The Australian National University, who  
has announced his retirement.**

In 2004 there was a review of ANU. One of the recommendations was, in essence, that we work to bring our academic disciplines together because the old separation between the Faculties and the Institute of Advanced Studies (IAS) was not providing the best opportunities for staff or for students. Subsequent major reviews of key discipline areas made a similar point.

Recognition of this issue had been part of the ANU agenda intermittently in one form or another since the early 1980s. A review committee of the Faculty of Arts in 1982, for example, consisting of four external professors and the ANU Dean, thought the overlap and duplication of academic areas between the Faculty and the Research School “rather bizarre,” especially where they shared “identical scholarly concerns and interest.” The Vice-Chancellor of the day set up an ‘Interface Committee’ to look at the relationship between the IAS and the

Faculties more broadly, but there were strong barriers keeping them apart.<sup>1</sup>

Discussion around the broader structural character of ANU resurfaced in the 1990s. The IAS was subject to a comprehensive external review in 1995, jointly sponsored by ANU and the Australian Research Council (ARC). The ARC reported the outcomes to the Government at the end of that year, confirming that the IAS undertook “research of very high quality as judged by international standards and demonstrates intellectual leadership across many disciplines.” The ARC recommended that

ANU give attention to improvement in a number of areas, particularly through strengthening the ties between the Institute and the Faculties.<sup>2</sup>

Nearly 10 years later, the 2004 quality review constituted a significant turning point in the integration debate within our institution. It found “a much closer integration” of the IAS with the University’s Centres and Faculties than was identified in 1995, but nevertheless concluded that there

<sup>1</sup> S.G. Foster & M.M. Varghese, *The Making of the Australian National University, 1946-1996* (ANU E Press, 2009), p. 313

<sup>2</sup> Cited in *ANU: university with a difference*. The Report of the Committee established by the Council of The Australian National University to evaluate the quality of ANU performance (September 2004), p. 6

were still many “islands whose activities are detached from the mainland if not the heartland of the University.”<sup>3</sup>

The 2004 review panel – chaired by Professor Deryck Schreuder (the Vice-Chancellor of The University of Western Australia from 1998 to 2004) and including university leaders from some of the best institutions in the world – strongly recommended that we continue to improve our internal cooperation and integration to promote cross-disciplinary collaboration, as well as to reduce duplication of effort, with each student ideally having an intensive education integrated with research.<sup>4</sup>

Following the review, there was substantial discussion within the University. Working parties were established and papers circulated during 2005. Many meetings and discussions were held. We considered a question at length - do we optimise our disciplinary strengths, for the benefit of staff and students, by fragmenting them across internal boundaries? Not many people thought so.

Instead, given the expertise available at ANU, it was considered that we could offer an education and research environment simply second to none in Australia and up there with some of the best in the world. What has been done since has been directed to that objective. Simply the objective remains to provide the best environment for staff as researchers and teachers and the best possible education at undergraduate and graduate levels for students.

There were additional pressures:

- The entry into the ARC was a positive a step – but it exchanged part of a (diminishing in value) strategic resource for small targeted packets that we won with a one in three success rate and which were funded at less than the cost of prosecuting the research.
- In that context, the spread and atomisation of our organisation was

stopping us from building strategically the capacity we needed to maintain the quality and focus of our research and research infrastructure in an increasingly constrained funding environment.

- Inadequate indexation of grants to the University means that more than one-half (on average) of each annual increase in salary has to be absorbed – or more discretionary funding earned. We cannot go broke.

We also saw the separation of our disciplines as constraining our ability to offer coherent educational programs at the cutting edge of knowledge that offered our students uniquely challenging experiences. We wanted to ensure they were engaged in courses informed by current research and active researchers – as a source of knowledge and as a way of learning.

We acknowledged that our students make ANU a distinctive research institute – indeed, they make it a university. The distinctiveness of ANU as an ‘education-intensive research institute’ emerged as a key theme and the opportunities this presented to create greater synergies within the institution which could benefit both staff and students were taken up.

After a lengthy consultative period – and a much massaged document on organisational improvements – the University settled on a structure of what we came to call ‘Colleges’ (seven in all, grouping together the 30 previous academic units) as the means by which we should address the key recommendations of the 2004 review. Each School of the IAS was aligned with the relevant Faculty, forming in combination the basic organisational unit of the University.

The Colleges began operation as functional units for the organisation and management of research and education at ANU on 1 January 2006. They link research and teaching at undergraduate, postgraduate and higher degree levels. They are overarching units within which we conduct research at the highest standards we can support and deliver educational programs informed by current research, with active

<sup>3</sup> ANU: *university with a difference*, pp. 7-8

<sup>4</sup> ANU: *university with a difference*, pp. ix, xii

researchers committed to giving students a memorably good experience.

The ANU Colleges work locally and with substantial autonomy to organise themselves in a way that best suits their discipline mix. There is not a 'one size fits all' approach. They are allowed to be different. In fact, each College is different from the others: in size; in the mix of disciplines it contains; and in the balance between teaching and research activities. Therefore, each College has adopted slightly different structures for its internal decision-making.

We have fine-tuned the College system since 2006. External reviews are the means by which ANU identifies the qualities of its outcomes in both research and education, and considers the best use and alignment of our resources. Major reviews in the Social Sciences, the Biosciences, Chemistry, Earth Sciences and the Asia-Pacific area have allowed us to improve our organisational arrangements. From 2009 the seven Colleges were reconfigured into the following entities that we have today:

- ANU College of Arts & Social Sciences
- ANU College of Asia & the Pacific
- ANU College of Business & Economics
- ANU College of Engineering & Computer Science
- ANU College of Law
- ANU College of Medicine, Biology & Environment
- ANU College of Physical & Mathematical Sciences

The ANU Colleges should provide a robust planning framework that enables ANU to respond to the unpredictabilities of the future. We should move away from an opportunistic profile: not replacing staff in order to manage budgets without having due regard for what is important. The overall aim of our organisational changes was, and is, straightforward: to use our resources to enable the best researchers to do the best research they can, and ensuring that our students interact with and learn from many of Australia's best academics in their field.

By realigning our traditions of excellence in research and education, the ANU College structure should enable us to balance change with continuity.

### **Professor Chubb's retirement statement**

Colleagues,

I advised the University Council this morning [June 4, 2010] that I intend to retire from the ANU on 30 June 2011.

Decisions like this are never easy, but there is a time when it is right for them to be made. I think that this is the right time, in my 68<sup>th</sup> year.

There will be ample time to thank you for your efforts - and your support - over what will be 10.5 years as your Vice-Chancellor. You can be sure that I greatly appreciate what you have achieved for this University and its standing nationally and internationally.

The Chancellor has sent out a press release which is reproduced below.

The search for my successor will begin immediately.

With best wishes,

Ian Chubb  
Vice-Chancellor

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### **Chancellor's appreciation**

ANU Vice-Chancellor Ian Chubb AC told University Council today [June 4, 2010] that he will retire in 12-months' time, after more than a decade leading the national university.

Making the announcement, ANU Chancellor Gareth Evans AO said he and other Council members were saddened by the news, but recognised that ANU was in an extremely healthy state due to the work of the Vice-Chancellor.

"Professor Chubb has invigorated ANU, made the most of its exceptional research strengths, and extended those riches to all students, making the educational experience at ANU a truly unique one," Professor Evans said.

"He has fulfilled the high expectations of the ANU founders, to make ANU a place to 'advance the cause of learning and research ... and take its rightful place among the great universities of the world,' and has enriched the relationship with the Commonwealth, making ANU a national institution of which all Australians can be proud.

"Professor Chubb has made an exceptional contribution to the strength and standing of ANU, and to higher education in this nation. He has been a leading defender of the vital role Australian universities play in sustaining our healthy democracy and the role of ANU in promoting high-level public debate.

"By leading ANU so successfully through a time of change and uncertainty in Australian higher education, Professor Chubb leaves a remarkable legacy.

"He has driven a period of extraordinary growth in the university's finances, student and staff numbers, infrastructure and on and near campus accommodation.

"Professor Chubb has also led ANU through some difficult times: most notably Canberra's devastating 2003 bushfires that all but laid waste to the Mt Stromlo Observatory; the 2007 hail storm which caused extensive damage to ANU; and the Global Financial Crisis that left so many universities in dire circumstances around the world but saw ANU emerge in a strong position.

"Professor Chubb has led this great institution with determination, assurance and compassion, and his work will leave a lasting imprint both on ANU and the nation.

"When it comes to university leaders, anywhere in the world, Ian Chubb is as good as it gets. He will be a very hard act to follow," Professor Evans concluded.

## Milestones

University progress made over Professor Chubb's term include:

- \* Total income at ANU (in 2009 dollars) has increased from \$565 million in 2001 to \$830 million in 2009;

- \* Research grants and consultancies have increased from \$65 million a year to \$149 million a year, and the total value of the property, plant and equipment has grown from \$876 million to \$1,549 million;

- \* Total student places (EFTSU) have increased from 8,425 to 12,792;

- \* Higher Degree by Research student places have grown 50 per cent, up from 1,142 to 1,781;

- \* Postgraduate student places have grown over 100 per cent, up from 1,102 to 2,484;

- \* Undergraduate places have grown from 6,066 to 8,350;

- \* International student places have grown from 508 to 1,836 (in 2009);

- \* Academic staff numbers have risen, from 1,063 to 1,477;

- \* The number of students in on-campus and near-campus accommodation has grown from 2,284 students in 2001 to 3,686 in 2009, and a projected 4,911 by 2013 once building projects initiated by Professor Chubb are complete.

Among Professor Chubb's achievements are:

- \* Reinforcing the University's long-held research strengths, using them to provide a unique, high-quality education for all students; and leading the institutional restructure that facilitated that change;

- \* Winning a graduate medical school for ANU, now well established and growing;

- \* Cementing and extending the special relationship between ANU and the Commonwealth Government, which reached its peak with the announcement of the \$111.7 million Public Policy Precinct for ANU last month, [See report Page 7] and

- \* The renewal and upgrade of many of the University's facilities.

### Things you will never ever know

(Inspired by Heisenberg's Principle of Uncertainty)

The moment you are born and first see your  
mother  
The moment when you die and last see your  
lover  
The moment when sleep shuts the curtains of  
your mind  
These are the moments you will never ever find

Nor will you ever know the nature of time  
Nor the depth of space, nor the number nine  
The Quark and the Lepton will not be understood  
Nor will you comprehend the nature of The Good

Some people know that they are always right  
That certainty is real does not cause them fright  
But some are relaxed to know it is also true  
The sum of one and one is approximately two

*Giles Pickford*

### Climate debate stimulating ideas

**John Slaughter, retired US Army General and a retired neurosurgeon has joined the ANUEF's climate debate with a totally new angle – stimulation of ideas.**

The climate change "question" is a beautiful one to exercise the mind. But it will not surprise you that I take a somewhat different slant. In short I am not bothered by the climate change debate because I think that regardless of who is right or wrong there is not much we can do about it and the uproar is a good thing in general terms.

The so called "threat" gives the international political community something good to talk about, and as most "dire threats" may well produce a response which transcends the petty preoccupations of nationalism, political borders, military posturing and economic self interest.

This debate may well bring people together (well, some people anyway) and to some extent therefore be unifying or at least uniting in the face of a "common (or at least shared) perceived threat". My view is probably contrary to good scientific thought, but rests upon the historical context of human behavior.

There have always been great constraints upon basic human activities: usually war or manipulated political unrest or massive sweeping biological contagions or greed or the unanticipated consequences of false economic premise.

In virtually every instance eventually some path has been found or has developed out of the difficulty in order to permit human enterprise to resume its grand adventure.

At the moment the constraint is "global warming" whatever that actually is. The bad news is that scientists don't agree about the nature of the phenomenon: the good news is that there is a growing and now widespread consensus that "something needs to be done about it".

It is the mechanics which have brought this consensus about and the fact of the consensus itself which are good, not necessarily the components of the consensus.

Whatever will be done will have a broad economic impact and a performance impact for a short time. It will modify and perhaps eliminate certain forms of human activity, but as usual a way will be found out of the dilemma.

Since I happen to think we humans have been trashing the planet (the millions of tons of plastic bottles floating around in a big circle in the Pacific is a good example) my fond hope, not based upon a rational expectation, is that something generally good will emerge from the climate change worry.

I also happen to think the debate is healthy and useful because it will necessarily stimulate further scientific investigation and break loose more money for scientific inquiry and that is always a good thing.

The prospect of ecologically correct energy sources is very exciting. We now have these massive coal trains of 120 to 140 rail cars each carrying 64 tons of coal from the Powder River basin in Wyoming to coal fired generators all around the country. The advent of giant wind farms is not

aesthetically pleasing, but I find it better than the coal trains. - **John Slaughter**

### Who belongs to ANUEF? A series

#### **Adrian Gibbs – Biologist – on Viruses and absinthe**

I have been a biologist all my life, and a true believer of Theodosius Dobzhansky's famous dictum that "Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution". I have been lucky enough to be able to apply this concept to the study of viruses all my working life.

I was born in the mid 1930s near Greenwich, UK, and so was a child in wartime Britain. From the age of four, life was divided between boarding schools and holidays with my Granny in the Essex countryside – 'Doodlebug Alley' in 1944/5. Holidays were those of a country kid, initially exploring the woods, rabbiting, fishing, scrogging, hanging around the Italian PoW work gangs etc, but later collecting brains, parasitic worms, etc. I was particularly fortunate in going to Kings College, Taunton, for my secondary schooling. It had a most adventurous group of young enthusiastic staff. Science teaching was largely by experiment, and as I was the only sixth former taking biology, I had the biolab to myself. The poor guy who was given the task of teaching me biology was Major Allen, a maths teacher who also ran the cadet force; we worked through the textbook and learned biology together!! The biolab was the first purpose-built school science laboratory in the UK, so I had the space to keep lots of aquaria, a mouse colony and an observation bee hive. A visit to the local brewery was instructive, and subsequently many of my friends (and at least one master) proclaimed my liqueurs, including absinthe, to be excellent – no wonder my liver introduced me to teetotalism at the age of 50.

Two chance events while a botany student at Imperial College, London, led me to my lifelong interest in the origin and evolution of viruses. The first was reading "Fleas, Flukes and Cuckoos" by Miriam Rothschild and Theresa Clay. Miriam Rothschild was a member of the famous Rothschild family of

bankers and biologists who established Tring Museum, still a gracious traditional museum. The book mostly describes the fascinating world of the co-evolution of different fleas, lice and worms and their bird and mammal hosts. It shows how a combined study of hosts and their parasites greatly enhances understanding of the evolution of both. The other event was attending a seminar given by Kenneth Smith, who at that time led the world in describing and recording the diversity of viruses of plants and insects. So, before I went to do a Ph.D. in Fred Bawden's department at Rothamsted Experimental Station, 50 kms north of London, the die was cast.

Viruses are subcellular organisms that spread between, and replicate in, cellular organisms such as plants, animals and bacteria. We are mostly aware of those that cause various human diseases, such as 'flu and chicken pox, but others cause diseases of plants, insects, bacteria and fungi (such as mushrooms), indeed wherever they have been sought, viruses have been found; most of the DNA in the sea is from viruses, and more than one fifth of human genes are the defective remains of viruses. Viruses replicate in the cells of their hosts using the host's metabolic machinery. This replication produces characteristic particles containing the genes of the virus, and also causes symptoms. The symptoms aid the spread of particles to uninfected hosts, and start a new cycle of infection. Some viruses, such as 'flu are directly contagious and spread in droplets, but others require specific vectors, such as mosquitoes or aphids.

Back in the 1950s, when I started research, the study of viruses was still in its early stages. Their novelty and small size had been first discovered at the turn of the century, but their minute particles were not seen until electron microscopes first became available in the 1940s. There was much discussion in those days whether viruses were 'living' or 'dead', as their particles could be crystallized like chemicals, but they replicated! To understand their origins and evolution seemed a distant dream, however the study of viruses has many experimental advantages and, as most of the major advances of molecular biology have



involved work with viruses, information about them has surged ahead. As a result, during my working life, the dream became reality, and we now have a clear understanding of how viruses evolve, although when and how they first originated is still actively controversial.

Rothamsted was a very interesting place to work. It is the oldest agricultural research institute in the world, founded in 1843 by Sir John Lawes in the grounds of his inherited 16<sup>th</sup> century manor. He started the famous Broadbalk and Park Grass fertilizer experiments there in the 1850s, superphosphate was invented there, most of the basic work on pyrethroid insecticides was done there. Rothamsted had one of the first "electronic computers" operated by switches and plug boards; it occupied a whole large room, and when finally switched off in 1970, it went straight to the British Museum!!! As Rothamsted was close to London, and employed many leading scientists as staff, one never knew who one might meet when all the staff assembled at 'Green Gables' every afternoon for tea. I well remember one afternoon finding myself next to Tenzing Norgay of Everest fame and, on another, Ronald Fisher, who worked at Rothamsted from 1919-1933 while founding modern statistics and population genetics!

My Ph.D. supervisor and first mentor was Fred Bawden, who, with his colleague Bill Pirie, had shown in 1937 that the particles of tobacco mosaic virus were not just protein, as had been claimed, but contained a fixed amount of ribonucleic acid – the first clear indication that genetics might be linked to nucleic acids, not proteins. At Rothamsted I worked on viruses of crop plants and, with Bill Bailey, a bee pathologist, described some of the first viruses of honey bees. The interest in bee viruses led to meeting Max Day of CSIRO, who was visiting UK and, via him, Frank Fenner, my second major mentor. I had first heard about Frank and his innovative department from my close colleague Bryan Harrison, who had visited JCSMR in 1965. The department was leading the world in the study of the ecology and molecular biology, and hence the evolution, of many different animal viruses, especially poxviruses and 'flus, so I was

thrilled to join it in 1966 and then, in 1971, to move to the recently formed RSBS.

The search for the origins and evolution of viruses has involved me in several parallel but distinct strands of work. Not only just searching for viruses that might provide useful clues, but also working out how best to store virus data, and how to derive information from that data. At ANU I and my colleagues collected and described novel viruses from interesting sites throughout Australia. Many came from native plants, also insects, even an alga, and we helped others in such work, notably Graeme Laver and his colleagues collecting 'flu viruses from sea birds on Barrier Reef islands.

When I started research virus data was stored in journals and books. One of my first projects was to convert Kenneth Smith's 1957 "Textbook of Plant Virus Diseases" to an edge-punched card index to allow me to search for hidden character correlations. This exercise convinced me that books were too inflexible for a fast developing science like virology, so in 1968 I initiated the loose-leaf, but printed, "Descriptions of Plant Viruses", and these are now fully online and excellently curated at Rothamsted. At RSBS, in the 1970s, Les Watson with Mike Dallwitz of CSIRO were starting to invent the first fully computerized taxonomic database, so with the help of an army of colleagues, we used their system to assemble a database for plant viruses of characters like the shape and size of their particles, their hosts and symptoms, etc. Many 'megapersonhours' later this has become the database of the International Committee on the Taxonomy of Viruses. However these data, although very useful for pathologists, epidemiologists, etc reveal little about the evolutionary relationships of viruses. That evidence comes from gene sequences which, like languages, contain both functional information and also accumulated past mutational changes, and these can be analysed to recover evolutionary information.

Gene sequencing was first invented in the 1970s. In 1974 the first complete set of genes of a virus, coliphage phiX174, were sequenced. This feat was accomplished by a large team, including an Australian, Gillian

Air, in Cambridge UK, and involved several years of work, whereas the latest methods would take less than a day to accomplish the same, and so they produce mind-boggling amounts of data. The open-access international gene sequence databases now contain a vast set of data with which the genes of Australian viruses can be compared. Charles Darwin in "On the Origin of Species" (Chapter 12) noted the particular advantages and disadvantages of asking evolutionary questions for the inhabitants of "oceanic islands" like Australia, and viruses are no exception. This has helped me and my colleagues to conclude from gene sequence analyses that whereas most Australian crop viruses entered with overseas trade over the past two centuries, others came from overseas much earlier, some perhaps to Sahul by the Austronesians, another from the top of Mount Kosciusko probably came in bird-borne seeds before the last Ice Age but after the last major interglacial, and a virus found in an alga in the Murrumbidgee River is perhaps as ancient as its host, whose fossils, gyrogonites, first appeared in the fossil record at least 350 million years ago!

These studies would not have been possible without the enthusiastic support of many gifted colleagues and also my family. My wife and I met as botany students and we have three fine sons; two have brought us lovely grandchildren, and the third brought us hot air ballooning. Competition ballooning, which we took up as a retirement project, is an fascinating and exciting sport, it is like orienteering, but in 3D and in a medium, air, you cannot see, and you only have control over the balloon's height (NB it has a mass of several tonnes and no brakes!!). However, with skill and, in my case, lots of luck, balloons can be steered from target to target across the countryside. Great fun!!!

PS If anyone wants further details of my virus studies, there is a list of published papers, books, etc in the ANUEF eText

### **Education policies revisited**

**By Barry Ninham,  
Professor Emeritus, ANU**

The present debate on education policies leads me to recall an earlier era. In 1962 I

was a newly appointed 26-year-old PhD lecturer in Mathematics at the UNSW, back from America to do my bit.

My task was to lecture to groups of 200. There were seven other first year lecturers. My colleagues were all experienced ex-high school teachers upgrading by doing PhDs. They all knew how to teach, and how to set reasonable examinations.

At the end of the year each of us valiantly set one question for the whole class of 800, with possible marks 17. My question was on polar coordinates. If they spelt their name correctly they scored one point. If they were a girl they got another, for affirmative action. If they drew a graph with a vertical (y axis) and a horizontal (x axis) line, and a radius from the origin they got another point; 5 scored top marks; 10% scored zero; 90% scored in a narrow range from 2-4.

The same occurred for the questions of the other lecturers. When the marks were all put together the overall unscaled average was sharply peaked at 23%. This was a time when the State of NSW, with much fanfare, had adopted a new syllabus for high schools, the Wyndham scheme.

Our boss, eminent Professor of Nuclear Physics John Blatt, was furious and berated us all—until he found out that the average unscaled mark at the more highly rated University of Sydney was just as sharply peaked, around 24%. The sharp distributions had to be rescaled to give a bell shaped curve that reflected educational theory about the spread of abilities of students.

In the following year a colleague, teaching an advanced course in second year Applied Mathematics to 50 students, set and marked his examination at the end of the first semester. At the end of the year, tired of marking papers and anxious to get on with his research, he set a different three-hour examination. It was: *set your own examination and mark it.*

The good students set themselves easy questions, answered them well and gave themselves good grades. The poor students set themselves hard questions that they



could not answer. They gave themselves poor grades. The net result was exactly as for the first (graded examination) semester. He saved a lot of work and published the results of his experiment in *Vestes*, an education journal.

Somewhat later, as a professor at ANU, I witnessed the formation of a new political party among the students who I coached in rowing at the boat club. The party was called the Deadly Serious Party. Their candidate put up an excellent show at the Federal Elections. The platform on which they ran had two policies.

- On foreign policy: Tow New Zealand to Antarctica and sink it.
- On education: List the TES marks of all students nationwide in order on a computer. Then give them all 72%. This avoided any problems of elitism or bell curves.

The policy was never adopted and they all joined the Liberal Party.

This brilliant and original contribution to education policy that predates the present debate has never been properly recognised.

### **Colin Steele on judging panel**

Judges for Australia's richest book prize, the 2010 Prime Minister's Literary Awards, include ANUEF member Colin Steele, former ANU Librarian.

Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright, experienced literary judge, writer and editor will chair the judging panel for 2010's two new award categories-Children's Fiction and Young Adult Fiction. She will be joined by a founder of the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation, Ms Mary-Ruth Mendel and program coordinator of the Centre for Youth Literature at the State Library of Victoria, Mr Mike Shuttleworth.

Author and academic Professor Peter Pierce will return as chair of the fiction panel for the third year, and will be joined for the second year by Professor John Hay AC and Radio National executive producer of *Artworks* Dr Lyn Gallacher.

Mr Brian Johns AO, a former journalist, Penguin publishing director and managing director of the ABC and SBS will chair the non-fiction panel, together with academic, writer and reviewer Mr Colin Steele and book retailer Dr Faye Sutherland.

Together, the judging panels will review more than 300 books entered into the 2010 awards.

More information about the judges at [www.arts.gov.au/books/pmliteraryawards10/judges\\_information](http://www.arts.gov.au/books/pmliteraryawards10/judges_information)

### **\$111.7 million public policy precinct for ANU**

As noted on Page 3, the Australian National University will establish a new Australian National Institute for Public Policy to which the Commonwealth Government will contribute \$111.7 million.

ANU Vice-Chancellor Professor Ian Chubb said: "The importance of teaching and research as a foundation for future policy will be highlighted by the development of a public policy 'precinct' based around the new JG Crawford building."

An Australian National Institute for Public Policy will be established to highlight, under one banner, the public policy expertise available through ANU and its various specialist centres, including the Australian Centre on China in the World and the National Security College, and the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG).

Other beneficiaries from the funds include:

The Crawford School of Economics and Government will receive \$14 million to enhance public policy expertise at ANU, including the establishment of the H. C. Coombs Policy Forum.

\$7 million to support Sir Roland Wilson Foundation scholarships for public servants to study at ANU;

\$17.3 million National Security College operations;

A new \$19.8 million building to house jointly the new National Security College and the enhanced presence of ANZSOG in the precinct;

The recently announced \$53.1 million Australian Centre on China in the World (including a building); and

\$500,000 to scope the need and nature of additional accommodation for officials and students in Canberra for courses

Read a full report on the new public policy precinct and hear the Prime Minister's speech on the ANU News website:  
<http://news.anu.edu.au/?p=2137>

### **A bad day at the office - again**

By Kate Daniell

University staff are among the most dissatisfied with their jobs and working conditions in the UK and feel under increasing stress, according to a UK study. Job insecurity, poor working relationships, lack of job control and inadequate resources and communication are on the rise and levels of support are declining, according to scientists who wrote the report.

Their paper was published in the journal *Quality in Higher Education*.

One of the report authors, Dr Darren Van Laar, a psychologist at the University of Portsmouth, said, "Previous studies have been carried out to test the quality of working life in higher education but our survey is the first to assess both work and non-work contexts. The results provide a much wider picture of working life. "Many of the factors that underlie satisfaction at work are related to how well work is integrated with home life. These things cannot be considered in isolation."

The authors questioned more than 2,500 people in both academic and support roles in four universities. Most were on full-time permanent contracts and had been employed in higher education for six-ten years.

Don Anderson, of the ANU, comments, "The research base for the UK study isn't clear but the findings reported are similar to results from Australian studies.

"For example our survey of changes in the academic work role found evidence of stress although perhaps not to the extent in UK. Rather there was low morale and reports of lower standards due to changing work conditions associated with poor resourcing (student staff ratio has increased from 12 to over 20), poor career structure and frustration at the way universities are managed."

[See Anderson, Johnson and Saha  
[http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher\\_education/publications\\_resources/profiles/change\\_s\\_in\\_academic\\_work.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/publications_resources/profiles/change_s_in_academic_work.htm)

Staff were asked questions about job satisfaction, general well-being, home-work interface, stress at work, control at work and working conditions in a Work-related Quality of Life (WrQoL) scale devised by Dr Van Laar with University of Portsmouth spin-out company, QoWL Ltd.

Simon Easton of QoWL Ltd said, "Studies around the world show work related stress is widespread in higher education. University staff in the UK tend to report that demands are increasing, while support and a sense of having control at work have fallen.

"Many complain about the rushed pace of work, the lack of respect and esteem, having too much administrative work to do, inadequate administrative or technical support, and lack of opportunity for promotion. The psychological stress among university employees appears to be much higher than in other professional groups and the general population."

Simon Easton said employers finding out about staff well-being was the first step in diagnosing and improving job performance. This, in turn, has the potential to create a capable and productive workforce which benefits the employer, the students and the staff.

He said: "The WrQoL scale gives employers much more information about what is causing employee stress so they can target support in the right places. For example, it

can pinpoint if the key stresses are related to work-life balance and if necessary bring in flexible learning, work from home and other family-friendly policies.”

Dr Van Laar added: “Keeping staff happy and well is not just about having better productivity and balance sheets - employers also have a legal duty of care for the health and safety of their employees and a duty to assess levels of workplace psycho-social hazards, including stress and well-being.”

It is estimated by the Health and Safety Executive that 105 million working days are lost to job stress each year, accounting for 11 per cent of all absences and costing industry £8bn. Strong links have been established between work-related stress and under-performance, early retirement, employee turnover, accidents and substance misuse.

The researchers say the findings are particularly relevant to employers in the light of the recent publication of NICE public health guidance which suggests employers could save 30 per cent in staff absenteeism costs through using targeted assessment and intervention.

For more information, access QoWL website: <http://www.qowl.co.uk/>

### **ANUEF author at book launch**

The ACT Chief Minister, Jon Stanhope, launched two books by ANUEF member Ian Rae on May 25. The books are a novel, *The Wizard from the Isles*, and a volume of Australian short stories, *Rough End of the Stick*.

*The Wizard from the Isles* is published in Glasgow, and is the first in a trilogy. The second, *Tribulation*, is complete, and ready for release later this year.

Ian Rae says, “I am still writing the third, *Dark Renaissance*, for publication next year. It was at Les Murray’s behest that I sought publication in Scotland. I researched the substance of my narrative extensively, including a trip to Scotland, the Outer Hebrides and the Orkneys. I talked with some notable people, including the poet

Alan Riach, who is Professor of Scottish Literature at Glasgow University, the Lord Lieutenant of the Isles, Sandie Matheson, and Dr Finlay MacLeod, the living authority on Gaelic myth and legend.

“More importantly, I shared many a dram with ordinary folk who still live the old culture, and who were unfailingly generous with their own stories and advice.

“*Rough End of the Stick* contains fifteen stories in which I try to depict some quintessentially Australian traits, both on the home turf and in paddocks far afield. I present my characters at their best, their worst, and their most idiosyncratic.

“Les Murray has always advised me to steer clear of praise, for it engenders expectations that are inevitably disappointed. That is wise advice. Therefore I hope only that people might find something worthwhile in my work, and above all will enjoy the reading.”

### **Human rights inquiry**

The Australian Human Rights Commission is seeking comments on its draft submission for Australia’s appearance before the United Nations Human Rights Council’s Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in January 2011.

Submissions for the UPR by the Commission and non-government organisations are due to be submitted to the United Nations in July 2010. The Commission’s draft submission for Australian Human Rights Universal Periodic Review is at: [www.humanrights.gov.au/upr/20100517\\_upr\\_submission.html](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/upr/20100517_upr_submission.html)

Feedback should be sent to: [www.humanrights.gov.au/upr/feedback.html](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/upr/feedback.html)

### **Graduation ceremonies**

The Australian National University is conducting *Conferring of Awards* ceremonies on July 15 and 16.

ANU Emeritus Faculty members are invited to participate in the Academic Processions, at Llewellyn Hall. Register your intention to participate in one of the processions via the following web address:

**[http://www.anu.edu.au/sas/graduation/Emeritus\\_Poll/](http://www.anu.edu.au/sas/graduation/Emeritus_Poll/)**

First select the ceremony (or ceremonies) you wish to attend, and the area that you will be representing. A schedule for each ceremony is included on the website.

**Registrations close on Friday, July 9 at 5pm.** Participants must provide their own academic dress; the Office of the Council and Boards Secretariat (x52113 or Head.Cabs@anu.edu.au) may be consulted. Processions gather near the Graduands Robing Room; there will be signs on the day. Staff should assemble at least half an hour before the ceremony.

For more information contact the Graduations Officer - Alice Sharrad (x54648)

### Monthly get-together

ANUEF has booked the Forrest Room at University House for the first Wednesday of every month for members to get together for informal meetings. You get to the Forrest Room through the Fellows Cafe (The old Cellar Bar in the House basement).

Please come if you can. There is no need to RSVP. Go to the Fellows Cafe, buy your food and drink and join us in the Forrest Room which you get to through Fellows Cafe. We open from 12 noon to 2.30 pm.

### International research collaboration

The House of Representatives Industry, Science and Innovation Committee held its seventh public hearing for its inquiry into Australia's international research collaboration on May 24.

One of the points made by the ANU in its submission (No.14 on the committee's website) states, "Administrative complexities associated with bilateral agreements could be reduced through more active management of bilateral and multilateral research agreements by an Australian

Government Agency with the portfolio responsibility for international engagement. Currently participation in the European Framework Program is hampered by the EU struggling to engage with multiple Australian institutions...."

Those giving evidence included, from the **ANU, Professor Lawrence Cram, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Dr Mark Matthews, Centre for Policy Innovation.**

**For further information:** contact the Committee Secretary on (02) 6277 4594, or [isi.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:isi.reps@aph.gov.au). website at: [www.aph.gov.au/isi](http://www.aph.gov.au/isi)

### ANUEF Lecture diary dates

**16 June – The Vice-Chancellor: 'Research Universities and Australia's place in the World'**

**The Vice-Chancellor will be giving the ANUEF Lecture at 4pm in the Law Link Theatre for this event as it has more capacity than the Molony Room.**

14 July – The Lindsay Pryor Memorial Lecture with Peter Kanowski *'Lindsay's legacy: sustaining Canberra's urban forest'*

18 August – Jack Waterford 'TBA'

15 September – Don Anderson *'The Great Private/Public Schools Divide'*

20 October – Shirley Pipitone *'The Social Value of Lake Burley Griffin'*

17 November – TBA

15 December – ANUEF AGM + Christmas Party

### Your benefits

Check this web site for a list of benefits enjoyed by members.  
<http://www.anu.edu.au/emeritus/benefits.html>

### Next ANUEF Newsletter in October