



Editor's note

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Editor's Note

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Strategies to enhance the linkage between research and teaching in tertiary institutions are frequently discussed within the higher-education literature. For instance, there has been a call for newer approaches to learning to be adopted, which encourage a stronger alignment between undergraduate learning and the research activities being undertaken by the university (e.g., Roach, Blackmore, & Dempster, 2001). It is generally anticipated that both teaching and research will be mutually enriched as a result (Lucas, 2008). Incorporating staff research activities into the content of undergraduate lectures and including a research participation component into course assessment are strategies that are often used to promote the integration of learning and research. It is also important that novel strategies are developed and employed to further encourage the active participation of students in research-related activities.

One recognised benefit of integrating teaching and learning is its potential to promote deep-level, rather than surface-level, learning. For example, Roach et al. (2001) suggested that traditional teaching activities promote adoptive learning, which focuses on retaining established knowledge, as opposed to adaptive learning, which involves generating knowledge. Although traditional approaches to teaching that promote adoptive learning are essential, sole reliance on these approaches may inhibit creativity and the generation of transferable knowledge and skills. Research activities, by contrast, are likely to provide opportunities for adaptive learning, knowledge generation, and creativity (Roach et al.).

An additional issue to consider is whether students themselves wish to have a greater involvement in the research activities being conducted at their universities. This question was the focus of a qualitative study conducted by Jenkins, Blackman, Lindsay, and Paton-Salzberg (1998). Focus groups were conducted to determine students' current and desired level of engagement with research activities at their universities. The results indicated that students felt more motivated when lecturers discussed their research during classes. In addition, those students who wished to pursue further education felt that they

had more direction in terms of finding a supervisor for their studies as a result. Many of the students also expressed a desire to have greater involvement in research activities, as they often felt excluded from such activities (Jenkins et al., 1998). The research findings presented here suggest that both academics and students themselves recognise the value of integrating research and learning.

Towards the end of 2007, a committee of staff members from the School of Psychology at Griffith University identified the need to create a number of initiatives to enhance the learning experiences of undergraduate students. Further to the recognition of this need was an expressed desire of many staff and postgraduate researchers to facilitate a culture within the School that promoted research collaboration between staff and students of all levels. As a result, the *Strengthening our Undergraduate Research Culture Project* was overseen throughout 2008 by Associate Professor Alf Lizzio. This project comprised three components: (a) the establishment of **research interest groups**, which are facilitated by staff and postgraduate students throughout the School of Psychology at both the Gold Coast and Mt Gravatt Campuses; (b) the development of an **internship program** where advanced undergraduate students are provided with the opportunity to gain work experience within research laboratories and on established research projects; and (c) the development of an online **student journal**.

The *Griffith University Undergraduate Psychology Journal* was developed to serve four purposes: (a) the promotion of scholarship between staff and students across all levels of the School of Psychology; (b) to showcase some of the high quality work being produced by our undergraduate and honours researchers; (c) to promote the projects being conducted by staff and postgraduate researchers to undergraduate students; and (d) to encourage postgraduate researchers to become leaders in the scholarship process, by acting as reviewers and editors for the journal. Learning activities that involve the dissemination of work, provision of feedback, and peer assessment are considered to be particularly beneficial for promoting deeper levels of learning (Roach et al., 2001). The development of a journal certainly incorporates these elements: undergraduate researchers are provided with feedback from their work and opportunities to develop their writing skills. In addition, postgraduate researchers have the opportunity to practice critical analysis to determine the quality of work and provide feedback to their peers in a constructive manner.

This is the first issue of the Griffith University Undergraduate Student Psychology Journal. In Part I of this issue, a selection of undergraduate researcher essays are presented. These students were invited to submit modified versions of assessment items that they had submitted as part of their

course assessment throughout 2008. Each of the essays that appear in this issue were independently peer-reviewed by two postgraduate researchers. In Part II, three abstracts from honours research projects are presented. Each of the researchers featured in Part II are now completing postgraduate degrees within the School of Psychology at Griffith University. Finally, Part III presents an overview of some of the scholarly activities that are being conducted by researchers within the School of Psychology, including Dr Tamara Ownsworth (Lecturer), Jennifer Barbour (PhD researcher), and Claire Hitchings (Professional Doctorate researcher).

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the people who gave their time to contribute articles and research profiles to this issue. In addition, I would like to thank the postgraduate researchers who acted as reviewers for this issue of the journal.

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