

# RESEARCH NEWS

## WELCOME

### Round 2 Research Lecturer Appointments

Dr Julie Thorpe – School of Humanities and Languages  
 Dr Elizabeth Roberts – School of Humanities and Languages  
 Dr Ann Dadich – School of Management  
 Dr Kathy Tannous – School of Economics and Finance  
 Dr Hao Tan – School of Management  
 Dr Abel Duarte Alonso – School of Management  
 Dr Yingyang Zhang – School of Engineering  
 Dr Gang Zheng – School of Biomedical and Health Sciences  
 Dr Chris Eagle – School of Humanities and Languages  
 Dr John Hadley – School of humanities and Languages

I am sure you will join me in welcoming them onboard.

Recruitment is underway for Round 3, with the aim of appointing an additional 12 Research Lecturers to commence in 2011.

Professor Andrew Cheetham, Pro Vice-Chancellor Research

## EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH FOR AUSTRALIA

UWS research scored well in the Australian Research Council's (ARC) Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) evaluation announced 31 January 2011, with two of the University's key research areas – cultural studies and plant biology – labelled “well above world standard” and achieving a score of five, the highest ranking possible.

The ERA 2010 National Report is the first comprehensive assessment of the research quality within Australia's universities, measuring it against research carried out by other institutions around the world. The report was released by Senator the Hon Kim Carr, Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research.

It found the University's cultural studies and plant biology research concentrations the University's Centre for Cultural Research (CCR), and the Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment (HIE) – achieved the top mark of five; while UWS research across the categories of agriculture, civil engineering, performing arts and creative writing and literary studies all achieved ranks of four – also putting them “above world standard”.

Of the 21 broad research disciplines that UWS is research active in, the majority were rated at or above world standard, which is very pleasing. Our highest performing areas, cultural studies and plant biology, are competitive with the best in Australia and the world. Only two other institutions scored five in cultural studies – the University of Sydney and the University of Queensland.

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## UWS RANKED NO. 1 IN AUSTRALIA

UWS is now the most productive university in the country with regards HERDC declared publications per research active staff. In 2008 we were No. 8 (2010 UWS DEEWR/DISR Institutional Performance Portfolio).

Another good story is that in terms of student completions we are ranked 20th in the country. In terms of ACG income we are ranked 24th up from 26th in 2008.

While Research Income per Research Active staff fell across the sector in 2009, that trend was bucked by UWS and our benchmark cohort (Griffith, Newcastle, Deakin, UNE, UniSA).

## RESEARCH ACTIVITY AT UWS

The total number of Research Grant applications seeking external research funding processed by the Office of Research Services during 2010 was 484.

College	Applications	Approved
Arts	134	49
Business	29	8
Health and Science	291	73
Divisions	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>131</b>

The Research Evaluation Committees were made up of 149 senior researchers from Australia and overseas. The University is delighted that 6 of the 8 panels are benefiting from the expertise of UWS researchers.

There are many UWS researchers also participating in ERA as peer reviewers for those clusters where 20 per cent of publications are read but owing to confidentiality agreements they have with the Australian Research Council, the University does not know their names. We take this opportunity to thank them for their contribution to this critical quality assessment process.

UWS Researchers on the Research Evaluation Committees are as follows:

- » Cluster One: Physical, Chemical and Earth Sciences – Professor William (Bill) Price
- » Cluster Two: Humanities and Creative Arts – Professor Tony Bennett
- » Cluster Three: Engineering and Environmental Sciences – Professor Kenny Kwok
- » Cluster Six: Biological and Biotechnological Sciences – Professor David Ellsworth
- » Cluster Seven: Biomedical and Clinical Health Sciences – Professor Vaughan Macefield
- » Cluster Eight: Public and Allied Health Sciences – Professor Alan Bensoussan

Full lists of REC members can be viewed at: [http://www.arc.gov.au/era/recs\\_2010/era\\_2010\\_RECs.htm](http://www.arc.gov.au/era/recs_2010/era_2010_RECs.htm)

These results demonstrate the depth and strength of the UWS research program, and confirm the effectiveness of the University's strategy to selectively concentrate research strength with significant research investment to boost research activity and quality.

The report also highlighted a number of disciplines where UWS's research performance was "world standard", including pure mathematics; physical chemistry; microbiology; nursing; urban and regional planning; education systems; specialist studies in education; human geography; cognitive sciences; other studies in human society; film, television and digital media; historical studies; and linguistics.

This ERA result positions us well for the next stage of our research development, which includes recruiting another 500 new academic staff over the next five years.

Outcomes of the ERA 2010 process are available on the Australian Research Council website at: [www.arc.gov.au/era/outcomes\\_2010](http://www.arc.gov.au/era/outcomes_2010)

## RECENT RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS

### Australian Research Council

For funding in 2011, UWS researchers have won:

- » \$3.3M for Discovery Project funding. This represents an overall success rate of 13.5%.
- » \$0.414M for Discovery Indigenous Researcher Development. This represents an overall success rate of 66.7%.

### National Health and Medical Research Council

For funding in 2011, UWS researchers won 3 NHMRC project grants totalling \$1.2 million.

Many other UWS researchers have also achieved success in collaboration with other universities.

### CIPHER

UWS is one of 11 universities awarded funding for an NHMRC Centre of Excellence in 2010.

The Centre for Informing Policy in Health with Evidence from Research (CIPHER) has been awarded \$2,496,375.

The Centre's research is in public health – a field which is a central pillar of UWS's research future.

## National Innovation System

UWS is part of one of four Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) funded in the 13th round announced by the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, Senator the Hon Kim Carr in December 2010.

The CRC program funds world-class collaborative research and innovation and through the College of Arts, UWS will lead two Programs in the CRC for Young People, Technology and Wellbeing. The CRC will promote mental health and wellbeing through three complementary research programs uniting the humanities and social sciences with expertise in cyber safety; use of technologies for mental health promotion, prevention, early intervention and treatment; cultural research; e-research; youth culture; and innovation in research methodologies. The CRC will develop tech-savvy tools to support the wellbeing of our young Australians.

## DDOGS

Deans and Directors of Graduate Study from universities across Australia met at the Female Orphan School, Parramatta campus for a two day meeting over the 11th and 12th November 2010.

Professor Andrew Cheetham, UWS PVC, welcomed 42 members to UWS.

The DDoGS group is a very collegial group of senior academic administrators responsible for the delivery of higher degree by research education. They meet annually to share ideas and to discuss topical matters with a view to lobbying government and other agencies in the interest of research education.

There were guest speakers from the Department of Innovation, Industry Science and Research (DIISR), the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA) and the Australian Quality Framework (AQF). CAPA sponsored a survey into resource provision at universities across Australia and named UWS as one of the institutions awarded a top 5 five star rating.

Members reported on current and upcoming research studies. Prof Sid Bourke, SORTI, University of Newcastle, spoke about a study on PhD candidate factors related to attrition and completion.

Dr Margaret Kiley, ANU, announced a 2011 study jointly with DDoGS and ALTC on pathways into higher degree by research; a topical subject at UWS as research education is becoming an increasingly popular career move among established professionals in the workplace. Sid and Margaret are proposing an ARC Discovery program: do oral examinations make a difference?

Other topics included;

- » an update on the agreement with the Australian Society of Editors on the editing of candidate's theses for examination
- » Four year doctoral programs
- » Formal coursework in doctorates
- » Matching the disciplinary mix of research students with national needs
- » Assessing quality in research degrees
- » Joint degrees
- » Best practices for indigenous students
- » Conflict of interest
- » Generic skills of HDR graduates

The convener, Prof Helene March, JCU, was very pleased with the facilities at UWS and attendees agreed that it was a successful meeting, in terms of UWS as host and the quality of the meeting content. The next meeting will be held in Perth in May at Edith Cowan University.



## UWS ACADEMIC APPOINTED TO PRESTIGIOUS INTERNATIONAL POSITION

Professor Christine Halse, the Director of the University of Western Sydney's Centre for Educational Research (CER), has been appointed as an ethics expert to the European Commission on Framework Program for Research and Technological Development.

Professor Halse, who is also President of the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE), is one of only two Australian academics to be appointed to the international expert panel.

As a member of the Ethics Review Panel, Professor Halse will participate in the development of ethics guidelines, particularly for the Social Sciences, and in evaluating successful research proposals submitted under the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) – the European Union's main instrument for funding research in Europe.

This is an important task, which aims to ensure that all funded research carried out under the Framework Programme are conducted in accordance with fundamental ethical principles.



Professor Halse says her appointment will be challenging on a number of levels.

"As the European Commission on Research considers grant proposals from all over the world, there are significant cultural barriers when considering the ethical implications of various research projects," says Professor Halse.

"National ethics frameworks differ from country to country, and different cultures have very different views of appropriate, ethical practice so that research procedures that are acceptable to some cultural groups may be abhorrent in another.

"The ethical challenge for the panel is to set a globally applicable standard of ethical research practice that also accommodate social and cultural differences."

## STAFF AWARDS

Dr. Markus Riegler, Lecturer of the Centre of Plants and Environment, University of Western Sydney has been selected the **Runner-Up** in the category of **Agriculture and Food Security** from among highly competitive applicants in the recently concluded review for **ProSPER.Net-Scopus Young Researcher Awards 2010**. This award recognises the highest standards of research in Asia-Pacific.

## STAFF PROFILES

**Gary Long** is the Research Systems Manager. Gary looks after the ongoing development of the software used for the increasingly complex aspects of research data management within the Office of Research Services. Gary created the researchers Portal <https://research-report.uws.edu.au/wpubs/Portal.asp> which has delivered transparent data to the research community. He is often found immersed in data, performing statistical analysis or reports using Microsoft Excel. Gary played a significant part in the compiling of data for the UWS ERA Submission. He has recently completed a Diploma in Management through UWS ODU. Outside work, Gary likes relaxing in the pool, listening to music and has recently begun competitive cycling.

**Kathleen MacDonald** is a Research Development Officer, promoting the development of research within the university. Kathleen has a background in physics and computer science as well as quality control, editing and health care. Her role includes reviewing and critiquing internal and external grant applications, educating

academic staff about grant writing and funding strategies, negotiating funding agreements and writing Research Directions articles. Kathleen is also a massage therapist who loves singing, playing the ukulele and has a ridiculous number of other hobbies.

**Clare Charlton** is the Data Administration Officer for Office of Research Services. Clare undertakes data input and reporting for all grants relevant to research databases. This includes creating cost centres, projects numbers, entering significant dates, such as invoicing, budgets and reporting on milestones that are relevant to our databases and email. Also ensuring all invoicing and reporting are adhered to according to contractual agreements. Clare comes to UWS with background in customer service and finance with a Diploma in Finance. Clare has in worked in government organisations such as local Councils and Department of Defence and enjoys the opportunity to give back to her community through these positions. Clare's likes to relax and unwind through creating patch work quilts.



Gary Long



Kathleen MacDonald



Clare Charlton