

LEARNING & TEACHING @ UWS

Updates from the Teaching Development Unit (TDU)

The Teaching Development Unit works with UWS staff to enhance the learning and teaching environment for students. Information about ways in which the Unit works with staff, and our 2010 Annual Report, is provided on the website (<http://www.uws.edu.au/tdu>).

In 2010, TDU led two major projects that have provided valuable feedback and information to the University. We evaluated the impact of the Foundations of University

Learning and Teaching program for new academic staff (see below) and we surveyed UWS students about their experiences of technology (see page 2). Find out more about about the upgrade of vUWS in 2011 and 2012 on pages 2 and 3. Resources and a profile of our E-Learning Service Desk are on page 4.

Associate Professor, Janne Malfroy

The Foundations of University Learning and Teaching program: How does it contribute to improvements in teaching at UWS?

A formal three year evaluation of the Foundations of University Learning and Teaching program was conducted and reported to UWS senior staff in 2010. The program is embedded in academic practice and draws on the expertise of teaching staff in the University. The outcomes of the evaluation indicate that the program is contributing to improvements in quality teaching at UWS, supporting staff to become more accomplished and confident teachers. The full report is on the TDU website, but comments from interview groups included the following:



Foundations, November 2010 group

“I was almost entirely content focused I think, I really didn't think about how I delivered the information. And now I'm looking at the process and also planning ahead much more than I did.

(Foundations graduate)



“I think they are probably more self critical as a result of going through the program. They're able to look at their own practices and evaluate them.

(Head of School)



Building on the success of this program, and in anticipation of new Federal Government requirements for professional accreditation of teaching staff, TDU has been asked to develop units for a proposed UWS Graduate Certificate in Higher Education.



Foundations, February 2011 group

This highly successful program is becoming even more valuable as academic recruitment strategies bring many new teaching staff to the University. Currently, 62 academic staff have completed the program, 77 are completing, 35 have enrolled for the July program, and others are on a waiting list for the November program.

Student use of technology:

What is the UWS student experience?

In 2010, TDU led a major survey of students, the Student Experience of Technology, in collaboration with Macquarie University and UTS. A total of 7,411 students at UWS responded, which provided a 20.4% return rate. The survey asked 127 questions about student access and use of

technologies for learning, administration, communication and social and work purposes. Results indicate UWS students are moderately to highly satisfied with the current level of services and supports for learning.

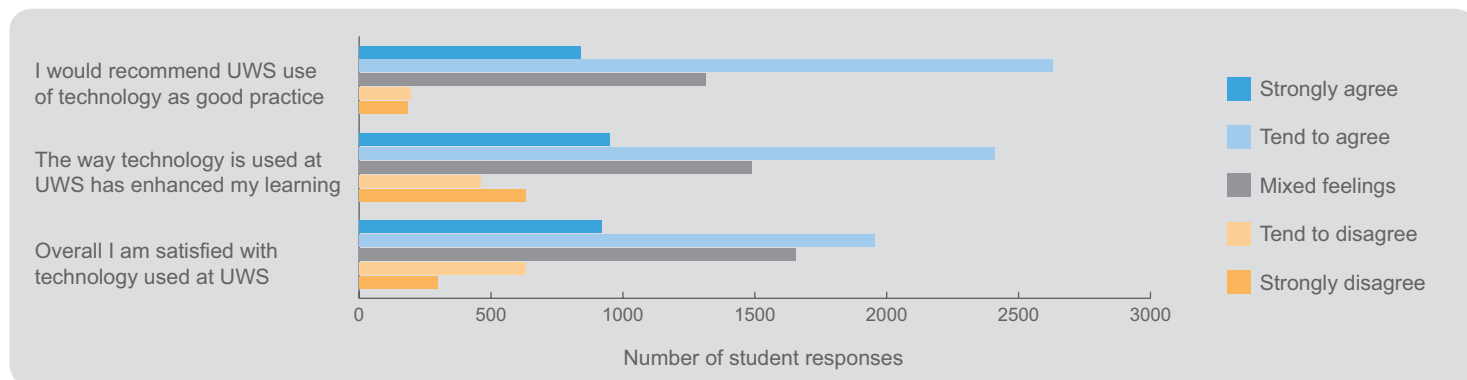


Figure 1: Student satisfaction with technology at UWS (based on 5,452 student responses at the end of the survey)

New opportunities for online learning and teaching: vUWS upgrade

We would like to introduce UWS staff to the new opportunities for online learning and teaching that will be available after migration to the Learn 9.1 Learning Management System (vUWS).

In 2009 and 2010, UWS undertook an evaluative process to determine the best option for a new Learning Management System (LMS), known internally as 'vUWS'. The current LMS 'Campus Edition 8' has reached its 'end of life' and will no longer be supported by Blackboard from 2012. The upgrade, from Campus Edition 8 to Blackboard

Learn 9.1, will occur over 2011 and 2012. Blackboard Learn 9.1 extends the existing functionality of Campus Edition 8 and has new features and a new user interface.

TDU is developing a comprehensive staff development program of workshops and self-paced resources to support the upgrade to the new look vUWS. In Spring semester 2011, a small pilot group of academic staff will be trialling the new software. During this semester, all other UWS academic and professional staff requiring setup of vUWS sites for 2012 will be able to select their preferred migration method to the new look vUWS. From February 2012 all vUWS sites will be in the new look vUWS.

The timeline for the new look vUWS will be:

4 July 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Users will log into the new LMS and have access to their existing vUWS sites in the current LMS
27 July 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot commences All other Spring/2nd Half/Quarter 3 & 4/Term 3 sites remain in current LMS
From 1 September 2011 For Autumn/1st Half/Quarter 1/ Term 1 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can request your new sites to be developed and/or migrated depending on your migration option Mandatory 30 minute online Induction Module and other workshops available E-Learning Staff Support Site available
December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer 2012 sites will remain in the existing vUWS interface
From 1 February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All vUWS sites will be in the new LMS, ie all unit, course and ongoing type sites E-Learning Student Support site available
From 1 April 2012 For Spring/2nd Half/Quarter 3 & 4/ Term 2 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can request your new sites to be developed and/or migrated depending on your migration option

Introducing Learn 9.1

Staff will need to complete the mandatory 30 minute online Induction Module before they can access new Learn 9.1 sites as designers (instructors). This module is being developed in a Learn 9.1 site and will be available from 1 September 2011 with open access for all staff. The module will cover:

- **Navigation:** orientation to the My vUWS page
- **Getting Started:** site orientation, how to add files, content and tools
- **What tools are available:** interactive map of features and functions within vUWS
- **Processes:** activating a site, using EDMM, roles, responsibilities of an instructor, accessibility, support for students and staff, workshops available

What will students like about Learn 9.1?

- **New interface** is more attractive and much easier to use.
- **Group spaces** that allow students to choose their own medium for working together such as blogs, discussion board, chat or wiki. Groups can share files and also revisit previous document editions.
- **Early Warning System** that allows students to receive alerts when certain benchmarks are not reached: for example, when they have not submitted an assignment.
- **Notifications Dashboard** that alerts students to new content, discussion postings, messages and items due, and supports RSS feeds. Students can elect to have these notifications sent to their student email.
- **Increased access and portability via mobile devices** with native applications (iPhone, iPad, Android, etc) that enable students to access content, read and contribute to blogs, discussion boards and more.

What will staff like about Learn 9.1?

- **New interface** is easier to use and allows many common procedures to be completed in fewer steps.
- **Improvements to collaboration and communication tools** such as group spaces that offer group blogs, wikis, journals, a file exchange and virtual classroom. Blogs, journals and wikis are now gradable, as is the new Self and Peer Assessment feature.
- **Early Warning System** that can be set to identify students who have not reached certain benchmarks: for example, logging in to vUWS recently, or completing particular assessment requirements.
- **Easy addition of 'mashups'** with YouTube, Slideshare or Flickr content searchable and inserted from within the HTML Text Editor. The Text Editor also allows easy adding of audio and video and has a Maths and Science Notation Tool based on Maths ML.
- **Voice Tools** that include a new Voice Announcement tool along with the previously integrated Voice Discussion, Voice Chat, Voice Email, Podcaster, Voice Recorder and Voice Presentation functions.
- **Range of quiz questions** has now increased to 17 different question types.
- **Colour-coded Grade Centre** to allow easy identification of different student performance levels.
- **Grade Centre Smart Views** where datasets can be stored instead of searching for the same information each time.
- **Increased access and portability via mobile devices** with native applications (iPhone, iPad, Android, etc) that enable staff to access content, read and contribute to blogs, discussion boards and more.

What migration options will be available?

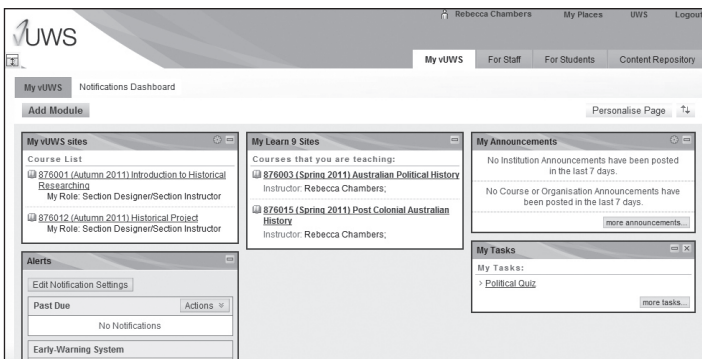
- **Blank site:** allows you to make best use of the new functionality and features of vUWS as well as structuring your content for easier management and currency of files.
- **Copy over files only:** Only the files you have in your existing site will be transferred over to the new system and not the structure of linked content or tools. You will be able to make best use of the new functionality and features but all out-of-date files will need to be deleted.
- **Migrate site with all content and tools:** TDU will migrate your site over but due to the new interface and tools, staff will be required to check their migrated sites before making them available to students.
- **Use an existing site as a template:** Create a blank site as a shell for your unit sites which is then used as a template for additional sites.

Further details and resources will be posted on the TDU website during the year.

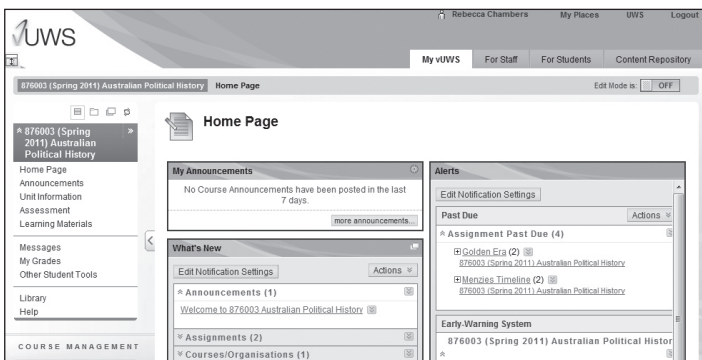
Data also revealed UWS students are well equipped, with levels of computer ownership consistent across all age groups and cohorts. UWS students are reported as active users of technology for study with nearly all students indicating they use technology for study from home or campus one or more times a day. UWS students rate themselves as technologically literate with the capacity to learn new technologies.

Despite the private use of social network technologies such as Facebook, Twitter, wikis and blogs, students do not currently prefer these technologies for their university learning experiences. Students would prefer that more and better use is made of core learning technologies; for instance, students want greater access to online lecture recordings, more use of the discussion boards in vUWS, and to track grades and academic progress online.

Recommendations for improvement will be used in infrastructure planning, teaching development initiatives and future developments. The results will continue to be provided to academic groups in 2011. A summary of this report can be found on the TDU website.



This image shows the new My vUWS page that users will see when they log in to vUWS from the 4 July 2011. Users will see their existing vUWS sites. When users have access to the new LMS sites they will appear on this page. Students involved in the Pilot will see their new LMS sites on this page from 27 July.



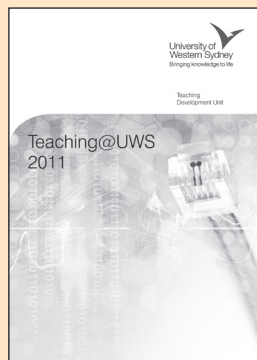
This image shows the Early Warning Notification feature of the new LMS. Under 'What's New' students will see new tools and content that have been added recently. Under 'Alerts' students will receive notifications configured by their teaching staff such as if they haven't reached a certain benchmark or when they have not submitted an assignment.

TDU Publications and Resources

TDU website – contains useful information about programs, workshops and initiatives (<http://www.uws.edu.au/tdu>)

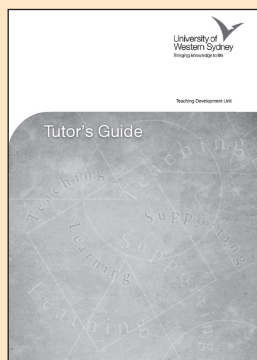
We publish several booklets about learning and teaching. They are all available as downloads on the TDU website.

Teaching@UWS



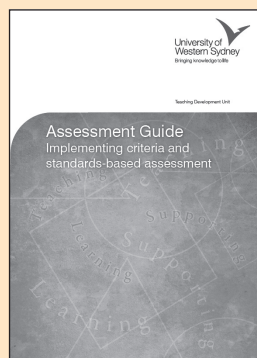
This resource is particularly useful for new staff as it provides a valuable resource and contextual information relevant to the learning and teaching environment at UWS.

Tutor's guide



The Tutor's Guide complements Teaching@UWS, providing information about preparing and planning small(er) classes, understanding student learning and implications for teaching, strategies for getting students engaged in classes, managing e-learning effectively as a tutor, marking and giving feedback on assessment, and evaluating and improving one's own teaching.

Assessment Guide



The Assessment Guide provides a resource for staff to review assessment practice, align assessment tasks with learning outcomes (validity), prepare criteria and standards, and communicate assessment expectations to students.

E-Learning Service Desk staff

So far this year the E-Learning Service Desk has received over 4500 vUWS related enquiries of which 61% were from staff and 39% from students. Of these enquiries 53% were received by phone and 47% by email. The E-Learning Service Desk is open from 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Thursday and from 8.30am to 3.00pm on Fridays and you can either call (02) 98525252 or email vuws@uws.edu.au for assistance. Deney Bernacer and Sheikh Faruque have worked on the E-Learning Service Desk since 2007. Filip Galeta and John Bajen started work in TDU this year to support the upgrade.

Deney, Sheikh, Filip and John are available to support staff in their use of vUWS and are able to remotely access staff computers to talk you through any aspect of working on your vUWS site. For example, they will be able to help you ensure that your quiz settings are appropriate for your particular assessment needs prior to making the quiz available to students; guide you through uploading your assessment marks into vUWS and releasing them to students; or confirm that accurate selective release criteria has been applied so that students only receive the tools and content you wish to make available to them based on date, group, grade and/or user.

During the upgrade to the Learn 9.1, Deney, Sheikh, Filip and John will be out at all campuses providing Migration Support Sessions at various times throughout the year.



E-Learning Service Desk Staff: John Bajen, Sheikh Faruque, Kathie Goldsworthy (E-Learning Systems Administrator), Deney Bernacer, Filip Galeta