Message from UTAS College Academic Director …..

Welcome to our fourth newsletter and the penultimate edition for 2010. As we go to press the evaluation and review of the University College Program enters the final stages - presentation to the University Academic Senate and consideration of key issues by Senior Secondary Principals in Future Directions Meetings to be held in November. Some brief highlights of the evaluation and review are included in this newsletter with the full reports available on the UTAS college website. In the meantime the program will continue in 2011 with some minor changes to languages workshops, and the visual and performing arts programs made in response to student and college teacher colleague feedback. In parallel we have been reviewing the High Achievers Program with review outcomes due to be disseminated by November.

On the VET articulation front, some great work has been done in the creative arts area at UTAS, mapping multiple pathways from Cert 1 to Ph D. This work puts UTAS ahead in regard to the new proposed AQF requirements for mapped pathways and in plans to create integrated qualifications. We are also working on some research which is examining the progress at university of students who articulate from VET qualifications and identifying critical success factors. Using the creative arts project as a model we will also be mapping pathways in Health Science and Community Services with our partners in the Polytechnic and the Skills Institute.

For the team at UTAS College the continued development of the University Preparation Program, designed to provide mature aged students with an alternative entry pathway into University, has been a priority and both the student and curriculum outcomes have been very rewarding. Particularly exciting has been the offering of the UPP Intensive Summer School, a free program for student accepted into a degree or associate degree program who may be returning to study or for students who studied in 2010 and want to improve their skills. Joining us in promoting the program have been two successful graduates from the 2010 Summer School pilot. Jess and Chris are enthusiastic advocates of the program and their success and the success of the other pilot participants is testimony to the effectiveness of UPP. The Summer school will be offered on all three UTAS campuses this year.

Anne
Corporate Intern

Kristin Bramich
Corporate Intern, Faculty of Business

Kristin joined the UTAS College team for second semester 2010. Kristin’s focus as an intern is to develop a communication strategy for UTAS College and two key programs, the University Preparation Program (UPP) and the University College Program (UCP).

As part of her 13 week placement, Kristin has begun a process of establishing and qualifying the UTAS College client groups and an analysis of the current marketing and communication tools used to promote the service offerings.

Kristin has worked with Scott Cunningham, artist and teacher at Newstead College and the School of Visual and Performing Arts, to develop photographic images for UTAS College. She has also worked with UTAS Marketing and Recruitment Manager, Jo Bailey, to ensure that UTAS College promotion and communication are consistent with UTAS policy. In addition she has worked with the UTAS College team to develop a full marketing and communication strategy. This ‘newlook’ newsletter format is one result of Kristin’s work.

What is a Corporate Intern and how to engage an intern?

Corporate internships are run through the Faculty of Business, and allow accepted students to gain practical experience within their studied major.

Businesses or organisations can submit project proposals requiring an intern to the Faculty Internship Coordinator who arranges an interview process to confirm the suitability of potential applicants to the project.

For more details go to: www.utas.edu.au/business/faculty/internships/

UTAS College Staff Profiles:

Gemma Howe
University Preparation Program Administrative Officer

Gemma has considerable experience in administration after working in a busy service office for 3 years. She is also currently studying a Bachelor of Arts (Public Policy & History majors) part time with UTAS.

Gemma has appreciated her time at UTAS, gaining a lot from her studies. Working with UPP for Gemma means that she can empathise and connect with students wishing to succeed at University and assist others to gain the benefits she has during her time as a student.

Contact Gemma on 6324 3714. Gemma.Howe@utas.edu.au

Anna Mizzi
UTAS College Administrative Officer

Anna brings to UTAS College a diverse and broad range of experience in small business, education, health and the arts, to complement her qualifications in Business Management, Human Resources and Marketing.

Anna will be using her knowledge and experience to develop the supporting structures of the UTAS College model and to be the first ‘port-of-call’ for all enquiries relating to UTAS College.

Contact Anna on 6324 3343. Anna.Mizzi@utas.edu.au

University College Program (UCP) Evaluation - Some findings

The extensive evaluation process in 2010 included: an analysis of student participation and outcomes; an analysis of UCP student destination and performance once they articulated to UTAS as full time students; three focus groups with UCP students now enrolled at UTAS full time; an online survey of involved Principals, Heads of School (HoS), College teachers and UTAS lecturers (78 respondents); and analysis of the literature past UCP reports and student surveys.

Overall:
- Student performance has improved with 58% of students in 2009 performing at credit level or above
- Student withdrawal rates have fallen from 29% to 17% in 2009 and estimated as lower still in 2010
- Most units offered are in languages and visual and performing arts (supply driven)
- Most students are female (67.8%)
- Students who take full UTAS units while in secondary school perform better than TCE students in general
- However these student are most likely to be mid to high Socio Economic Status

Student destination and success
- UCP students do successfully articulate to UTAS but caution must be taken in drawing conclusions because of the short time frames
- 242 students have articulated to UTAS
- 57.9% are taking or have taken at least one unit in the same UTAS School

Grade Point Average in UCP and ongoing UTAS is positively and moderately correlated (5.44 / 4.78).

(Continued over page)
A new scholarship has been created to assist students who need to develop their English language skills in order to be successful at university. Recipients will receive either 10 or 15 weeks of intensive English language study at the University of Tasmania’s English Language Centre (ELC) worth up to $4,050. It is open to University of Tasmania students from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds who are already studying in the University Preparation Program (UPP), or have enrolled in UPP for the following semester.

The first scholarship recipient is Purna Chhetri. Originally from Bhutan, Purna resettled in Australia in 2008. In Bhutan he had learnt some English at school but found he forgot everything when at the age of 14 he was arrested and forced to spend 27 months in a Bhutanese prison (eventually being released with the aid of Amnesty International). After fleeing Bhutan with his family he then continued to study as best he could with the help of volunteer teachers in the Nepalese refugee camp that was to be his home for the next 18 years.

Though never dreaming in Nepal that he might one day be able to attend university, once he resettled in Australia Purna began to explore his options and decided that if he could he would like to pursue a career in nursing. His first tentative steps were to enrol in the University Preparation Program in Launceston. Despite his dedication and hard work however, he found that his English skills were still not quite good enough to achieve his goals. It was then suggested he apply for extra English tuition through the UPP ELC scholarship and as a result he is now the first proud recipient of the scholarship.

UCP Evaluation (cont.)

Online Survey

- 78 people attempted the survey (18 principals/6 HOS)
- Broad support from involved staff (all bar one indicated that they thought the program should continue)
- Additional benefits identified (for example, breaking down barriers, introduction to MyLO, professional development opportunities for staff, increased standards)
- Issues identified including:
  - fitting the program in with the high demands of Yr 11/12
  - access and equity (particularly geographical)
  - adequate resourcing (physical and human)
  - opportunity to participate in decision making
- the need for a greater variety of units
- 17 recommendations made by respondents

A number of priority issues were identified for further consideration and will be discussed with Principals in November.

The External Review (brief summary)

- UCP is an innovative pathway to tertiary study for senior secondary students
- It does not necessarily currently contribute to social inclusion
- It needs to sit comfortably in the suite of UTAS preparatory programs which are not well articulated
- UCP has a broad base of support and has made a positive impact on hundreds of students
- The review supports maintaining the UCP but:
  - Teaching a wider range of disciplines with fewer units
  - With some operational improvements and enhancements to policy settings
  - Its co-ordination and engagement role through UTAS College recurrently funded through HEPPP

The external reviewer made 8 recommendations. Full reports of both the evaluation (including full focus group analysis), and the external review can be found on the UTAS College website:

http://www.utas.edu.au/utas-college/publicationandresearch
University Preparation Program Summer School

“I don’t know how I would have survived if I hadn’t done the UPP summer school,”
(Student, Summer School Pilot, 2010)

After a successful trial of the UPP Summer School concept in Launceston earlier this year, plans are now underway to implement Summer Schools state-wide for 2011.

The intensive Summer School sessions will be aimed at students returning to study who have already been accepted into a degree or associate degree in 2011 but who need to refresh or develop skills in order to start their university experience with confidence.

For those students who need to gain or improve computer skills Part 1 of the Summer School, a 4-day computer course, will be held state-wide on 4-5 and 11-12 December 2010.

Part 2 of the Summer School will be held January 10 – 28 2011 at the Sandy Bay, Burnie and Launceston campuses covering: researching and writing essays, managing study schedules, participating in group work, using the library, giving oral presentations, getting the most from tutorials and lectures, assessment strategies and note-taking skills. In addition it is expected students will gain familiarity with university culture, strategies to access help and support along with developing a network of fellow students.

The program is FREE to eligible students.

Enrolment is by interview only. Anyone interested in attending the Summer School or referring a student, please contact UPP Administrative Officer on 6324 3714 or email UPP.Course@utas.edu.au.

“Increasing the opportunities for all Tasmanians to participate in and succeed at university”

Chris, current Bachelor of Education student and Summer School participant January 2010, says:

“I was told about the course and I thought it sounded alright so I went along. It was really good. It took the rust out. It got me used to the academic lifestyle of reading and thinking outside the box again. Having the opportunity of getting used to the surroundings, not being stressed and feeling at home with the place was a huge plus. “

“I would definitely recommend it to others -- especially for people who may not have been studying for a while.”

Keep up-to-date with what’s happening at UPP at: www.utas.edu.au/utas-college/university-preparation-program

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Students share their thoughts on the University College Program

I think it has been encouragement, I have seen how I performed in a Uni course, providing me with motivation to keep achieving high standards.

I found the program helped me to improve my skills and feel as if I had achieved something. It made me realise that I have the capability to undertake studies at a tertiary level.

It did give me like an insight to the different [areas of the Arts] – [because] … before I was like oh I’m only a photographer I can only do photography but when we went into the other studios I was like oh I am actually all right at sculpture as well – I’m not just a photographer – so it gave me a different look on what else you can do.

I wasn’t planning [to go to university] … the colloquium thing changed my ideas on it and I was like oh wow uni can actually be really fun and not as bad as I thought it would be.

During senior college everyone’s thinking uni’s really scary… [There is] so much decision making that’s happening in grade 12 – you’ve got so much different stress in your head thinking about where you’re going to go – what you’re going to do – so just doing [the UCF] and having that bit of reassurance that it’s really not going to be all that scary was [important].

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UTAS College

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“Increasing the opportunities for all Tasmanians to participate in and succeed at university”

UTAS College on the web: www.utas.edu.au/utas-college