



NZACE

NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATION
FOR CO-OPERATIVE
EDUCATION INC.

Promoting Work-Integrated Learning

ACETALK

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CHAIR'S REPORT

I am pleased to update NZACE members on some of our activities.

At a recent teleconference the Council endorsed a number of items introduced in the last ACETalk.

First is the NZACE Annual Conference for 2007. This is to be held in Rotorua 19-20 April, 2007, and as noted last time consistent with our new portfolio approach to member benefits the program will include several workshops related to member services. Specifically there will be workshops on research and getting work published. The details will be provided in an ACETalk issue closer to the time of the conference.

As a reminder the portfolios and contacts are:

- Development of Cooperative Education Programs (Dave Hodges)
- Developing Best Practice and Audit of Cooperative Education Programs (Jenny Fleming & Karsten Zegwaard)
- Legal Issues and Contracts in Cooperative Education (Jenny Fleming)
- Research in Cooperative Education (Richard K. Coll).

The NZACE web site is dated in style and the Council is reviewing a proposal for its update at our next teleconference to be held in a few weeks time. I will update you on this soon.

The Council endorsed two proposals for a nationwide, cross-subject, and cross-institution collaborative research projects. We will seek external funding for this and an application will be made via the Ministry of Education's Teaching & Learning Research Initiative (TLRI) next year. I will send out a call for interest in these proposals sometime next year.

Finally a reminder about the call proposals for research support under our new Contestable Research Fund. More details are available from Dr Chris Eames (email: c.eames@waikato.ac.nz) but the main points are that the Fund seeks to support research into cooperative education or work-integrated learning. The purpose of the Fund is to support research projects that aim to enhance understanding about the theory and practice of cooperative education, and to assist the development of research capability in educators or administrators involved in cooperative education programs. The criteria that will be considered when assessing applications for funding to support research projects are:

1. Applicants must be members of NZACE at the time of application
2. How the research project will build on the national and international knowledge base in cooperative education theory and/or practice
3. How the research will be designed to enable substantive and robust findings
4. The research expertise of the researchers and/or the capacity of the project to build research expertise in the researchers, and
5. The research can substantially be completed within two years of grant receipt.

The value of the Fund in any one year will vary according to the resources of the Association. In 2006 the total Fund will be no more than \$4000 and NZACE also will provide grant recipients one free conference registration per grant to an annual NZACE conference within two years of the grant receipt to present a paper on the research. The closing date is October 31, 2006, and application forms are available from Chris or me (email: r.coll@waikato.ac.nz).

Richard K. Coll
Chair, NZACE

REPORTS OF THE SHANGHAI WACE CONFERENCE

Conference Report

The Shanghai WACE conference was held over three days. The first day consisted of industry visits to either Bao Steel and General Motors factories, or Volkswagen and Supercomputers plants. This provided opportunities for delegates to see the enormous scale of Chinese industry. The second day began with a morning of keynotes. Most of these were in Chinese from eminent people in education or business. Delegates were informed on the progress that Chinese industry was making and the partnerships that industry was engaged in with tertiary education. There was much positive talk regarding the opportunity for significant expansion of cooperative education in China in the near future. The feeling is that China could be ripe for co-op as graduates are completing and not getting jobs due to an oversupply and the corporates want to know whom they are getting.

The remainder of the conference was dedicated to concurrent sessions and featured presenters from many parts of the co-op world. Presentations ranged from examinations of different models of co-op to assessment to international exchange programmes. Breaks between sessions provided good opportunities for networking with delegates from 23 different countries. For lovers of Chinese cuisine the lunches and dinners were a sight to behold with a myriad of dishes including jellyfish, roast duck and dumplings. The social highlights were an acrobat show that left us wondering about the flexibility of the human body and a cruise on the Huangpu River. All in all a good opportunity to see how cooperative education could play a part in a country that has a big future.

Chris Eames

Board of Governors Report

The year was a transitional one for WACE with a change in CEO and the final year for the existing President. The outgoing CEO, Peter Franks, left in August to take up a position as Executive Director and Associate Vice Provost, Steinbright Career Development Centre, Drexel University (US). The incoming CEO, Dr. Paul Stonely, takes up this role in conjunction with his existing position as President of the US National Commission for Cooperative Education (NCCE). It is anticipated that Paul will distribute his time evenly between these roles and will utilise the facilities and support systems of the NCCE in his capacity of CEO for WACE. The WACE appointment is for a three year period.

There are obvious synergies between NCCE and WACE and it is anticipated that this will be a positive move for WACE. Nevertheless, a number of challenges lie ahead for the new CEO, particularly in growing the organisation globally and in ensuring the future sustainability of the organisation. In many ways, these challenges are not dissimilar to the ones faced by NZACE, but on a global scale. With a minimal (paid) secretariat available, the task is not an easy one. We also welcomed Professor Ian Goulter, Vice President of Charles Sturt University (Australia), as the new WACE President. Ian will serve for a three year term and takes over from Dr. Richard Freeland (VP, Northeastern University, Boston).

As with previous Board meetings, much time was spent on discussing finances. WACE's financial stability has benefited from the significant support from Northeastern University over the past few years. However, the outgoing WACE President (who is also the President of Northeastern) has made it clear that if WACE is to survive as an organisation it must do so on its own two feet. Northeastern have agreed to extend their support (on a reduced basis) over a two year period. Essentially, WACE will need to be self-sufficient by 2008.

One of the ways in which WACE gains financial support is through the direct support of WACE Board members. A number of Board members provide institutional support by way of a partnership agreement between their own organisation/institution and WACE. This involves a financial contribution in return for

some direct benefits to the Board member's own organisation/institution. There was considerable discussion on this point, with an agreement in principal that all Board members are expected to make a financial contribution either directly through an institutional partnership agreement and/or through increased membership from their own country, or indirectly (non-financial) through individual contribution to the work of WACE. It was further agreed that 'inactive' Board members would be removed from the Board (such activity would include attendance at WACE Board meetings and council meetings).

A draft strategic plan was discussed for growing WACE globally. This included a separate strategy for 'emerging' markets (Japan, China and India) and one for 'mature' markets (US, Canada, UK). The latter would focus on gaining more institutional partnership agreements and the former on increasing memberships (individual or organisational). It is not clear yet what the strategy is for the 'middle group', which would include Australia and New Zealand.

The last WACE Symposium held in Orlando (November 2005) was considered to be successful by those who attended. However, it made a loss of US\$12,000. The late promotion and Call for Papers were considered to be major contributory factors. There was also a suggestion made that there may well be some actual or perceived overlap with the biennial WACE conferences.

Planning for the WACE conference in Singapore is now well underway and this promises to be a very successful conference. It was suggested that WACE will gain a significant financial contribution from this. However, I questioned the assumptions behind a budgeted US\$50,000 (for WACE) from corporate sponsors, which appears to be optimistic. Dr. Stonely was confident he could achieve this, so I guess it is a case of wait and see.

The 2008 Asia-Pacific conference looks to be uncertain with Japan, who expressed prior interest in hosting this, now unlikely to be involved. Some dialogue with (and prompting of!) the Australian delegates indicated that their preference would be to host the 2009 or 2011 world conference, rather than the 2008 Asia-Pacific conference. Given Singapore are hosting the 2007 world conference it is likely that the 2009 conference will be held in the northern hemisphere (Canada appears to be the front runner at this stage). So finding a host for the 2008 Asia-Pacific conference looks to be problematic.

The Co-op International Handbook has now been translated into Japanese. Because of the character-basis of the written language, this equates to 1,200 pages! Not surprisingly, Keiko Saito-Miyakawa, the Japanese Board member, was looking for financial support to get this edited and published. A business plan is currently being developed for this purpose, including the option of publishing this on the web only. Keiko indicated national sales of around 1,300 could be possible. Discussions are on-going between WACE and China for a Chinese translation. There has also been some concern about how well the handbook is being promoted generally. With only US\$3,000 being budgeted for profit in the coming year it would seem that this is not getting the attention it deserves. Richard Freeland, outgoing President, pointed out that this was still considerably more than was actually achieved in the previous year. Paul Stonely agreed to look at this issue.

Finally, an update was given on the new international Journal of Cooperative Education and Internship. Our very own NZACE Chairperson, Assoc Prof. Richard K. Coll, is the international editor of this journal. An issue outstanding was firming up on the name of this journal and this was currently being discussed among relevant parties. I would encourage NZACE members to get writing and submitting – let's get NZ on the global co-op map!

From a hot and humid, but ever fascinating Shanghai,

Dave Hodges



Who would have thought – the Red Carpet Treatment!!



Spot the three spheres of Shanghai



The WACE board members, 2006

THE NZACE CONTESTABLE RESEARCH FUND

NZACE has established a contestable research fund to support research into cooperative education or work-integrated learning, details were recently sent to members by email. The purpose of the fund is to support research projects that aim to enhance understanding about the theory and practice of cooperative education and assist the development of research capability in educators and cooperative education practitioners. Funding is up to \$4,000 and NZACE will also grant the successful recipient one free NZACE conference registration, at which the findings of the research will be presented. Applications are to be submitted to Dr Chris Eames (c.eames@waikato.ac.nz) before the 31st of October, 2006. Applicants will be advised of the outcome by the 30th of November, 2006. For any queries regarding the contestable fund, or to obtain a copy of the application form, contact Dr Chris Eames.

CONFERENCES

NZACE Conferences

Planning for the 2007 NZACE conference is continuing and early drafts of the programme looks exciting. Note the following dates in your dairy:

- *The 2007 Conference*
Rotorua
April 19-20, 2007
Start writing now! Abstracts will be due on the 9th of February, 2007. The full conference proceedings paper will need to be submitted for refereeing before the conference. Details regarding the process of submitting full papers will be included in the next ACETalk.
- *Proposed Venues for the 2008 and 2009 Conferences*
2008 - New Plymouth. Mid to late April.
2009 - Nelson. Mid to late April.

International Symposium on Work Integrated Learning

Theme: Work integrated learning for sustainable futures: Responding to employers needs and the changing face of higher education

Where: University of Westminster, London, UK

When: November 16-18, 2006

Web: <http://www.wmin.ac.uk/page-11046>

International Conferences

The following World Association for Cooperative Education (WACE) conferences are scheduled for the near future:

- *World WACE Conference - 2007*
Singapore,
Conference dates, 26-29 June, 2007
Abstracts due by 15 of December, 2006
Web address: www.wace2007.org
- *Asia-Pacific Regional WACE Conference – 2008*
No details on location as of yet.
- *World WACE Conference - 2009*
Likely to be Canada

PROFILING RESEARCH

In each ACETalk, we will be including a short section profiling the current research activities of either a NZACE member or a group belong to NZACE. This is to raise awareness of co-op research groups and research projects currently being undertaken. In this issue, we describe the research activities at Unitec.

Co-op at Unitec: Multi-disciplinary and Active

Co-op research is alive and well at Unitec. Staff members from Unitec have made an enormous contribution to co-op in NZ over the years, and also to NZACE. Staff have been well represented at NZACE Council and conferences. Unitec staff constantly strive to enhance practice and have made numerous presentations about best-practice and research-informed practice. Below we present an overview of some current research and best-practice at Unitec. In this issue we reproduce abstracts from material presented at the Queenstown NZACE conference. Two things are impressive about this collection. First, is the amount of research and program evaluation conducted at Unitec. Second, is the variety of departments and schools represented. Co-op at Unitec is definitely both multi-disciplinary and active!

Overview of Unitec Co-op Research Presented at the NZACE Conference

Industry Facilitates Work-Based Learning Opportunities

Leonie-Mae Tucker

School of Applied Technology Institute, Unitec, New Zealand

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate a collaborative assessment undertaken in a real world situation. In an effort to excite creativity and expose learners to the growing area of retail merchandising display, a New Zealand based organization was approached to seek assistance in providing a context for student groups to develop their skills and meet the learning outcomes of the course in a commercial and public arena. The feedback from a student questionnaire conducted at the conclusion of this project indicates that opportunities for student groups to work cooperatively with industry, encourages learners to develop, interdependence to respect difference in a collaborative group and encourages students to exceed their creative and theoretical learning of the course. The industry participant confirmed that in the case of these projects the students window display were fresh, creative and innovative. The result had acted as stimuli for existing staff promoting a more competitive and enthusiastic approach to the display of the companies merchandise. Tutors may consider during the delivery of a program that students have not related their learning to real practice. If this happens, the students miss out on an important part of the educative learning possibilities within the working environment they desire to enter.

Competition for IBL Placements

Shiu Ram

School of Computing and Information Technology, Unitec, New Zealand

Providers of tertiary education and training include work experience or real projects as compulsory requirements of a number of programs that they offer. Students have to meet either one of these requirements in order to graduate. This implies that the students must find employers who can provide opportunities for them to gain the necessary work experience or complete projects that are relevant to their respective programs of study. Are there such employers? If so, can they meet the demand for the industry based learning (IBL) placements? How should the placements be managed? Obviously there are employers who do offer opportunities for IBL placements because many students have successfully completed the requirements of their programs and have graduated. However, did all students find placements that they needed? Did they find them in good time? The reality is that the number of opportunities for placements is limited. Students from all tertiary institutions compete for the places that are available. The situation is probably aggravated by secondary school students who also take up holiday jobs. Apparently, there is a need for an efficient and effective management of the placements. An electronic database that stores employer information is an obvious solution, but who should create and maintain it? Should each institution have one of their own? Should there be one for each city, or the nation as whole or a global one? Answers to these questions may lead to well-managed IBL placements. The issues raised in the above paragraphs are based on my observation over the last three and a half years while supervising IBL students on Unitec's Bachelor of Business program of study with the information systems major. These may also be relevant to industries other than information technology (IT). The intention of this paper is to find some feasible solutions to these apparent problems by delving deeper into the issues that have been raised. This paper may also trigger the undertaking of new and more detailed studies that could lead to effective solutions.

Fostering Moral Courage: What Do Business Students Learn About Professional Ethics in Cooperative Education Placements?

Diana Ayling

School of Accountancy Law and Finance, Unitec, New Zealand

This paper examines recent literature and research into business students' experiences in cooperative education placements with a view to exploring their experiences and learning of professional ethics. In recent times, the business world has been rocked by scandals such as Enron, WorldCom and Parmalat. At the heart of these business collapses is the realization that the business world has fallen short in terms of professional and business ethics. As cooperative education students enter the workforce for the first time, they have the opportunity to learn from their colleagues' and mentors' attitudes and behaviors that will influence them for a life time. These may be positive strong attitudes to ethical behavior and practice or poor attitudes and questionable practices. This examination of the recent literature and research will serve as a foundation for a small research project into students learning and experiences of professional ethics in their cooperative education placements.

Action Research in Cooperative Education Projects: Developing Lifelong Capabilities for Improving Practice

Lesley Ferkins

School of Sport, Unitec, New Zealand,

Jenny Fleming

Division of Sport and Recreation, Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand

There are natural synergies between action research as a method of inquiry and the practice of cooperative education. In the search to integrate theory and practice, action research is underpinned by a philosophy of experiential learning. Similarly, cooperative education is underpinned by the belief that in order to learn, there also needs to be action. The work of cooperative education students is also founded on data-based reflection is highly context based and usually collaborative; important characteristics of action research (Cardno, 2003). These similarities between action research and cooperative education provide a starting point in conceptualizing the adoption of action research for sport cooperative education projects. How can action research be integrated within cooperative education projects? This paper will discuss the theoretical basis of action research and illustrate through the use of case studies why and how action research has been utilized in cooperative education projects in sport and recreation. Sport students undertake a range of activities in the cooperative education setting. Some complete basic day to day tasks in recreation centers and with sports teams and others act as volunteers in major events. While these types of roles can fulfill desired outcomes for cooperative education program (for student, industry organization and institution), the adoption of action research can add a further dimension because it aims to create change within the setting under investigation. Through the use of cooperative education projects, students are in a unique position to frame a problem, integrate theory, determine action, and implement and evaluate that action. This paper explores how action research is used in cooperative education projects to help develop capabilities for improving practice

Student/Industry Project in Industrial-oriented Undergraduate Degree in Electrotechnology

Z Qi and James Cannan

Department of Electrotechnology, Unitec, New Zealand

This paper is to discuss a new methodology for the student/industry project in an industry oriented undergraduate degree. As discussed at the industrial oriented teaching and learning education in an electrotechnology undergraduate degree (Qi & Cannan, 2004, 2005b), students have an approach to learning from an industry perspective. All courses in the Bachelor of Applied Technology (Electrotechnology) are directly linked to industry and the focus is on industrial products where the design for teaching and learning is through a project based philosophy. All foundation knowledge and skills can be achieved within these studies and the students are well equipped to develop advanced knowledge and expertise required for their second year technology project and industry project required in their final year through a cooperative education agreement with industry. Students are to complete their final year industry project in six months full-time or 12 months part-time. Instead of traditional final year work practices, students will focus on approved research topics and complete their project through real world learning in an industry environment. A robust assessment for the industry project to meet industry and academic requirements is discussed in this paper.

A Qualitative Pilot Study of New Zealand Employers' Views on the Importance and Measurement of Business Graduate Competencies

Dave Hodges

Undergraduate Division, Unitec, New Zealand

Recent research undertaken in New Zealand has identified the type of competencies that employers view as being important for new undergraduates (Coll, Zegwaard & Hodges, 2002; Hodges & Burchell, 2003). These prior studies indicated that employers are looking for well-rounded graduates who possess a broad range of cognitive competencies (hard skills) and behavioral competencies (soft skills). While these prior studies examined what competencies employers viewed as being important, they did not focus on why employers held these views nor how they viewed and measured employee performance in relation to these competencies. This paper will report on a follow-up pilot investigation that sought insights into why employers believe certain competencies to be more important than others and the ways in which they consider performance against these competencies. A similar survey instrument to that used in the prior 2003 business study was distributed to a small number of employers in the Auckland region who agreed to participate in this pilot study. Individual survey results were then used to guide follow-up, semi-structured interviews with each of the 10 survey respondents. Common themes, drawn from an analysis of the interviews, are discussed and reported on in the findings. The discussion also gives consideration to the sociocultural factors that may influence employers' views. Implications for learning goals and assessment practices within a cooperative education program will also be highlighted.

Industry-Based Student Projects: A Client Perspective

Chris Manford and Tineke Manford

School of Computing and Information Technology, Unitec, New Zealand

There are a number of computing degrees that incorporate into the curriculum an industry-based student project. A number of benefits can be derived by the student and education provider from working closely with industry. But how does industry view such projects? Do they derive any benefit from them? This research studies the value of industry-based student projects to organizations that have sponsored them for the Bachelor of Computing Systems over the last five years. The work first looked at client satisfaction and finds that 73% of organizations were satisfied or very satisfied with the outcome of the project. Some 54% used the solution immediately or after some changes and of these 78% used the solution for six months or longer. The research also studied the company's perception of the performance of the effectiveness of the solution and how the project was managed. It finds that overall 54% the respondents felt the students performed well or very well. The area of worst performance was the students' understanding of the business where only 41% organizations felt the students did this well or very well.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Individual membership: \$50 a person

Corporate membership: \$150 for four nominated persons from one institute, with \$30 for every additional person

For organisations with more than 10 members, enquire about institutional membership

Contact Katharine Hoskyn, Auckland University of Technology 09 921 9999 ext 5349, for details about renewing membership or becoming a new member. Alternatively access the NZACE webpage for more details (www.nzace.ac.nz).
