PESWS FORUM

Thursday 22 May 2008, 3.30pm-8.00pm
Faculty of Education and Social Work

The University of Sydney
# MAY FORUM PROGRAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location/Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3:30pm</td>
<td>REGISTRATION</td>
<td>Foyer, Education Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:05 – 4:55pm</td>
<td>PAPER PRESENTATIONS</td>
<td>(see timetable for presentation titles &amp; room allocations)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:05 – 5:55pm</td>
<td>PAPER PRESENTATIONS</td>
<td>(see timetable for presentation titles &amp; room allocations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:05 – 6:55pm</td>
<td>WELCOME &amp; KEYNOTE ADDRESS</td>
<td>Assoc Prof Janette Bobis, Associate Dean (Research)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Professor Peter Freebody</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Why research matters even more in changing times</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lecture Theatre 351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:55 – 7:00pm</td>
<td>ANNOUNCEMENT</td>
<td>Assoc Prof Janette Bobis, Associate Dean (Research)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00 – 8:00pm</td>
<td>DINNER</td>
<td>Staff Common Room, Room 401</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TIMETABLE FOR 4.05PM SESSIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROOM 461</th>
<th>ROOM 459</th>
<th>ROOM 435</th>
<th>ROOM 418</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair: Dr Lesley Harbon</td>
<td>Chair: Dr Ruth Phillips</td>
<td>Chair: Dr Sue Goodwin</td>
<td>There are no presentations in this room until 4:30pm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grace Yuwono</strong>&lt;br&gt;Are teachers being professionalised, deprofessionalised, reprofessionalised - or does it really matter? A case of Indonesian teachers</td>
<td><strong>Yong-Moon Jung</strong>&lt;br&gt;Tolerance of poverty: Epistemological dimensions of poverty in Australia and Korea</td>
<td><strong>Hongxing Cai</strong>&lt;br&gt;Brain gain in Chinese Higher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervisor: Dr Lesley Harbon</td>
<td>Supervisor: Dr Ruth Phillips</td>
<td>Supervisor: Prof Anthony Welch</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Xuelai Jia</strong>&lt;br&gt;Self perception and presentation of College English teachers - A case study of a University in the North of China</td>
<td><strong>Amy Huang</strong>&lt;br&gt;Social work support services for sex workers: Implications for practice</td>
<td><strong>Takayuki Shimomura</strong>&lt;br&gt;A comparative study of Indigenous Education, in the context of globalisation: Australia and Japanese perspectives</td>
<td><strong>Gloria Hill</strong>&lt;br&gt;The medicalization of behaviour in children diagnosed as having Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor: Dr Hui Shen</td>
<td>Supervisor: Dr Ruth Phillips</td>
<td>Supervisor: Prof Anthony Welch</td>
<td>Supervisors: Prof Trevor Parmenter &amp; Prof Barbara Fawcett</td>
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<td>ROOM 461</td>
<td>ROOM 459</td>
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<td>Chair: Prof Gabrielle Meagher</td>
<td>Chair: Ms Alexandra Hugman</td>
<td>Chair: Assoc Prof Andrew Martin</td>
<td>Chair: Dr Lina Markauskaite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Sabrin Farooqui  
*Establishing truths, targeting dreams - the Secondary English textbook in Bangladesh* | Christine Preston  
*Factors affecting Primary children’s interpretation of science diagrams* | Jasmine Green  
*Gender and year-level invariance of academic motivation, self-concept and key educational outcomes: First order and higher order solutions* | Wendy Escott  
*Outside the box’: Towards a capacity building service delivery framework for people with developmental disabilities* |
| Supervisor: Dr Llian Merritt | Supervisor: Assoc Prof Mike King | Supervisor: Assoc Prof Andrew Martin | Supervisor: Prof Trevor Parmenter |
| Stuart Brooking  
*Post colonial issues in Theological Education: Whose curriculum?* | Marlene Lebreton  
*Second language teaching within the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme: A comparative study of the International School of Paris and St Paul’s Grammar School, Sydney* | Suma Parahakaran  
*Human values-based water, sanitation and hygiene education: A study of teachers’ beliefs and perceptions in some South East Asian countries* | Martin Raffaele  
*An exploration of the psychosocial effects that school-age children with Childhood Onset Absence Epilepsy (CAE) experience when their condition is misdiagnosed as Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)* |
| Supervisor: Prof Phillip Jones | Supervisors:  
Dr Nigel Bagnall (University of Sydney), & Prof Jacqueline Feuillet (Universite de Nantes, France) | Supervisor: Dr Armstrong Osborne | Supervisor: Dr Susan Colmar |
KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Why research matters even more in changing times

Professor Peter Freebody – 6:05pm, LT 351
Professorial Research Fellow

The significance of research in areas such as education and social work is often asserted but less often scrutinised in depth. In this presentation a brief history of the role of socially-oriented research will be presented, including a consideration of the development of quantitative and qualitative approaches to documenting data. A quick history of both of these forms will be discussed in particular with respect to the differing ways in which they produce, delineate, and evaluate phenomena, the different kinds of practical action they afford, and the different kinds of nation-state services they legitimate. Equally critical differences between research in natural, social, and cultural sciences will be outlined, and the relative advantages each offers educational and social workers described. The role of research on the education and care of the young in the growth of the disciplines conventionally taken to be (somewhat paradoxically) informing education will also be outlined. Concluding the presentation will be a discussion of the distinctive importance of certain kinds of research in times in which change is rapid and governments are in retreat from broadly-based, wholehearted social support.
Abstracts have been listed alphabetically by presenter’s surname.

**Post colonial issues in Theological Education: Whose curriculum?**

*Stuart Brooking – 5:05pm, Room 461*

*Supervisor: Prof Phillip Jones*

The current dominant models for theological education derive from the USA and Europe where Christianity is the majority religion. The transference, adaptation, and rejection of these models to ‘minority’ contexts such as most of Asia will be the topic.

The issue of ‘contextualisation’ of the Christian faith has been clearly on the academic agenda for the past four decades. However, in this post-colonial era there are still many negative vestiges of influence throughout the developing world. Theological education is key in point. The impact of the Western world through financial control of the Developing world’s church and theological education activities is yet to be fully examined (and challenged). In particular the issue of generating theological education models in places where Christianity is in the majority and transplanting them to places where it is a minority has been given scant attention in the literature.

The presenter is soon to undertake field research in Sri Lanka and Papua New Guinea based on these concepts and will interview representatives from most of the theological colleges in the two countries.

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**Brain gain in Chinese Higher Education**

*Hongxing Cai – 4:05pm, Room 435*

*Supervisor: Prof Anthony Welch*

Global mobility of the highly skilled is an increasingly prominent and commonplace phenomenon, and the competition for talent in the higher education has never been as fierce and widespread as today. Highly-skilled overseas Chinese, also coming to be known as the Chinese knowledge diaspora, are perhaps the largest example of this phenomenon.

Most received their highest degrees from western higher education institutions (HEIs) and have been working in the foreign universities or research institutions or companies for a few years. They are now deemed one of the most precious assets out of the mainland by the Chinese government. Favourable policies have been designed and implemented, and generous incentives have been offered to attract them to serve the motherland either by permanently returning or by working on both sides simultaneously. With more and more overseas Chinese academics being enticed back by the opportunities derived from China’s burgeoning economy and its endeavours to build world-class universities, China’s brain drain has been converted, to certain extent, into brain gain/circulation. This paper reviews China’s brain drain problem and its efforts to reverse the situation. By providing convincing evidence of its achievements in higher education, it concludes that China has benefited significantly from the brain gain and this trend is going to continue for a long time, although there are some confronting issues during this process.
Outside the box: Towards a capacity building service delivery framework for people with developmental disabilities

Wendy Escott – 5:05pm, Room 434
Supervisor: Prof Trevor Parmenter

The research traces the development of an innovative framework for service delivery, identifying its key elements. Set within the context of current service delivery policy and practice, it tests and evaluates the outcome effectiveness of the framework. Integral to the research are the key concepts of social capital and community capacity building, and their impact upon the quality of life and community participation of adults with disabilities, and also on the wider community.

The research draws on the findings from the literature review to establish criteria for a capacity building approach to delivering services that are inclusive for people with disabilities. Following an examination of good models of practice from around the world, it specifically looks at the role of the arts as community ‘connector’ - a means of building community and removing barriers.

A systems model of evaluation is used to assess the outcomes of the intervention on the participants with disabilities, the organisation and the wider community. The study is longitudinal, incorporating qualitative methods of assessment. Results are obtained from data collected through eight case studies, individual ‘Community Connections/Contacts Mapping’ records, interviews and surveys. Measures of community contacts are obtained to record growth in social capital over the duration of the study.

The aim of the research is not only to describe and evaluate the particular framework in focus within its local community and the current disability service system, but also to share an understanding of the identified key elements and their wider appropriateness with those engaged in similar services or contexts.

Establishing truths, targeting dreams - the Secondary English textbook in Bangladesh

Sabrin Farooqui – 5:05pm, Room 461
Supervisor: Dr Llian Merritt

Textbooks are central to the schooling and the education of students going to primary, secondary and higher secondary levels of education in Bangladesh. There, English Language Teaching Improvement Project (ELTIP) has made some remarkable progress, among other initiatives, by introducing communicative textbooks up to the higher secondary level for the first time and introducing major changes in English Language Teaching (ELT) there. ELTIP aimed at improving the standard of English in terms of both teaching and learning in Bangladesh. The new curriculum stressed the need for students to learn to communicate in English rather than to just master the structure of the language. This study focuses on how the various contextual factors shape teachers’ ways of using the textbook and shows that there is a gap between policy imperatives and classroom realities. Data collected through classroom observation, document analysis and a series of interviews with secondary English language teachers reveal that various contextual factors interact with the textbook use to facilitate or inhibit the use of the textbook as has been suggested. This paper identifies several thorny issues which need attention of the educational policy makers.
Gender and year-level invariance of academic motivation, self-concept and key educational outcomes: First order and higher order solutions

Jasmine Green – 5:05pm, Room 435
Supervisor: Assoc Prof Andrew Martin

The question of whether a given instrument measures the same components with equal validity for males and females of different ages is an important one. Most research typically investigates mean-level differences between groups, too often neglecting to assess whether the structure of the measures are invariant across groups. This study examined the factor structure and psychometric properties of the Motivation and Engagement Scale; “High School (MES-HS), the Self-Description Questionnaire II - Short (SDQII-S) and relevant educational outcomes using a representative sample of 3,450 Australian high school students in years 7 to 12. Results of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) provide support for the first and higher order factor structure of motivation, self-concept, and key educational outcomes. Furthermore, invariance tests confirmed that factor loadings, factor covariances, residuals and the factor structure of the above mentioned instruments were invariant across gender and year-level.

The medicalization of behaviour in children diagnosed as having Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Gloria Hill – 4:05pm, Room 418
Supervisors: Prof Trevor Parmenter & Prof Barbara Fawcett

This study follows an interpretivist sociological tradition to investigate two aspects of the medicalization of behaviour in children diagnosed as having ADHD: 1. the process of achieving a medical solution and 2. the impact of medicalization on the lives of children diagnosed as having ADHD through the eyes of those children who have experienced such a diagnosis.

I present a two-pronged exploratory field-based qualitative research study from a Social Constructivist perspective, influenced by the tenets of Symbolic Interactionism and Phenomenology. I particularly, though not exclusively, utilize Symbolic Interactionism in the first part of the study, that is, the process of medicalization, and Phenomenology in the second part, that is the experience of ‘being ADHD’.

Please note that this presentation provides a synopsis of work in progress.
Social work support services for sex workers: Implications for practice

Amy Huang – 4:05pm, Room 459
Supervisor: Dr Ruth Phillips

Based on recent PhD research, this paper discusses the findings from interviews with sex workers and social workers working to support sex workers. The key research question was to explore the impact and implications of “empowerment” social work practice in support services for sex workers in Sydney. One aim of the research was to determine ways in which social workers could improve support services for sex workers, in recognition that sex workers are often a highly marginalised and stigmatised group in contemporary society.

Empowerment is defined as a means of supporting effective decisions, and having control over one’s circumstances. Given the broader controversial nature of sex work, the examination of the apparently dominant approach to social work support for sex workers became the subject of interrogation in this research. Particular focus was placed on current legislative responses to sex work, the role of police and critical feminist debates about sex work as a means of establishing the broader context for social work interventions and support for sex workers.

Key findings in the research reflect a complex set of perceptions about how sex workers view their own position in society. Sex workers also expressed strong views about the impact of policy and legislation on the conditions of their work.

Due to the limited scope of PhD research and the sampling method, the sex workers in this study were mostly well-educated, knowledgeable about sexual health, and had enjoyed positive experiences as sex workers.

Self perception and presentation of College English teachers’- A case study of a University in the North of China

Xuelai Jia – 4:05pm, Room 461
Supervisor: Dr Hui Shen

There has been an increasing concern about Chinese self under the impact of Western culture. The overall research project aims to explore how the self is perceived and presented in by Chinese college English teachers today. The paper first briefly outlines the key elements of self in Chinese culture and how the self is interpreted and displayed in social interactions with others at the interpersonal level, with groups, and with non-specific others. The coexistence of the traditional social self and the modern individual self has been empirically proved as constituent elements of the realities in the social world reflected in the social interactions, but few researchers have examined the how the self is perceived and displayed in depth in today’s China. In addition, the methods used to examine the self tend to focus on tendencies or frequencies, which failed to conceptualize the self in terms of process. Also Chinese college English teachers’ self perception and presentation were still under studied. Taking these into account, focus group interviews and life histories will be utilized to explore how the potential participants interpret and display their selves in their daily lives.
Unresolved conundrums regarding poverty include why poverty is continuous even through economic growth and why poverty exists differently across countries. In exploring the persistence of poverty and variations in the distributive performances of welfare systems, researchers have focused on different institutional arrangements and ideological types. However, complete agreement has not been reached regarding how much difference institutional variations can make in the achievement of core objectives of social security policy, the elimination of poverty and the alleviation of income inequality. This study aims to explain the diverse performances of social policies in relation to the diversity of collective perceptions in society toward poverty, focusing on the social acceptance of poverty.

A key part of the research is a comparison between Australia and South Korea. As an exploration of diverse aspects of tolerance of poverty, this study requires multi-strategy research. Key variables to be examined are discourse of poverty, public policy preference, factual conditions of poverty, and behavioural and emotional aspects of poverty. Because of diverse sources and forms of data, multiple analysis methods will be employed. They consist of content analysis, multivariate analysis, and narrative analysis.

Theoretically, this research is expected to strengthen explanations about differences in the degree of poverty by an exploration of the effects of non-institutional discursive factors and micro-level perceptions of a society on diverse policy arrangements and performances. In terms of policy implications, it will highlight the importance of mindset change as an anti-poverty strategy rather than the expansion of welfare programs or modification of institutional frameworks.

Internationalization has a great impact on language teaching policies and intercultural education. Knowing more than one language and knowing about other cultures is highly significant in preparing children to become citizens of the world. Such values and competences are highly encouraged in the most recent programme of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO): the Primary Years Programme (PYP). Language is promoted throughout the PYP curriculum as a means of learning, a way of inquiring about knowledge. The second language (L2) of the school is, as the language of instruction, expected to be active, functional, involved and involving, necessary (Duverger, 2005). However, PYP language policy documents often give a general view on language teaching and not specifically on L2 teaching. L2 teachers often encounter difficulties with making the children use the L2. Many other questions arise regarding the role of second language teaching. This research is a comparative study of second language (L2) teaching within the PYP of two schools: the International School of Paris and St Paul’s Grammar School in Sydney. The following paper outlines the parameters of this study. Firstly, it explores issues in teaching an L2 within an international perspective and secondly considers theoretical approaches and pedagogical strategies in L2 teaching to young children. The research methodology consists of a focused ethnography of the two schools and case studies of teachers. Qualitative methods such as classrooms observations, interviews and focus groups will be used.

Key words: International education, PYP, L2 teaching issues, L2 teaching strategies, culture(s)

Second language teaching within the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme: A comparative study of the International School of Paris and St Paul’s Grammar School, Sydney

Marlene Lebreton – 5:05pm, Room 459
Supervisors: Dr Nigel Bagnall (University of Sydney) & Prof Jacqueline Feuillet (Universite de Nantes, France)
Human values-based water, sanitation and hygiene education: A study of teachers’ beliefs and perceptions in some South East Asian countries

Suma Parahakaran – 5:05pm, Room 435
Supervisor: Dr Armstrong Osborne

Teachers’ perceptions and beliefs have a great impact on classroom teaching and learning. Human values-based water, sanitation and hygiene education (HVWSHE) aims to develop students’ consciousness about water use and to develop a new water ethic. When implementing HVWSHE there are factors that influence human values internalisation process in students.

Teachers’ perceptions and beliefs on various aspects; as problem solvers, the effectiveness of teaching techniques and the impact of HVWSHE on students’ attitudes and character make a significant contribution to values integration in HVWSHE.

Previous research studies have measured impact of the human values integrated instructional model and teachers’ reflections on the impact of HVWSHE, but very little research has been done on the problems teachers face when they implement HVWSHE, the effectiveness of teaching techniques and the impact of HVWSHE on students’ attitudes and character.

The study will survey and analyse teachers’ perceptions and beliefs about HVWSHE. Human values education has proven record of improving students’ attitudes and developing good behaviour.

This study surveys and interviews teacher educators and teachers who have completed training in HVWSHE by the Society for Preservation of Water in co-operation with the United Nations Settlements Program (UNHABITAT) in Thailand.

Key words: HVWSHE, Teacher beliefs and perceptions, ethics and human values, water education.

Factors affecting Primary children’s interpretation of science diagrams

Christine Preston – 5:05pm, Room 459
Supervisor: Assoc Prof Mike King

Science diagrams are used widely in primary schools for instruction and assessment despite the absence of substantive research into their effectiveness as aids for the development of conceptual understanding or as indicators of scientific literacy. The paper will outline and discuss aspects of a study designed to explore how primary children interpret scientific diagrams. The study aimed to investigate the ways children interpret diagrams and the meanings children construct from them and whether and in what ways the diagrams change children’s knowledge and understanding of concepts. The factors affecting children’s ability to make meaning from science diagrams - student characteristics (age, gender, language and culture) and diagram characteristics (arrows, symbolism, colour, realistic, schematic, keys and labels, concept area) were also investigated.

Semi-structured interviews with individual children in Year 3 and Year 5 from one primary school were interviewed to elicit their preconceptions of specific science concepts before being asked to share their interpretations of related science diagrams. Follow up interviews determined any changes in children’s conceptual schema and in their interpretation of the diagrams.

The results revealed interesting and unexpected interpretations of commonly used diagrams that provide insights into children’s scientific thinking. This has implications for the use of science diagrams in instruction and in the assessment of scientific understanding.
An exploration of the psychosocial effects that school-age children with Childhood Onset Absence Epilepsy (CAE) experience when their condition is misdiagnosed as Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Martin Raffaele – 5:05pm, Room 434
Supervisor: Dr Susan Colmar

The reason for conducting this research is to provide an understanding from a first person perspective. Six participants from three family groups will take place in the research. Each family group includes an adolescent/young adult who has experienced CAE and a parent (guardian) of this child will also take place. The adolescents and guardians will be questioned on what effect they feel the diagnosis of ADHD and the later correct diagnosis of CAE played on the child at the time of diagnosis, and sequentially.

The qualitative study research method adopted in the study is Phenomenology. Phenomenology is a qualitative research method that aims to identify and illustrate the subjective experiences of respondents, providing details everyday encounters from the viewpoint of the subject. The researcher will conduct in depth interviews with ten participants from five family groups. A research framework based on a dual comparison construct will be required. Two set periods in time, firstly the diagnosis of ADHD, and secondly the diagnosis of CAE was points of comparison that were observed. The effects of these diagnoses that sequentially occurred both from the period of the first diagnosis of ADHD until the diagnosis of CAE and then following this second diagnosis until the present time will also be assessed.

The purpose of this study is to provide an understanding of the psychosocial effects of the misdiagnosis. To publish data that is not available at this time, and offer findings from that will create a foundation for further research.

A comparative study of Indigenous Education, in the context of globalisation: Australia and Japanese perspectives

Takayuki Shiomura – 4:05pm, Room 435
Supervisor: Prof Anthony Welch

This research will analyse differences between, and common issues affecting the education of Indigenous Australians and Ainu People in the context of globalisation. Historically, both indigenous peoples have various experiences in common; e.g. the notion of Terra Nullius, being called barbarians by Government propaganda, a loss of population caused by introduced diseases and conflicts, Government protection (control) policy and assimilation policy. Today, both indigenous peoples are exposed to not only threats due to the effects of the dominant society locally, but also the impact of globalisation. The research will focus on the transition from secondary education to tertiary education, of each group. Although the disadvantage of Indigenous children starts at a much earlier stage of education in Australia, the reason why this study targets the transition is that a huge achievement gap still remains between indigenous students and non-indigenous students in both countries, when measured in terms of access to higher education. To clarify the issues, this research will employ qualitative analysis in order to see the issues in a three-dimensional view. In this field of research, using qualitative methods such as critical ethnography allow in-depth clarification of indigenous experiences, particularly of educational issues. Four key ideas are described in the research questions, and are reported on in this paper, which focuses on the interview data: 1. The impact of specific global economic, political, and educational reforms, 2. The major trends in course selections by indigenous students, 3. Gender differences, 4. Impact of English as a global language on the viability of local languages.
Are teachers being professionalised, deprofessionalised, reprofessionalised - or does it really matter? A case of Indonesian teachers

Grace Yuwono – 4:05pm, Room 461
Supervisor: Dr Lesley Harbon

Much literature of teacher professionalism has focused on issues such as: attempts to improve teachers’ status and standing (e.g. Hargreaves, 2000), the diminishment of teachers’ status and autonomy due to the pressures and interference from outside agents (e.g. Ginsburg, 1996), or the need to redefine the nature of teacher professionalism due to the increasing complexity of teachers’ work (e.g. McCullogh et al., 2000).

Just like in many other countries, education reforms and changes in Indonesia have also influenced and altered teachers’ work as well as their perspectives on teaching profession and teacher professionalism. Based on a fieldwork conducted in 2007, the paper examines the nature of Indonesian teacher professionalism in present time, i.e. whether teachers are being professionalised, deprofessionalised, reprofessionalised - or whether such an issue actually matters.