

From Industrial Relations to Work and Organisational Studies at The University of Sydney 1953 - 2023



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY
—
Business School



About this monograph

This monograph traces teaching and research in industrial relations and cognate areas at the University of Sydney. It discusses the emergence of industrial relations from a single subject in the Department of Economics in the early 1950s, to a Department of Industrial Relations in the mid 1970s, and finally to a Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies in the 2000s. There is a brief outline of the period up to the 1980s and a more detailed discussion of the later expansion of the department into human resource management and management programs. This monograph outlines changes in curriculum, a growing research profile and international connections. The monograph argues that the academic fields of industrial relations, human resource management, organisational behaviour and general management were able to be integrated into a new discipline focused on work, rather than a more specialised department focusing on industrial relations. Areas of difference and of continuity are identified. The linking narrative from the department to the new discipline, from a variety of perspectives, is the experience and regulation of people at work.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful for the detailed comments and suggestions made by current and former members of the discipline, in particular Marian Baird, Bradon Ellem, Russell Lansbury, Greg Patmore and Jim Kitay, and by Anne Junor from the University of NSW. Consultations rather than formal interviews were undertaken with a number of past and current members of the Department of Industrial Relations and the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies. I am grateful for the information and insights they provided. Although I was commissioned to write this monograph, I retained editorial control of the project.

John O'Brien
November 2022

Cover image: Abercrombie Building (H70),
The University of Sydney Business School

Dedication

To John O'Brien
Author, Colleague, Friend
21 December 1945 – 10 January 2023

Preface

From 2016 to 2021 I had the very good fortune to be Head of the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies, known affectionately as WOS, in the University of Sydney Business School. Decades earlier, in the early to mid 1970s, I was lucky to study as an undergraduate in the forerunner of WOS, the Department of Industrial Relations, and then later to enrol in a PhD with Professor Russell Lansbury as my supervisor. Russell was the Chair of the Department of Industrial Relations at the time. I am therefore very much a product of the 'Sydney IR school'. Since the 1970s, we have witnessed massive changes in the workforce, in universities and in the teaching and practice of industrial relations in Australia. That changing context and a deep love of our field inspired me to commission one of our leading historians and industrial relations scholars, John O'Brien, to write this history of our department, our discipline, at the University of Sydney. I am grateful to the University of Sydney Business School for a research grant that enabled John to undertake this research.

As invariably happens when a history is commenced and written, there is always more to discover, more people to talk to and more to write. The history presented here, therefore, may not cover every person and detail associated with IR at Sydney University, but it is a place to record the origins of industrial relations scholarship and teaching in Australia. It also shows that we are a broadly trained group and always have been, and that our strength and continuity come from that diversity of approaches and a willingness to adapt to new institutional contexts.

As well as documenting our past 70 years, this history was written for the future, to let current and future students and new staff know about the strong body of scholarship they are part of and to which they can contribute. I look forward to further research, teaching and public policy contributions as WOS grows ever stronger and as work and organisations change. At a time when we have experienced a global pandemic and the ensuing economic disruption that has focused on who works, how we work and where we work, there is an even greater need for understanding the world of work in all its dimensions.

This project would not have been possible without the commitment of John O'Brien. John brought a unique eye and skill to the project of researching and recording the history of WOS. Despite episodes of debilitating ill health, John remained committed and was always determined to write a clear and useful account, set within the broader context of change in Australian universities. Sadly, John passed away in January 2023, before the finalisation and publication of this monograph. We dedicate this history to him.

Marian Baird AO FASSA
June 2023

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By the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies, The University of Sydney Business School

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We acknowledge the tradition of custodianship and law of the Country on which the University of Sydney campuses stand. We pay our respects to those who have cared and continue to care for Country.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This publication is the history of an organisation within a larger organisation, itself within an even larger organisation: a department/discipline within a faculty/school, and the people who made it, within a university. This is the story of a Department of Industrial Relations that became a Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies in the Business School at the University of Sydney. The question explored in this monograph is whether this process constituted a radical change in the philosophy or the educational direction of the group, or was primarily an incremental adjustment to changing economic and intellectual environments and changes in students' preferences. Were all the changes incremental, or were some changes the result of a more deliberate strategy?

The monograph is structured as follows:

Evolution

- the emergence of 'industrial relations' as a concept
- the emergence of teaching of industrial relations at the University of Sydney, including the separation of the discipline from the control of the Department of Economics
- the context in which industrial relations was conceived as a means of maintaining industrial 'peace' in the workplace
- the history of industrial relations at the University of Sydney until the 1990s, with particular reference to issues of leadership in the Department of Industrial Relations until the late 1980s

Curriculum developments

- the development of curriculum within the department including the inclusion of organisational behaviour, sociology of work, labour law and labour economics in the context of highly regulated industrial relations in Australia, in particular through state sponsored centralised conciliation and arbitration
- the emergence of human resource management as means of regulating employment in the workplace and the widespread debate about its suitability to coexist with industrial relations as an academic discipline
- the transition from human resource management to management education
- postgraduate programs by coursework

Research

- research contributions by individuals and groups
- research centres and groups
- research grants
- higher degree and postdoctoral research
- scholarly teaching fellows

Research dissemination and influence

- journals housed within the discipline
- public policy interventions

International linkages

General conclusions.

Chapter 2: Industrial relations

The early years

The term 'industrial relations' came into common public policy parlance in the 1920s, principally as a legal and institutional approach to securing 'industrial peace' (Morris 1993). Scattered contributions were made by economists and lawyers in the 1930s and 1940s, but it took some time to penetrate the academy. Occasional papers addressing various aspects of labour relations had been given by a range of contributors to meetings of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science. In 1973 a full program covering industrial relations took place at the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science Congress (Oxham 1974).

The teaching of industrial relations began at the University of Sydney in 1953. It was taught by an economist, the moderately progressive Kingsley Laffer, under the aegis of the Department of Economics. Kingsley Laffer, together with Noel Butlin and Heinz Arndt, had been instrumental in establishing the Fabian Society in New South Wales (Barcan 2002: 263). He struggled to convince his economist colleagues that industrial relations was really an 'academic' discipline (Laffer 1968, 1974; Kelly 1999: 376). Indeed, during Kingsley Laffer's tenure from 1953 to 1975, the industrial relations group never numbered more than five academic staff. For the whole of the period, Laffer sought to separate industrial relations teaching and research from the organisational control and the preoccupations of the powerful Department of Economics.

The first industrial relations subject incorporated elements of labour economics, labour law, industrial psychology and labour history. Topics included public institutions, workplace issues (including psychological factors), organisation theory, personal practices and trade unions. Dianne Kelly, of the University of Wollongong, in her doctoral thesis on academic industrial relations in Australia described this course as both 'ambitious and eclectic' (Kelly 1999: 165). The second appointment in the group was a psychologist, Maxine Bucklow, who specialised in applied psychology and who was influenced by the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, particularly as it related to the workplace (Bucklow 1966; Bucklow 2013, first published in 1975). She addressed the issue of equalisation between management and semi-autonomous work groups (Bucklow 1966). She was the first psychologist appointed to the industrial relations group.

By 1966 the year-long course¹ Industrial Relations 1 (pass) was broadly divided into employer-employee relations (including industrial conflict) and managerial organisation and the state and industrial relations (including arbitration) (Kelly 1999: 162). Thus, from the beginning, industrial relations at the University of Sydney was drawn from a variety of established disciplines and incorporated both individual and institutional factors in the organisation of the workplace (e.g. Bucklow 1965).

This interdisciplinary nature of the subject had both advantages and disadvantages for its continuation as a field of study (Kelly 1999: 179). The main advantage was that the scope of the industrial relations curriculum was flexible enough to incorporate other areas of investigation related to work and the workplace, as well as changes in external regulation. Moreover, there was a broader shift in thinking about the nature of industrial relations research with a greater focus on the workplace (e.g. Strauss and Whitfield 1998). On the other hand, the boundary fluidity invited attempts to hive off sections of the discipline (Strauss and Feuille 1978).

¹ At the time University of Sydney courses were taught over three terms (Lent, Trinity, Michaelmas) and a full academic year.

In 1975 the industrial relations group, consisting of Kingsley Laffer, Maxine Bucklow, Geoff Sorrell, Malcolm Rimmer and Peter Scherer, emphasised that it took an interdisciplinary approach to its work by covering labour economics, industrial law, trade union theory, and industrial psychology and sociology. The second undergraduate subject, Industrial Relations 2, concentrated on the ‘analysis of the source of conflict’ (University of Sydney Economics Handbook 1975: 28–30), a predominant concern of the 1970s and early 1980s. Conflict, however, could be explained by a combination of personal and institutional factors. Industrial conflict, nevertheless, intensified in the 1970s, with an average of over 500 days lost per 1000 workers over the decade (Table 1). Figure 1 shows that dispute frequency peaked in 1974, when over 1000 days were lost to disputes per 1000 workers: in other words, an average of just over 1 day was lost that year for each employed worker (Stanford 2018).

Table 1: Historical trends in industrial disputes in Australia, by decade

Decade	Average disputes per year	Average work days lost per year	Days lost per 1000 workers per year
1950s	1299	962,000	268
1960s	1341	862,000	185
1970s	2368	3,146,000	542
1980s	1919	1,942,000	312
1990s	697	825,000	122
2000s	463	268,000	32
2010s	198	145,000	14

Source: Stanford (2018) [Stanford’s calculations from Australian Bureau of Statistics Catalogue No. 1301.0, 6321.0 and 6321.0.55.001; and Reserve Bank of Australia (1997) *Australian Economic Statistics 1949–1950 to 1996–1997*, Occasional Paper 8].

Figure 1: Days lost per 1000 workers per year in Australia



Source: Stanford (2018), Australian Bureau of Statistics Catalogue No. 1301.0, 6321.0 and 6321.0.55.001; and Reserve Bank of Australia (1997) *Australian Economic Statistics 1949–1950 to 1996–1997*, Occasional Paper 8.

Note: 2017 includes first three quarters only.

Various disciplines were called upon to explain the phenomenon of industrial conflict. Nevertheless, the University of Sydney and its faculties, that presented themselves as offering courses with a strong disciplinary foundation, were not always supportive of areas of learning that lacked such a foundation. Kingsley Laffer, later supported by a small number of colleagues, fought to both establish the legitimacy of the field of study and to remove it from the control of the discipline of economics (Laffer 1974). It took Kingsley Laffer and his colleagues many years to achieve the separation.

In 1976 the industrial relations group achieved the status of a separate department, despite the sustained opposition of leading professors in the Faculty of Economics, especially the Dean, Sidney Butlin, and the Head of Economics, Warren Hogan. Kingsley Laffer appealed to Vice Chancellor Bruce Williams who agreed to establish a separate department (Groenewegen 2009: 153). Sidney Butlin, nevertheless, took credit for this initiative. Subsequent Deans were more sympathetic to the new department and supported the broadening of its curriculum (Laffer 1968, 1974). Table 2 summarises the growth in enrolments up to the establishment of the new department.

Table 2: Enrolments in industrial relations at the University of Sydney for selected years 1956–1972

Year	Industrial Relations 1	Industrial Relations 2	Industrial Relations 3	Other
1956				
1958	25	N/A		
1961	33	11		
1962	43	10		
1963	47	10		
1964	55	7		
1965	65	7		
1966	86	7		
1967	94	15		
1968	92	14		
1969	112	29		CE
1970	131	41		CE
1972	147+24H	54+12H	6H	CE

Notes: Industrial Relations 1, 2 and 3 were year-long courses; H = Students in Honours stream; CE = Chemical Engineering Service course.
Source: Kelly (1999: 191).

Kingsley Laffer is commemorated each year with a lecture named after him. The lecturers from 1993 to 2023 are listed in Appendix 1. The lectures are open to students, staff and the general public. The first of the Laffer lecturers in 1993 was former Prime Minister Bob Hawke who also spent six years associated with the department as an Honorary Professor, after the end of his period as Prime Minister. In 2013, the 50th anniversary of industrial relations teaching at the University of Sydney, two prizes for undergraduate students were established as memorials to the pioneering work of Kingsley Laffer and Maxine Bucklow. These were made possible, in part, by funds from the Vice Chancellor’s award to Russell Lansbury for excellence in higher research degree supervision.

One of the factors inhibiting the growth of the Department of Industrial Relations was that it could not accept undergraduate students from the Faculty of Arts, which had been the practice in the Department of Government. However in 1990 the Dean Stephen Salsbury agreed that 40 students from the Faculty of Arts could enrol in industrial relations. In the following years total enrolments increased significantly. Indeed, Stephen Salsbury was impressed with the progress of the department. He resisted attempts by the Department of Economics to reabsorb the Department of Industrial Relations. After the resignation of the inaugural Professor of Industrial Relations, John Corina, who returned to England after only a short time in the post, Stephen Salsbury became acting Head of the department. He engaged George Strauss, from the University of California, Berkeley, to review the future of industrial relations in the (then) Faculty of Economics. Strauss recommended the continuation of a separate department and was instrumental in the process leading to the appointment of Russell Lansbury to the Chair of Industrial Relations in 1987.

Leadership for expansion

Until 1987, the small department lacked sustained leadership. Noted scholars George Strauss and Bert Turner spent relatively short periods as Visiting Professors and Heads of the department. George Strauss, in particular, maintained his links with industrial relations academics in Australia, including at the University of Sydney. In 1978, economic historian John Corina was appointed as a permanent professor but stayed only four years before returning to the United Kingdom. While the department continued to grow during John Corina's tenure, it was the appointment of Russell Lansbury in 1987 that brought a period of stability and growth in the discipline of industrial relations at the university. It can be fairly said that the department had been in the 'doldrums', and largely self-managed during the period between the retirement of Kingsley Laffer in the mid 1970s and the appointment of Russell Lansbury.

Russell Lansbury presided over the expansion of the industrial relations department into human resource management, and later added other work-related aspects of management studies. Russell Lansbury came to be regarded as an able administrator, a canny politician and pragmatist, as well as a noted scholar who involved department colleagues in his research projects. He served as Head of Department from 1987 to 1999. He then became Associate Dean (Research) until his retirement in 2009. He was also appointed as the inaugural director of the Australian Centre for Industrial Relations Research and Teaching (ACIRRT) from 1989 to 1991. This was one of two Key Centres funded by the Australian Research Council, after a competitive process. (The other being at Monash University.)

By 2000 the Department of Industrial Relations had 15 full-time academic continuing staff (University of Sydney Handbook 2000: 110). By this time, industrial relations, human resource management and organisational behaviour and management courses made up the wide-ranging curriculum within the department.

By 2019, the successor department, the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies, had expanded to 24 full-time academic staff, six postgraduate fellows working on a variety of research projects, and three administrative staff (University of Sydney Business Handbook 2019). The growth of the discipline reflected both the diversity of subject offerings and a considerable research effort by academics within the discipline. These activities raised the profile of the discipline in the Business School and provided course offerings which attracted increasing numbers of students.

Russell Lansbury was followed by a succession of long serving staff who provided a continuity of leadership that facilitated and guided the change process. The discipline was collegiate and pluralistic in its approach to the various aspects of the employment relationship, a characteristic that survived the growth of managerialism from the late 1980s.

Heads of department after Russell Lansbury included Greg Patmore, Jim Kitay, Chris Wright, Bradon Ellem and Marian Baird. In 2022 Anya Johnson became Head, the first organisation behaviour specialist to do so. All Heads took a collegial and democratic approach to leading Work and Organisational Studies, which aided the process in reaching a consensus about changes within the discipline. This has continued in the face of growing managerial centralisation and the concentration on metrics at both the University of Sydney and Business School levels.

A relatively new academic staff member in the discipline remarked in 2020 that, as a workplace, Work and Organisational Studies was 'psychologically safe' for its members. Another staff member commented that the culture of the discipline was supportive rather than punitive – a 'safe place to work'. It appears the leadership of the discipline balanced both its managerial and mentoring functions – a difficult task in an increasingly managerialist environment. What needed to be done was given appropriate emphasis by the leadership, while at the same time assistance was provided to achieve the requirements of both the Business School and the University of Sydney. Within the Business School, Work and Organisational Studies has a reputation for being assertive in wider fora, reflecting the negotiation skills of its leaders, while at the same time maintaining relative harmony within a diverse discipline.

Board of Advice and Australian Senior Human Resources Roundtable

In the late 1980s Russell Lansbury introduced a Board of Advice to the Department and ACIRRT. The Board had an independent Chair and external members from business, unions and government. Strategically this was a very good move as it gave the department external credibility and support. The first Chair was Sir John Moore, former President of the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. Other Chairs included Mr Lance Wright, President of the NSW IR Commission, Mr Ian Grey, Director of HR at P&O Ports and then Sydney Water, and Anna Booth, alum 1977 honours class, Fair Work Commissioner and Australia's most recently appointed Fair Work Ombudsman. Most recent Chairs have come from industry, continuing to provide support for the Discipline, for example, Chris Reynolds, HR consultant, and Emma Martin, Lion Co. The Board continues to provide a very positive and direct link to industry partners, who contribute advice on IR and HR trends and educational needs. It has also become a model for the other Disciplines in the Business School.

The Australian Senior Human Resources Roundtable (ASHRR) was established in 2000 to develop an ongoing partnership between academics and practitioners in the field of human resource management (HRM). It continued its operation for 15 years until 2015. The objectives of ASHRR included raising the performance and standing of the field of HRM in Australian organisations, encouraging innovation and original research in HR, raising the standard of training and development for HR professionals and facilitating practitioner involvement in HR research and education.

The secretariat for ASHRR was initially established in ACIRRT but later moved to Work and Organisational Studies. Russell Lansbury had seen similar organisations bringing researchers and practitioners together at the Sloan School of Management at MIT in the US when he was on study leave there as well at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). He approached Brian Pickett, then the HR Director at Email (a white goods manufacturer), who had been active in an informal network of HR Directors in Sydney.

Brian and Russell discussed the concept of a more formal entity with several senior HR managers in a variety of organisations and the first meeting of ASHRR was held in March 2000 with a seminar opened by Dame Leonie Kramar, the Chancellor of the University of Sydney, and attended by 15 senior HR managers and several academic staff. During the next 15 years, almost 100 organisations became members of ASHRR, for an annual fee of \$2000. Approximately 50 workshops were held and 8 annual conferences were held during this period, and ASHRR sponsored over \$1 million in HR research projects around Australia.

The success of ASHRR was based largely on the efforts of the committee, which had representatives from both ACIRRT and WOS, as well as senior HR managers. ASHRR met an unfulfilled need by the existing HR professional association at the time to attract senior HR managers and promote research collaboration between academics and practitioners in the field of HR. One of the major strategies adopted by ASHRR was to support linkage grants from the Australian Research Council from its member organisations. This benefited academics not only in WOS and ACIRRT at the University of Sydney but also from other universities around Australia. While ASHRR held most of its annual conferences and meetings at the University of Sydney, it also held events at universities in other cities.

Chapter 3: The development of the curriculum

The story of the department and discipline in the late 1980s, the 1990s and the 2000s is characterised by expansion into other areas of learning that impacted the employment relationship, particularly at the workplace level. In 1989, the curriculum was still primarily focused on industrial relations, more at an institutional level, rather than regulation and organisation within the workplace. Industrial Relations 1, a year-long course, was described as:

This course is an introduction to the subject and provides the foundation for more intensive disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies in later years. The first half of the year consists of an introduction to industrial relations providing an overview of the subject matter, focusing mainly on the Australian system. The second half of the year offers an examination of comparative industrial relations including a review of policies and practices in a number of industrialised countries.

(Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies IRI_GEN file, unit outlines database)

Industrial Relations 2, also a year-long course, covered the historical development of industrial relations in Australia and drew its material from historiography, labour history, labour economics, labour process theory and industrial relations (Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies Hist89; Handouts database).

Most of these topics listed in the databases covered the same broad ground covered in department courses since the late 1950s. In the 1980s, labour process theory became influential, concentrating on relationships within the workplace. Indeed, labour process theory became increasingly significant in the construction of industrial relations subjects at the University of Sydney and elsewhere (e.g. Bray and Taylor 1986). In addition, several subjects were offered for students wanting an industrial relations major. They covered labour economics, the legal aspects of industrial relations, and the sociology of industry and labour, substantially reflecting the approach taken in the original industrial relations subjects. This mix reflected the interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary nature of industrial relations. The two Honours courses were Foundations of Industrial Relations Theory and Industrial Relations Theorists (from Dunlop to the present).

A number of the undergraduate programs included a 'work experience' module to enable students to work with unions, governments or employers. It could be undertaken between semesters. This was later developed into a more formal unit that incorporated negotiation skills. Some students who undertook this program received job offers from these organisations at their graduation. This approach also facilitated closer contact with practitioners who often provided guest speakers for courses and research contacts for staff.

The coming of human resource management

While the study of industrial relations could lead to a variety of occupations, the preferences of students began to reflect the desire for more occupational options related to the employment relationship. By 1991 more occupationally oriented human resource management courses appeared in the offerings of the department. Much of the early development of curriculum in the department was undertaken by Jim Kitay and Robin Kramar, with the involvement of other staff members. Robin Kramar became a leading figure in research and teaching of human resources in a number of Australian universities. There was a stand-alone human resource management unit and a unit covering management, titled Writers on Management. Gender and Work, was another addition reflecting the growing demand for understandings of the workplace more explicitly related to the experience of women. There was also a service course in 'Human and Industrial Relations' for Faculty of Engineering students that addressed the realities faced by engineers in industry which went beyond technical competence.

The first undergraduate course in human resource management was offered in 1995 and covered the following topics:

- industrial relations and human resource management
- organisations, environments and boundaries
- organisations, structures and processes
- job analysis and design
- organisational control and integration
- organisational performance
- wage–effort exchanges
- training and development
- organisational change
- industrial relations and human resource management policy
- strategic human resource management
- work organisations and trade unions
- management and managerial work.

This course had elements of industrial relations and human resource management, organisational theory and practice, and management. While these elements had been present in courses dating back to the foundation of the department, a growing department could offer a wider range of perspectives on the workplace than had previously been possible. This was also indicative that some members of the department who came from disciplines other than generic industrial relations, as well as those with industrial relations oriented degrees, found themselves teaching in subjects removed from their prior experience. On the other hand, other members with industrial relations backgrounds eventually taught outside their industrial relations background. In a small department, such flexibility was required. People who had to adjust to teaching mainstream industrial relations found themselves applying additional perspectives on the workplace. Nevertheless, the adoption of human resource management was a significant, and contested, shift in focus by the department.

Also offered were two elective courses titled Gender and Work, and Industrial Democracy. Gender and Work had both industrial relations, public policy and human resource elements and has remained an important area of research in the discipline. Industrial Democracy reflected a growing interest in employee voice at the workplace, sitting alongside the formal industrial relations arrangements. However, the concept of industrial democracy was being challenged in the practitioner world by the notion of employee consultation or involvement, where management controlled the process and was more focused on enhancing productivity, rather than providing an independent voice for employees.

These tensions became increasingly apparent in the following years where human resource management gradually became more popular with students seeking a more workplace oriented management qualification, although students were not aware of the arguments within the department. While jobs that called for industrial relations expertise persisted, there was a growing demand for courses that gave greater emphasis to the management of employees and their workplaces.

As well as growth in human resource management, there were also increased opportunities to examine the workplace from a more explicitly industrial relations perspective. A new course titled Workplace Industrial Relations was offered as an elective, covering the following topics:

- models of workplace industrial relations
- Australian workplace industrial relations
- management
- unions
- firm size
- product markets
- gender and equity
- workplace productivity and management
- workplace productivity and unions
- wages and workplace bargaining
- payment systems
- award restructuring.

The external environment

This change and broadening in subject offerings by the department reflected changes that were being undertaken by the federal Labor government in the early 1990s, as part of the Accord process, with its emphasis on decentralised bargaining and productivity in the workplace. This had followed the Accord period when wages were determined centrally. However, it preceded the significant shift of bargaining to workplaces and enterprises following the passing of the Labor government's *Industrial Relations Act 1993*.

Traditional industrial relations had been focused on unions and employers and their organisations, and on industrial conflict as a central concern, whereas there was now a greater emphasis on wage bargaining and productivity enhancement at the workplace. The role of management moved from being just another player in a centralised industrial relations system, to a more active component of workplace relations generally, and as a prime actor in organising the workplace. The Workplace Industrial Relations course was not a management or human resource management unit, but it complemented the growth of workplace studies through a more explicit human resource management lens.

1980s: The partnership of intellectual rigour and practicality

In 1976 after a 'battle' of 20-plus years, industrial relations became a department in its own right. Kingsley Laffer wished to take a more interdisciplinary approach to the teaching of industrial relations, and this could be better achieved outside the confines of the discipline of economics (Butler, Jones and Stilwell 2009: 160). Having realised his ambition for an independent department after approximately two decades of advocacy with successive Deans and Heads of economics departments, Kingsley Laffer retired in 1975. This battle reflected broader trends within the Faculty of Economics, especially the emerging struggle between the political economy staff and mainstream economists. In 1975 there were seven academic staff (including tutors) in industrial relations. This enabled a wider range of courses to be offered, but they were of a general nature, rather than a specifically vocational orientation. The new Department of Industrial Relations emphasised that its courses were characterised by 'intellectual rigour', but that 'practical' aspects were also integrated into its courses. Indeed, this approach continued to characterise course development within the department and fostered links beyond it.

Liberal or professional education?

In 1970 the industrial relations group within the Department of Economics numbered only three staff: Kingsley Laffer, Maxine Bucklow and Geoff Sorrell. The group offered three courses. Industrial Relations 1 covered personnel management, law and trade unionism, as well as institutional industrial relations. Industrial Relations 2 involved a more detailed study of arbitration, advanced personnel management, and law (common and statute law and employers' liability). In addition, an Honours course examined bargaining theory, theories of organisational change and the role of law in industrial relations (University of Sydney Economics Handbook 1970: 68). These developments took place in the broader context of arguments about the role of vocational courses in 'traditional' universities, in contrast to the more explicitly vocational orientation of colleges of advanced education. In 1973 the Dean of the Faculty urged students to:

"remember that theoretical study of general principles is the University function; it is not, therefore, the purpose of the Faculty to produce fully equipped accountants, business executives, personnel managers, teachers, public servants, statisticians or economists."

University of Sydney Handbook 1973: 3

Similar remarks were still being made in 1981 when the Dean, Stephen Salsbury, wrote that 'in these days of economic recession and turmoil it is fashionable to emphasise vocational over liberal education. This is unfortunate' (University of Sydney Handbook 1981: 3). By 1984, Stephen Salsbury noted that, while there was greater emphasis on professional education, it was in the interest of students to be 'flexible' and not be confined to a narrow vocational track (University of Sydney Handbook 1984–5: iv). This is an implicit recognition that there was a growing demand for vocationally oriented education, even if the Dean, who was an economic historian, was not comfortable with the trend.

These arguments were expressed as doubts began to emerge about the viability of a binary system of higher education in maintaining the distinction between liberal education and vocational or professional education (Marginson 1993: 145–152). State governments in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia redesignated a number of colleges as universities (O'Brien 2015: 22–24). The viability of the binary system was canvassed by Hugh Hudson in his *Review on Efficiency and Effectiveness in Higher Education* in 1986 (Hudson 1986), and even more so by federal Minister of Education John Dawkins in 1987 and 1988 (Dawkins 1987, 1988), leading to the formation of a unified system of higher education which was followed by an extensive period of amalgamations between universities and colleges of advanced education (Croucher et al. 2013: 9–55). These changes legitimised more vocationally oriented courses in universities that went beyond the more traditional concentration on professional education in areas such as medicine, engineering and law.

In the early 1990s there was concerted effort to shift post-secondary education more towards a competency-based training model (Carmichael 1992; Harris and Hodge 2009). This approach was, for the most part, resisted by universities. The campaign against it was led by the University of Melbourne Vice Chancellor David Penington (Penington 1993; Penington 2010: 258–261). It was quietly dropped by the new federal Minister for Higher Education, Peter Baldwin.

The Department of Industrial Relations had long had vocational and practical elements in many of its offerings. Indeed, this was one of the grounds for the arguments that industrial relations was not a discipline like economics. In the new environment, the department's offerings provided some advantage in attracting students to industrial relations and human resource management courses. However, there is no evidence that the department adopted a competency approach in its vocationally oriented programs.

1990s: assimilation, coexistence, integration or take over?

During the early 1990s, the department added human resource management to its undergraduate offerings. Students from the Faculty of Arts gained access to a three-year major in industrial relations, with a fourth year in Honours. Industrial relations became a popular option for Arts students in the subsequent years. In the same year a Master program in industrial relations became available as well as a Master of Labour Law and Relations jointly offered with the Faculty of Law (Australian Centre for Industrial Relations Research and Training 1991).

The new Master of Law and Labour Relations degree was developed cooperatively between Ron McCallum, a recently appointed Professor of Labour Law (and later Dean of Law) and Russell Lansbury. They had worked together at Monash University and had a close friendship. The subjects in the degree were taught equally by staff from Industrial Relations and the Law School. Suzanne Jamieson, a labour lawyer, was the lecturer in Industrial Law in the Department of Industrial Relations and played a key role in the new Master degree, which proved to be very popular. For more than a decade, Ron McCallum and Russell Lansbury also headed an annual series of ten lectures for the general public on industrial law and labour relations at the Law School in the CBD as a means of publicising the Master degrees in these subjects at the University of Sydney.

These developments enabled the expansion of the department and extended the opportunities for more occupationally related curriculum. The incorporation of human resource management as a distinctive undergraduate program was achieved primarily by constructing two compulsory units: Macro Industrial Relations and Micro Industrial Relations. Macro Industrial Relations had an emphasis on the external influences on the regulation of the employment relationship at the workplace, while Micro Industrial Relations concentrated on the internal regulation of the workplace, driven by employers and management.

The department's program consisted of two compulsory units undertaken in second year and a series of electives: Sociology of Industry, Legal Aspects of Industrial Relations, Labour History, Industrial Relations Policy, and Comparative Industrial Relations. Two units, Work Safety, and Discrimination and Equality in Employment, incorporated both micro and macro elements as well as public policy developments.

In addition, there was one specialist elective unit, Human Resource Management, and one organisational behaviour unit, Organisational Analysis and Behaviour, as well as an Economics of Labour Market unit. However, not all electives were offered every year. It is possible to trace most of these elements included in a smaller range of courses that had been offered since the late 1950s. It was more a matter of greater specialisation, rather than a fundamental shift in curriculum. Certainly, the department had developed more management oriented subjects and many of their elements had been included in a smaller range of subjects. Thus, it can be said that the pluralist emphases of industrial relations were operating alongside the more unitarist perspectives of human resource management and organisational behaviour units.

Human resource management claimed to be more than a study of the mechanics of personnel management, more 'strategic' than procedural, where there were conscious policies to 'align' employees more effectively with the organisation. However, this claim was contested among scholars in Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, with some arguing that industrial relations and human resource management were complementary (e.g. Boxall and Dowling 1990; Gardner and Palmer 1992), rather than competitors. For the most part, members of the department refrained from participating in this debate, although there was some scepticism about human resource management. Nevertheless, both John Niland of the University of NSW and Russell Lansbury saw the opportunities that were opening up for industrial relations departments (Niland, Lansbury and Verevis 1994). John Niland, in particular, was critical of the view that industrial relations was pluralist and human resource management was unitarist and that they could not coexist comfortably (Niland 1997).

Margaret Gardner, who had completed her PhD at the University of Sydney, and Gill Palmer produced a comprehensive text which covered aspects of both industrial relations and human resource management (Gardner and Palmer 1992). Chapters on trade unions, employer associations and tribunals were balanced with chapters on staffing policies, management history and training. Other academics, especially British scholars, argued that 'strategic' human resource management was not a fundamental shift from the normative orientation of personnel management and that human resource management prescriptions offered more in image than in substance (Keenoy 1990, 1991; Keenoy and Anthony 1992; Kelly 1999; Legge 1991, 1995).

Nevertheless, the claim that human resource management 'had no clothes' did not prevent a growth of human resource management in both the United Kingdom and Australia. In the United Kingdom and later in some institutions in Australia, Professors of Industrial Relations become Professors of Employment Relations. In the face of the criticism of human resource management, there was an understanding in industrial relations departments to ensure that the teaching of human resource management should be critical, rather than being merely prescriptive. It was also because most, if not all, of the human resource management teaching at the University of Sydney was initially done by former industrial relations people! The use of the term employment relations came into common use in the early to mid 2000s.

Scholars in the Department of Industrial Relations were aware of, and participants in, these debates. The department's decision to expand the provision of human resource management was, in the end, a pragmatic response to anticipated changes in student demand, rather than an enthusiastic embrace of the arguments that human resource management and industrial relations were different approaches to the organisation of work and employees. Russell Lansbury and Mark Westcott noted that industrial relations research could be expanded into new or underdeveloped areas and predicted that, while there were still more industrial relations offerings than human resource management courses, the latter was likely to expand as student preferences shifted. Moreover, there was considerable overlap in the approaches in growing areas of interest such as workplace-level employment relations (Lansbury and Westcott 1992).

The provision of both macro and micro industrial relations courses could be interpreted as a tactical move to limit the influence of the more unitarist approach of human resource management on the teaching of industrial relations, as well as a response to changing student preferences. It might also be interpreted as one academic unit's response to the growing influence of neoliberalism on university curricula, which was reflected in a more vocational emphasis in university courses generally, as well as heralding more centralised management of institutions.

While there is some validity in these interpretations, the broader environment was becoming more focused on the workplace, especially after the introduction of enterprise bargaining in Australia in 1993, which was the harbinger of the decline of unions' influence on the regulation of the employment relationship overall. In that context, how management behaved was an issue of greater significance than previously. Moreover, the appointment of people without specific experience in teaching and research in human resource management followed the established tradition in appointing people to industrial relations positions whose disciplinary backgrounds were other than industrial relations, such as history, law, economics and psychology.

Indeed, the porous boundaries of industrial relations, rather than established disciplines, facilitated the incorporation of human resource management into industrial relations for a comprehensive approach to the employment relationship. In 1999, David Plowman of the University of NSW, in his capacity as the President of the Association of Industrial Relations Academics of Australia and New Zealand, argued that the challenge of human resource management to industrial relations was best met by assimilation, rather than unrelenting hostility to human resource management (Plowman 1989). It seems that the Department of Industrial Relations at the University of Sydney had adopted this approach before Plowman's warnings, although the issue had become more pressing by the late 1990s. These adjustments followed the appointment of Russell Lansbury as Professor and Head of Department in 1987. Russell Lansbury, became known, in part, for his responsiveness to changing trends, and for his internal political capacity to guide the nature of change, rather than simply hold out against it, for the rest of his career. A 2003 review of industrial relations courses in Australia (Westcott, Wailes, Todd and Bailey 2003: 172) concluded:

“While there has been a substantial increase in the teaching of Human Resource Management, Industrial Relations as a discipline has not been completely eroded and in places has proved to be resilient and adaptable to the challenge posed by HRM, in many instances incorporating and accommodating HRM into Industrial Relations programs.”

These shifts also reflected wider changes in the higher education system in the late 1980s and the early 1990s, following the federal Minister for Education John Dawkins' wide ranging reforms in the provision of higher education (Brett et al. 2016; Croucher et al. 2013). The integration of colleges of advanced education into the sector contributed to the trends towards more specifically vocational courses. Self-styled 'traditional' universities had long offered professional courses, particularly in elite areas such as law, medicine, engineering and architecture. The Faculty of Economics at the University of Sydney had been a major source of economics and accounting education, and those graduates who specialised in economics had a strong position in the private and public labour market. While the research-intensive universities, the 'Great' Eight, emphasised their commitment to research and professional education, they gradually responded to the demand for a wider range of vocational education, and more applied research.

Chapter 4: An expanding curriculum: From Industrial Relations to Work and Organisational Studies

In 2000 the Faculty of Economics was divided into two Schools: the School of Economics and Political Science, and the School of Business. The Department of Industrial Relations took the conscious decision to be located in the School of Business and in 2001 the Department of Industrial Relations operated under the new name of the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies. From the Faculty's and the Discipline's view, the courses taught in Work and Organisational Studies were more explicitly business oriented, closer to the disciplines of accounting, business law and finance, rather than the courses taught by the other school such as political economy, and government and international relations. It accorded with the Dean Peter Wolnizer's desire to transform the Faculty of Economics into a Business School. However, in curriculum terms, the department had been more social science oriented than business related, with staff drawn from a variety of disciplines. Moreover, there was likely to be growth and additional finance available in the Business School, not the least because overseas students were more likely to enrol in courses offered by a business school. With the Dean's support, and an influx of both local and overseas students, the discipline of Work and Organisational Studies grew from 12 to 20 academic staff.

An important background to this reorganisation was the long running contest between orthodox economics and the more heterodox political economy at the University of Sydney (Butler, Jones and Stilwell 2009; Stilwell and Jones 1986: 24–38). The Dean, Peter Wolnizer, remarked in the introduction of the 2000 Faculty of Economics Handbook that the two-school arrangement located 'our key disciplines in an economic, political and social context' (University of Sydney Handbook 2000: iv). The wording of this statement reflected the turmoil that had taken place since the 1970s. The new School of Business provided a more secure home for the discipline of Work and Organisational Studies.

This process was completed in 2005 when the Departments of Government and International Relations (a major contributor to the Faculty of Economics' research effort) and Economics and Political Economy were relocated to the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. This move was not without some bitterness from the Government and International Relations discipline, whose members believed they had been abandoned by the Dean and the Vice Chancellor (Hogan 2015: 217–223). The Faculty of Economics had, in time, become a School of Business, and then the Sydney Business School. Industrial relations was valued for its emphasis on workplace issues and in the view of the Dean, Peter Wolnizer, fitted better into a business-focused faculty than the Department of Government which was more compatible with a social science-focused school. The decision to stay within the Business School turned out to be one of 'strategic' importance for the maintenance and growth of industrial relations within the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies.

From human resource management to management education

The incorporation of additional management units was more controversial than the expansion into human resource management. This was assisted by the appointment of staff who argued for the notion of critical management, incorporating, in part, the applications of discourse theories and analysis to organisations. Work by Jim Kitay and Chris Wright had taken a critical approach to the work and influence of management consultants, but drew as much from labour process theory and older concepts from the sociology of work literature in their analyses (Kitay and Wright 2004). The appointment of United Kingdom academic David Grant in 2000 saw the introduction of a fully-fledged organisation studies approach to teaching and researching management, and indeed he became quite influential in the discipline and within the Business School generally (e.g. Grant and Oswick 1996; Grant et al. 1996; Grant et al. 2004). Another appointment, Susan Ainsworth, applied discourse analysis to her work (Ainsworth and Hardy 2004a, 2004b).

In the latter 2000s, a British academic, Chris Warhurst, spent a short period in the discipline as Professor of Work and Organisation Studies. He was a prominent researcher of aesthetic labour, but his influence was limited as he was only a member of Work and Organisational Studies for a couple of years. Nevertheless, Angela Knox (a WOS academic) continued to publish with Chris Warhurst (Knox and Warhurst 2015; Knox et al. 2015).

While critical management studies had some significant influence in the discipline, especially in analysing strategies and actions, it was supplemented by the work of other staff who took a more structural, rather than a discursive, approach to management and the employment relationship. These differences were managed and absorbed within the department. This inclusive approach contrasted with the long running dispute between 'orthodox' economists and those who took a more politically heterodox approach, which ultimately resulted in the formation of a separate Department of Political Economy.

The 2000s: From industrial relations to employment relations

In 2001 the Department of Industrial Relations became the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies, as noted earlier. This title was more reflective of the scope of the curriculum within the discipline. Work was an inclusive word that preserved the need for study of regulation, while organisational studies concentrated on the experiences of employees within a management-led organisation of the workplace (Lansbury and Kitay 1997: 240–244). It is interesting to note that industrial relations itself had never claimed to be a distinctive discipline such as history, philosophy or economics. As industrial relations had always drawn from a range of disciplines, it was easier for other disciplines such as psychology and organisational behaviour to be incorporated into work and organisational studies. While debate about the different orientations of industrial relations and human resource management lingered on during the 1990s, they had become an accepted part of the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies by 2000.

In 2002 the new Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies offered two postgraduate by coursework programs which could be taken as a Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma or Master degree: a Human Resource and Coaching course and an Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management course. The Human Resource and Coaching course included four human resource management units and three management and organisational studies units. The second program in Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management focused on industrial relations and human resource management in Australia. Electives included six industrial relations units, seven human resource management and management units and two units that had both industrial relations and human resource management aspects: Gender at Work and Practical Research in Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management.

All students were exposed to industrial relations and human resource management issues, but it was possible to acquire a postgraduate qualification that was primarily human resource management and management, or predominately in industrial relations subjects. In 2003 the compulsory courses for all students were Introduction to Employment Relations and Introduction to Human Resource Management.

The term employment relations, which had been more common in colleges of advanced education, became the generic term used by the discipline in both its undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Indeed, the term 'employment relations', rather than 'industrial relations', became the generic name for some professors' titles. The electives, with availability subject to student demand and timetabling, consisted of six human resource management units, five management/organisation units and three industrial relations units, as well as units on Gender at Work, Health and Safety, and Employment-related Law.

By 2005 the compulsory units in the undergraduate program were renamed to Foundations of Industrial Relations and Foundations of Human Resource Management. The electives included:

- three industrial relations oriented units: Labour Law, Labour History and Labour Market Analysis
- two units that incorporated both industrial relations and human resource management content: Industrial and Human Resource Management Processes, and Discrimination and Equity in Employment
- three human resource management units: Human Resource Management Processes, Human Resource Management Strategies, and International Human Resource Management
- three management specific units: Foundations of Management, Strategic Management, and Organisational Analysis and Behaviour.

By 2005 all domains of work and employment relations were in place: human resource management, industrial relations and management. While it was still possible to do an industrial relations major, there was greater choice for those undertaking the Management major (University of Sydney Economics Handbook 2005: 49–51). The Management major drew from a wider range of units across the Faculty, but was coordinated by the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies. All students were required to do Foundations of Management and choose electives from economics, government and international business. The Work and Organisational Studies units were all human resource management and management electives, and not from industrial relations.

By the mid 2000s, Work and Organisational Studies offerings had integrated both human resource management and industrial relations approaches to employment relations, while human resource management units were a significant, but not exclusive part, of the management major. Thus, while industrial relations remained in the discipline, hegemony had probably shifted from industrial relations to the more explicitly organisational behaviour subjects, although members of the discipline with industrial relations backgrounds, such as Mark Westcott, continued to play a significant role in management-related subjects. This trend was sustained. Nevertheless, industrial relations was embedded in a foundation unit, ensuring that all students had some experience of that area of learning. This was not just a concession to the industrial relations staff, but it also reflected the view that people working in management and human resource management needed to have some knowledge of industrial relations processes. By 2000 the discipline was offering an extensive range of courses covering industrial relations, human resource management and management units.

In 2011, the Foundations of Management unit covered the 'traditional' and 'modern' theories of management and the various management functions relating to stakeholders, culture, structures, power and politics, leadership and strategy and 'fads and fashions'. All these functions were focused on the 'management of people'.

By contrast, the unit Foundations of Work and Employment Relations covered the changing context of employment relations, employment relations theories, the State, employers and their associations, employees, unions and voice, federal legislation, bargaining structures, industrial conflict, performance and reward, and group problems and solutions. This unit was industrial relations oriented with some human resource management content, whereas the identity of employees in the management unit was listed as 'stakeholders needing management' (Unit outlines for Work 1003 Foundations of Work and Employment, Work 2201: Foundations of Management).

In 2015, apart from the two Foundation units, the available courses covered Human Resource Processes, International Human Resource Management, Organisational Behaviour and Communication, Strategic Management, Organisational Sustainability, Leadership in Organisations, Globalisation Work and Employment, and Work and Social Change, Industrial Relations Policy and Regulation at Work. The leadership course indicated that Work and Organisational Studies was claiming this contested curriculum space which was also claimed by other disciplines.

In 2018, the discipline offered 20 undergraduate units, incorporating industrial relations, human resource management and management/organisational studies. In addition, two postgraduate specialisations (by coursework) were offered, together with Honours in undergraduate programs, and postgraduate degrees by research.

The discipline was involved in the development of a new unit, BUSS2000 Leading and Influencing in Business, that introduced students across the whole Business School 'to the knowledge and skills required to successfully lead and influence people in an increasingly global and diverse workforce'. The thinking underpinning the unit is that all Bachelor of Commerce students must have some knowledge of how management operates, as well as the behaviour of employees at work. While Commerce students usually have good technical skills, they are often less prepared for the 'softer' skills at work (Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies BUSS2000 unit outline).

The unit began in 2018 and was taught by organisational studies staff, led by Anya Johnson and Helena Nguyen, and exposed students to aspects of the Work and Organisational Studies portfolio. With 1500–1700 students a year in this unit, there was an enhanced level of employment security for Work and Organisational Studies staff, allowing the more recent appointment of staff who largely came from an organisational psychology background. It brought the discipline more into the mainstream of the Business School's curriculum.

Boundary revision

While the discipline had no monopoly over the teaching of management, the formation of a new Discipline of Strategy, Innovation and Entrepreneurship in 2018 was largely imposed by senior management, and opposed by the discipline. The Business School leadership who thought that innovation should be uncoupled from management opened up the question of where management and organisational studies might be best located within the Business School. Implicit in that statement is that work on strategy and innovation is better achieved in a new discipline, rather than within the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies (or indeed any other existing discipline). Moreover, the new discipline claimed to have a social agenda that goes beyond the mechanics of organisation design and structure. Nevertheless, the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies and its predecessor department had also had a long established socially-focused interest in the organisation of work.

Four members of Work and Organisational Studies moved over to the new discipline: Leanne Cutcher (who became the first Head of the Discipline of Strategy, Innovation and Entrepreneurship), Chris Wright, David Oliver and Eric Knight. Indeed, the location of teaching in management had a lengthy history with the Business School. Just as a number of members of the discipline had moved onto other universities and taken up more senior academic and administrative positions (see Appendix 2), some other members found more congenial locations within the Business School.

Postgraduate curriculum

In the late 1990s and 2000s, there was a similar process of expansion among the postgraduate coursework courses, which became increasingly popular with students who desired more specifically work-related qualification. The department offered Honours courses for undergraduate students and postgraduate by research from the early 1980s. Previously, Master programs were primarily research degrees. The growth of coursework postgraduate courses followed the changes made to the higher education sector in the late 1980s and early 1990s. There was demand for specifically vocational courses for local students whose undergraduate qualifications were of a more general nature. In addition, there was growing demand from overseas students. Neither of these groups had access to the federal government Higher Education Contribution Scheme known as HECS and were required to pay for courses upfront as they proceeded through their degree. In an expanding system and with the financial crises that institutions periodically faced in the 1990s and the 2000s, fee paying postgraduate courses became increasingly attractive to universities in general. The precariousness of this source of income was illustrated in 2020 when many overseas students were unable to begin or continue their studies due to travel restrictions applied to manage the COVID-19 pandemic. The coursework program offered the flexible option of study at the Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma levels as well as a Master qualification. These courses were taught at night and subsequently in intensive mode (and often over weekends).

In 2002 the postgraduate foundation units were Australian Industrial Relations Systems and Human Resource Management. Electives in semester 1 included Policy Issues in Human Resource Management Globalisation and Human Resource Management, International, Performance and Reward Management, Human Resource Management, Writers on Management and the Management of Technology and Policy Issues in Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management.

While a number of human resource management and management units were available, industrial relations was still holding its own. A concerted effort was made to approach human resource management in a 'critical' and 'in-depth' analysis of the theory of human resource management, paying particular attention to the contrast between 'rhetoric' and 'reality' (Work and Organisational Studies Unit outline WORK2201). At least as far as the unit was concerned the treatment of the subject matter was to be analytical and critical, rather than primarily normative in approach. Industrial relations was holding a central focus within the foundation course on Australian Industrial Relations and a unit on International and Comparative Industrial Relations, in addition to five human resource management–management–organisation behaviour units.

By 2008 the term industrial relations was replaced by the term employment relations in course nomenclature, an approach that incorporated both external and internal influences on the employment relationship and on the organisation of work. The qualification title, however, remained Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management. The foundation units were Introduction to Human Resource Management and Management and Organisations. Electives included units on Human Resource Management Strategies, Recruitment and Selection, Organisational Change and Development, Organisational Analysis and Behaviour, Research Tools in Industrial Relations and International Employment Relations, and a Strategic Management unit.

In 2017 the postgraduate coursework offerings were:

Foundation (and compulsory) units

- People, Work and Employment (both semesters)
- Management and Organisations (both semesters)

Electives

- Organisational Analysis and Behaviour
- Strategic Management (both semesters)
- Human Resource Strategies (both semesters)
- Organisational Change and Developments
- Organisational Sustainability
- Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations in Action (both semesters)
- Management Consulting
- Industrial Relations Policy (intensive)
- Performance and Rewards (intensive)
- International Dimensions of Human Resource Management
- Employment and the Law
- Leadership in Organisations.

The electives included eight human resource management and management units and three industrial relations units. This reflected the demand for focus on the management of employees at the workplace. It was possible to include a focus on industrial relations units in a postgraduate degree, but with a background in work organisation. Industrial relations maintained its presence in one of the foundation units, and within a policy unit and law unit. Nevertheless, the offerings of the new Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies leaned more heavily towards human resource management, organisational studies and management. While these latter units had a normative function, there was a concerted effort to ensure that the teaching approach was analytical and critical.

In 2018 there was a major review of the postgraduate Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management program. The general consensus of the review panel, alumni and staff was that there needed to be more attention to industrial relations issues in the core of the program, beyond the formal legal environment. Perhaps the pendulum was swinging back – ever so slightly!

In the postgraduate units in the Business School, the desired learning outcomes were described as:

- Business knowledge
- Critical thinking
- Business analysis
- Communication
- Ethical and social responsibility.

On the face of it, this is not just a normative approach to organising and developing organisations. The emphasis on critical thinking and ethical social responsibility indicates an attempt to apply a critical analysis to a ‘nuts and bolts’ approach to organisational change.

This approach, for example, is taken in WORK6033 Organisational Sustainability. The set textbook was *Climate Change, Capitalism and Corporations: Processes of Creative Self-Destruction* by Chris Wright (Work and Organisational Studies) and Daniel Nyberg (University of Newcastle) 2015, which places organisational sustainability in the much broader context of climate change and its relationship with changes in capitalism. Such a book would not be out of place in a political economy course, and is a long way from a 'how to fix it' manual.

In the unit WORK6017 Human Resource Strategies, the purpose of the course is cast in the unit of study outline as follows:

“This unit examines the theoretical foundations of strategic human resource management and then critically analyses the empirical evidence related to a range of HR strategies deployed in contemporary workplaces, both in Australia and internationally. In doing so, the unit explores the issues underpinning emerging HR strategies, their implementation and the outcomes experienced within the organisation and the wider environment. The HR strategies studied involve those that focus on managing a contemporary workforce and may include human resources strategies associated with the management of frontline workers, teams, non-standard forms of employment, job quality and work–life balance, and gender and diversity at work.”

While this course focused on the management of the employment relationship, it does so in the context of issues that do not easily fit into a standard textbook approach of applying human resource techniques to the management task.

In contrast, WORK6012 Employment Relations Policy offered as an elective in 2007, amidst a fervent public policy debate about industrial relations regulation, took a much more traditional industrial relations approach. Moreover, such units placed increasing attention on diversity and equality in the workplace that incorporated both external and internal approaches to the management of this issue in the workplace. The unit of study introduction stated that:

“The main focus of this unit of study... is on Commonwealth government policy in industrial relations. Debates about influence over policy-making and the assessment of policy outcomes are examined in depth... The unit provides a context for understanding current policy debates by examining other aspects of the state’s activity in industrial relations including the history of that activity, areas of ‘non-policy’ and family-friendly policies. Major pieces of current legislation as well as current policy approaches are assessed in the light of historical and theoretical frameworks.”

Policy oriented subjects had long been the ‘bread and butter’ concern of the department and discipline since the 1950s. They re-emerged in time as an industrial relations policy unit or as a policy unit incorporating both industrial relations and human resource management approaches in the workplace. In addition, subjects covering the formal legal aspects of the employment relationship, such as WORK6116, had remained a central part of the discipline’s early days, in part sustained for many years by Suzanne Jamieson, a labour and human rights lawyer, and more recently by another lawyer, Stephen Clibborn. The external regulation of the workplace never ceased to be a key concern of the discipline. Discussion of policy debates still remained a key, albeit diminishing part, of the work of the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies.

In many of the human resource and organisational subjects, there is a conscious attempt to provide both practical techniques to prospective managers, while alerting them to issues that would need careful attention in the management of employees. While an industrial relations approach may emphasise overt conflict between employees and employers, these more management oriented units emphasised that there is more to management of employees than a straight-forward command and control approach in the workplace. This is particularly apt for a postgraduate course where many students were likely to be either current managers or aspiring to be so.

It is interesting to note that the courses offered by the discipline were very attractive to women, in part reflecting the attention given to the role of women as employees in the workplace by principally the female academics, as well as by the growing proportion of women relative to men in the discipline. In 2018, five of the six additional academic appointments were women.

Conclusion on curriculum developments

The changes in curriculum were not uncontested within the department and discipline, but the logic of changing student demand and a widening focus on all aspects of work left little opportunity for continued resistance to change. In that context, pragmatism outweighed an adherence to 'high' principle. If industrial relations was to be preserved, it needed to be through the emerging programs and courses. Moreover, as student numbers expanded, and the department and discipline grew, there were increased opportunities to offer a wide range of courses addressing the organisation of work and the employment relationship.

Industrial relations as a subject was embedded in the foundation units at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, although, in time, the human resource management–organisational–management units outnumbered industrial relations units in the list of electives. There has been a process of integration rather than continuing internal conflict, partly due to the leadership of Russell Lansbury and a core group of academic staff who served as Heads of Discipline and often also filled senior roles in the Faculty or Business School that delivered knowledge influence and reinforced legitimacy. John Shields, Greg Patmore and Jim Kitay served terms as Deputy Deans, while Richard Hall, Russell Lansbury, Rae Cooper and Leanne Cutcher were Associate Deans. David Grant served as a joint or co-Dean on a temporary basis.

The academic backgrounds of senior staff, and the continuing policy focus of the discipline, enabled some people to be particularly suited to the byzantine world of academic politics. This reinforced the legitimacy of the discipline within the Business School. Having said that, there is a level of continuity in the offerings of the discipline. The first unit in 1953 included trade union theory, organisational (originally industrial) psychology, labour economics, labour history and industrial sociology. With the exception of labour economics, there is a continuity of curriculum as well as a broadening of offerings reflecting changing student demands and a re-conceptualisation of work and its organisation. This leads onto a discussion of research, which has been a noted strength of the discipline.

Chapter 5: Research

The early years

As well as teaching, the other principal activity of the discipline was, and continues to be, research. Kingsley Laffer founded the *Journal of Industrial Relations* and published a number of articles in it from the 1960s to 1990, covering topics such as industrial relations theory, employee participation, wage determination, industrial relations as an academic discipline, over award payments, basic wage, total wage, industrial tribunals, strikes and the maritime industry. These were usually commentaries on decisions of the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, particularly on wages. Kingsley Laffer's contribution to the establishment of industrial relations at the University of Sydney is commemorated in an annual Kingsley Laffer lecture. The second person appointed to the group, Maxine Bucklow, wrote on personnel management. Another early member of the department, Geoff Sorrell, published on changes in industrial law (including competing state and federal jurisdictions), and the industrial relations system in both Australia and New Zealand. Phil Bentley, who taught labour economics (1971–1975), published on industrial relations issues, labour legislation, arbitration, trade unions, and strikes, especially in the stevedoring industry. Peter Scherer, who also taught labour economics (1976–1979), published on wage determination in the public sector, and contributed to the debate about whether the Australian arbitration system strengthened or weakened Australian unions (Plowman and Bryce 1991). Both Phil Bentley and Peter Scherer moved on to careers in the Australian Public Service.

In Peter Groenewegen's *History of the Faculty of Economics at the University of Sydney* (2009), it was noted that the Department of Industrial Relations had made a creditable research effort in the 1970s and 1980s. By the late 1980s members of the department had published five books and 41 other publications. This included nine articles by Richard Morris, seven by Ron Callus, six each by John Corina and Keith Whitfield, and two each by Malcolm Rimmer and Greg Patmore with an average of 4.6 publications per staff member. Although the precise period is not specified, Groenewegen (2009: 172) noted that this was 'good for a Department with no research culture'. This comment reflected a persistent view that industrial relations was not quite a discipline in the manner of economics. In the period from 1985 to 1999 the department became the third largest contributor to the research effort of the Faculty of Economics, which demonstrates that it was certainly 'punching above its weight', being one of the smallest departments within the Faculty of Economics and the Business School, as it later became (Groenewegen 2009: 217).

During the early 1970s and beyond, there was an active and vigorous research culture emerging within the industrial relations group. Alice Coolican wrote about the building industry, while Richard Morris published widely on the maritime industry. Malcolm Rimmer wrote on workshop-level union organisation and industrial relations in the labour process in the road transport industry (with Mark Bray). Ron Callus did research on full-time union officials, and management and industrial relations involving migrant workers. Mark Bray wrote on regulation of union elections, and contract labour in road transport, and edited a book with Vic Taylor of the University of NSW on the application of labour process theory in a variety of industries (Bray and Taylor 1986). Many of the articles published by department members in the *Journal of Industrial Relations* were commentaries on, and analyses of, wage movements, arbitration and unions, as well as industries such as road transport, building and construction and the maritime and stevedoring industries where there was a high level of disputation.

Expanding research

During the early years of the department's existence, research was not given as much emphasis as the development of its teaching programs. From the early 1990s, effort was made to establish international connections, and to set up a specialist research centre, initially under the department's auspices, and subsequently as an independent Key Centre in Industrial Relations Research and Teaching, that involved members of the department, as well as researchers employed by the Key Centre. When Russell Lansbury was appointed in 1987, he was summoned by the Chancellor, Herman Black, and after some discussion was provided initial funding of \$2,000 to establish a research centre – the Centre for Industrial Relations Research at the University of Sydney (*University of Sydney News* 1987). This further enabled the department to apply successfully for government funds including a prestigious Key Centre via an initial nine-year grant from the Australian Research Council. The Australian Centre for Industrial Relations Research and Teaching (ACIRRT) continued for more than two decades under the leadership of Ron Callus and John Buchanan, funded mainly by applied research. While the post-Dawkins curriculum changes emphasised a greater focus on vocational courses, there was also an expectation of greater effort in research, partly as a result of the more focused performance management systems in universities. By the 2000s, the efforts at the University of Sydney mirrored similar processes in other research-intensive universities.

Despite the changes, an examination of the research records of past and current members of the discipline shows there continued to be interest in industrial relations policy, legislation and regulation, labour history, employee voice, mutual and non-profit organisations, unions, the automotive industry, industrial conflict, especially in regional areas including the Pilbara, international and comparative industrial relations, supply chains, individual contracts, and skills.

The appointment of new staff to the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies since 2000 reflects the changing direction of research and teaching. Since 2000, organisation psychologists and management academics have been recruited in greater numbers. Although these areas were covered in the early teaching programs back in the 1960s and 1970s, there are new themes. David Grant was a significant advocate of the application of discourse analysis to management and organisational change, together with Grant Michelson and Susan Ainsworth. David Grant became Dean of the Business School and Pro Vice Chancellor of Griffith University. Grant Michelson later moved to Macquarie University and Susan Ainsworth to the University of Melbourne. Discourse analysis became less prominent in the discipline as other approaches came to the fore.

The current organisational studies group, led by Anya Johnson and Helen Nguyen, has examined topics such as wellbeing in the workplace, organisational communication and change and development, and career management, emotional labour and employee performance. Kevin Lowe brought expertise to the teaching of and research on the role of leadership within organisations which has a sharper focus on the role of management strategy formation, rather than employee experiences. He also has an interest in business ethics and diversity in leadership roles.

During the 2000s, new areas of research emerged such as gender and work, globalisation, migration, precarious work, professions (e.g. teachers and health workers), leadership, organisational analysis in a variety of contexts (e.g. health), training and recruitment, work teams and employee commitment, crisis management, job quality, international and comparative human resource management, pay and performance, geography and industrial relations, work in regions, labour mobility, non-standard and temporary workers, hotel workers, care workers, the gig economy, corporate governance, mindfulness and positive psychology at work, and stress. While interest in some of these issues occurred before 2000, there is a much greater focus on these matters during the 2000s, reflecting the diversity of the discipline and a much stronger research focus and output.

One of the ongoing interests of various members of the discipline was employee voice and representation, including work councils in Germany, Whitley work committees in the United Kingdom, Rochdale committees in Australia, worker directors and ownership, and health and safety employee representation. There was also interest in the ongoing relationship between the industrial and political arms of the labour movement, the state and federal industrial relations systems in Australia and the role of employers and their organisations. The links between all these issues were work, the employment relationship and the organisation of work, ranging from the international and national contexts, to the level of the firm and the workplace. Academic staff and research students published books, articles in a wide range of journals, and reports for governments in Australia and for international bodies such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

In addition, staff members were frequent presenters at, and organisers of, conferences at both the local and international level, book chapter contributors and authors of textbooks on employment relations, human resource management, and pay and performance. The original courses in industrial relations had covered many of these areas. As the department and discipline grew, these areas continued to receive research attention. There was research collaboration with colleagues in other disciplines at the University of Sydney, such as law and economics, as well in other institutions in Australia and overseas. In addition to wider and deeper research interests, and the development of new areas, there was a degree of continuity in the prime concerns of the group in industrial relations.

Research groups

The discipline has a number of research groups. Currently these are:

- Business and Labour History
- Cooperatives
- Migrants at Work
- Women and Work
- Sydney Employment Relations
- Body, Heart and Mind.

The first two groups reflect the research interests of Greg Patmore and other members of the discipline interested in labour history, and more recently, business history including cooperatives. Bradon Ellem and Rae Cooper had earlier led a group focusing on unions.

The Migrants at Work group continues a long established interest in the working lives of migrants beginning with Ron Callus in the 1970s. More recently Dimitria Groutsis has examined the experiences of expatriate professional employees and workers on work visas recruited to fill skill shortages and work in areas where it is difficult to attract domestic workers.

The Women and Work group, established by Marian Baird, became prominent in the 2000s with an extensive publication record, and a capacity to attract grants from both government and non-government sources (e.g. Baird, Cooper, Hill, Probyn and Vromen 2017). In the forefront of these efforts have been Marian Baird, Rae Cooper and a number of other researchers who joined the discipline more recently. The Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies is also a 'hub' in the multi-university Centre of Excellence in Population Ageing Research, with the discipline's role in this project to focus on work and ageing., led by Marian Baird.

The Body, Heart and Mind in Business group is a multidisciplinary group led by Anya Johnson and Helena Nguyen from Work and Organisational Studies and Stefan Volk from International Business. It aims to advance knowledge on how the human body, heart and mind interact in work settings.

Continuing research activity

During the 2000s, research on topics such as trade unions, legislative changes, gender and work, employment law and workplace industrial relations was maintained, principally by Marian Baird, Rae Cooper, Stephen Clibborn, Bradon Ellem, Chris F. Wright and Russell Lansbury. Although the purview of the discipline had broadened, industrial relations, both at an institutional and workplace level, remained a core interest of Work and Organisational Studies.

The publications of the now-retired Russell Lansbury cover a wide number of areas: a long standing interest in the automotive industry in Australia and in other countries as well as retail, banking and airline industries, international and comparative industrial relations, especially in Sweden and Korea, and a continuing interest in industrial democracy and changes in industrial relations regulation. His work is widely acknowledged internationally. He is a past President of the International Industrial Relations Association. In 2019, Russell Lansbury jointly edited *Trade Unions and Labour Movements in the Asia-Pacific Region* with Byoung-Hoon Lee and Ng Sek-Hong. In 2021, Russell Lansbury published a memoir, *Crossing Boundaries: Work and Industrial Relations in Perspective*, that included several chapters on his period as a Professor of Industrial Relations at the University of Sydney from 1987 to 1995 and research and other activities he has undertaken since his formal retirement.

Marian Baird wrote on the federal government's Work Choices legislation and collective bargaining, but she was also a pioneer of interest in employee entitlements, including paid maternity and family leave, and the concept of work and care. A recent concern was the impact of COVID-19 on women workers in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region. Marian Baird and Russell Lansbury also wrote about the need to broaden the reach of human resource management in the workplace, based in part on experience of the de-unionising United States of America.

Marian Baird's work throughout the 2000s on gender and work was recognised through becoming a 'Fellow' of the Academy of Social Sciences. In 2016 she was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2016 (AO) for her significant contributions to improving women's working lives, especially through her work on paid parental leave, and for her contribution to higher education and numerous. She received numerous other awards including in 2018 when she was named one of the world's most influential people in Gender Policy by Apolitical, a London-based network, which assists public servants to resolve major social challenges.

In 2009, Marian Baird was appointed Professor of Gender and Employment Relations at the University of Sydney, the first female professor in the department. In 2016 she became the first woman to become Head of the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies. There was a view that industrial relations was traditionally somewhat 'blokey'. Marian Baird's appointment challenged that tradition.

Indeed, the appointment of a number of young women staff from diverse backgrounds since the mid 2000s added greater diversity to the discipline. Of the three people in the discipline who were honoured in the Order of Australia in the 2000s, two were eminent women: Marian Baird (2016) and Rae Cooper (2019). Rae was recognised for her work in 'higher education and workplace policy and practice'. Russell Lansbury was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 2009 and an Officer of the Order in 2018 (AO). His AO was awarded for 'distinguished service to industrial relations education as an academic, researcher and author, through international arbitration and as a mentor of young academics', a very fitting description of Russell's wide ranging contributions.

Rae Cooper's early publications focused on unions and peak councils (Cooper 2003a, 2003b, 2004), on Work Choices (2005), individualism and collectivism in workplaces and employer militancy. She contributed to the *Journal of Industrial Relations*' annual review of developments in industrial relations in Australia, particularly trade unions. Subsequently her research focus shifted to the experiences of women at work. Rae Cooper is currently leading a public policy and cross-disciplinary group on the Australian Women Working Futures Project. As well as Rae Cooper and Marian Baird, Elizabeth Hill (political economy), Ariadne Vromen (government and international relations) and Elspeth Probyn (gender and cultural studies) are involved in the project. Funded by the University of Sydney, the group also has a postdoctoral researcher located in the discipline. In 2020 Rae Cooper and new recruit Meraiah Foley, together with Ariadne Vromen, were awarded an Australian Research Council Linkage grant to examine how women and men understand and experience the changing nature of work and their hopes and fears for the future. The research will focus on the legal profession and the retail sector. In 2022 Rae Cooper and Elizabeth Hill established the multidisciplinary Gender Equality in Working Life Initiative.

Bradon Ellem continued his long term research on industrial relations in northern Western Australia, especially in the Pilbara, involving extended periods of field work. He also had a broader interest in work in regional areas, drawing on emerging consideration of the nature of space in workplace relations, as well as developments in industrial relations regulation. Russell Lansbury, Marian Baird and Bradon Ellem have also served as editors of the *Journal of Industrial Relations*.

Suzanne Jamieson became a member of the Department of Industrial Relations in 1990. Until she retired in 2010 she did most of the teaching in labour and human rights in the department and the discipline. Her research focus was on wage equity and occupational health and safety and this was reflected in her publications and her work for the National Pay Equity Coalition. She was best known for her research on, and advocacy of, pay equity for women both in NSW and the federal jurisdiction. She was also a member of the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board for ten years and represented academic staff on the University of Sydney's Senate. In retirement she is a co-investigator with two other colleagues in an Australian Research Council Discovery grant on the efficacy of occupational health and safety prosecutions in NSW and Victoria. In many ways she was, and remains, a model of a socially engaged researcher, using her own research and that of others for public policy purposes.

Mark Westcott, one of the all-rounders in the discipline both in teaching and research, usually working with colleagues, has published in a wide range of areas including business history, health insurance, private equity owned companies (including Myer) and unions. He has also published on industrial relations and human resource management teaching in Australia. Together with a former discipline colleague Grant Michelson, he also critiqued Braham Dabscheck's 'orbits' theory of industrial relations (Michelson and Westcott 2001) which set off moderately-intense exchanges with Dabscheck (2001). There was an element of Young Turks' provocation in this exchange with a famously combative senior scholar.

Work and Organisational Studies staff have collectively published two books to illustrate the wide range of research projects undertaken by colleagues in the discipline. The first volume, published by Cambridge University Press in 2006, was titled *Rethinking Work: Time, Space and Discourse*, edited by Mark Hearn and Grant Michelson. The title reflected the diverse but interconnected interests of staff in various aspects of work and employment relations. A second book was initiated by Marian Baird as Head of Discipline and published by Routledge in 2020. *Contemporary Issues in Work and Organisations: Actors and Institutions* was edited by Russell Lansbury, Anya Johnson and Diane van den Broek. A comparison of the two books indicates the continuing vitality of the research culture in the discipline and new areas of concern about how work and organisations are being transformed under contemporary capitalism.

Research grants

From the early 1990s research activities gradually became a key performance indicator both for academic units and individual academics, especially for promotion purposes. Staff were also expected to maintain high teaching standards. This reflects a widespread trend in Australian universities where there was a decreasing emphasis on scholarship itself, and more on grant-based research and eventual publication in so-called A and A* journals while at the same time maintaining high teaching standards. Thus, the work of academics expanded and became more challenging. At the University of Sydney, a research-intensive university, the pressure was on academic staff to compete with similar universities, both locally among the 'Great Eight', and internationally. The research strength of the discipline is reflected in the success of its members in attracting external research grants. The alleged 'gold standard' of grants are those made by the Australian Research Council. While there has been 'success' in this context, members of the discipline have received funding from a wide variety of sources including Business School grants and industry organisations, as well as undertaking consultancy and commissioned research.

Russell Lansbury secured numerous research grants from the Australian Research Council and other sources on a diverse range of subjects including manufacturing, the airline industry, international and comparative industrial relations (especially Sweden), skills development, and changes in industrial relations regulation. Although retired, Russell Lansbury continues to play a significant role in the discipline's activities both as a mentor and active researcher. He gained a Business School Industry Partnership grant on autonomous mining systems and its implications for the education and skills development of the mining workforce in Australia. Some of the existing members of Work and Organisational Studies have begun their research careers either being supervised by Russell Lansbury and/or being included in his diverse research activities.

Another retired professor, Greg Patmore, continues his research, as do several other retired honoraries. Throughout a long career Greg Patmore attracted grants from a wide variety of sources. He has an Australian Research Council Discovery grant to continue his work on cooperatives in Australia in association with colleagues from the Business School and other universities. Greg Patmore has also done commissioned work on the history of major business organisations, Westfield and Citigroup. He is also a long time critic of operations of business schools in general, despite or in light of his intensive experience as Deputy Dean of both the former Faculty of Economics and the current Business School.

Marian Baird, as principal investigator and with colleagues from other universities, has been awarded many Australian Research Council Discovery and Linkage grants on gender equitable workplace change, on maternity leave, work and family in regional Australia and mothers' engagement with work in the pre-school years (2012–2014) and with Rae Cooper on the flexibility of working parents in a hybrid fair work system (2012–2014). She led the Women and Work research group whose members not only produced a wide range of publications, but also made many submissions to public inquiries. She has won grants from state and federal governments, and from not-for-profits and unions, to undertake research. In a Business School that places considerable emphasis on engagement, these grants were evidence of engagement by Marian Baird and her many collaborators. Indeed, it is characteristic of the discipline to address current issues related to work and, in particular, to a range of occupations and disadvantaged groups in the workforce. Marian Baird is also a frequent commentator in the media. She is currently Chief Investigator on a Centre of Excellence in Population Ageing Research program examining the mature age population and work. This has led to an expansion in the number of postdoctoral fellows, research assistants and PhD students in the discipline. A newcomer, Myra Hamilton, with extensive experience in social policy, is Principal Research Fellow in this program.

In addition, Marian Baird brought her expertise to the task of industrial negotiation with University of Sydney management in her role as Vice President (Academic) and as a member of the National Tertiary Education Union bargaining team in 2003–4. Among other issues, the team modified the effects of the Higher Education Workplace Requirements and was successful in inserting a strong statement on academic freedom in the enterprise agreement, in the face of strong opposition from management (University of Sydney, Academic and Teaching Staff Agreement 2003–2006). She served as a union endorsed Staff Elected Fellow of the University Senate from 2011 to 2019 and later as a Presiding Pro-Chancellor of the University of Sydney. In 2023 Marian Baird was appointed as an Expert Panel member of the Fair Work Commission, a part-time role serving on the Annual Wage Review and Aged Care cases.

Suzanne Jamieson had earlier brought her expertise as a labour lawyer to the position of Staff Elected Fellow of the University of Sydney Senate from 1999 to 2005. She also sat on the Operations Review Committee of the Independent Commission Against Corruption until 2006, and was a member of the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board for ten years. Suzanne Jamieson has a reputation as a collegial and mentoring administrator.

Bradon Ellem was part of a group who had an Australian Research Council Linkage grant from 2013 to 2016 to investigate engineering service work, global production networks and employment relations in Australian mining. Bradon Ellem has a well-established research record on the mining industry in Western Australia, particularly the Pilbara. He is a regular commentator on changes in the labour market. He also has a reputation as a supportive senior colleague.

John Shields, who was Deputy Dean of the Business School, recently moved to another senior position as Academic Director International at the Business School. He had an Australian Research Council Discovery grant between 2010 and 2012 on pay alignment: fact and fallacy. He is a highly regarded authority on performance-based pay. He also contributed to the history of Citigroup. He is regarded as an expert on performance-based pay and unions and has published with a Canadian colleague (e.g. Long and Shields 2005). In recent times, John Shields has been much involved in the administrative work undertaken by senior members of the Business School.

Dimitria Groutsis has an established reputation for her work on migrants, including professional workers and refugees. She is currently part of a group which has an Australian Research Council Linkage grant on the settlement outcomes of Syrian-conflict families. She is also a teaching all-rounder having taught many units over her tenure. With Diane van den Broek, she has investigated career progression of culturally diverse talent, funded by Deloitte. From 2007 to 2010, Dimitria Groutsis was part of the large international group investigating policy addressing health care provision for migrants in Canada, the United States and Australia.

Diane van den Broek (now retired), who has a background as a labour historian, has worked with Dimitria Groutsis on careers of culturally diverse talent as well as holding other grants on female offenders, and employment and supply of labour in the horticulture industry.

Angela Knox has a distinguished publication record on issues such as the hospitality industry, including cafes and hotels and temporary work agencies. She has a particular interest in job quality. Some of her work has been done with United Kingdom academic Chris Warhurst who was briefly a member of Work and Organisational Studies and is now at Warwick University.

Chris F. Wright has a significant research record for a relatively new researcher. He was a postdoctoral fellow in Work and Organisational Studies before he became a teaching and research academic. His postdoctoral project was on the business and labour market impact of skilled migration in Australia. He currently holds an Australian Research Council early career researcher award on employers' strategies in developing a skilled workforce.

A number of members of the discipline have attracted grants that have enabled them to examine various professional occupations. Susan McGrath-Champ obtained grants on teachers' work including a review of teachers' and school leaders' work in a devolving school system that was commissioned by the Australian Education Union; and two grants comparing the work of teachers in NSW, Western Australia and Sweden, funded by the Business School as an international partnership grant supplemented by an International Collaboration grant.

Two members of the discipline, Anya Johnson and Helena Nguyen, have attracted external grants, and have been members of larger research teams, on work and organisation in the health sector. They began their collaborative work on health at the University of NSW as postdoctoral staff, working with Markus Groth. Anya Johnson and Helena Nguyen are lead researchers in a large team on an Australian Research Council Linkage grant on advancing emotional wellbeing, engagement and performance in hospitals, in association with a number of Sydney hospitals. This grant is worth nearly \$500,000. This is supplemented by a University of Sydney Business School grant on the links between team processes and climates, nurse outcomes and effective patient care.

Helena Nguyen, who also worked at the University of NSW, is also an early career researcher involved in a number of health workforce related investigations including an Australian Research Council Discovery grant on errors by skilled staff in health care. With Anya Johnson she is part of the team investigating the silent killer: advancing knowledge on silence and its impact on errors and safety. These two members have considerable collaborative experience both at the University of NSW and within Work and Organisational Studies in significant public policy research in the health sector (Johnson, Nguyen and Groth 2018). In a Business School that gives considerable weight to engagement, Anya Johnson and Helena Nguyen are noted contributors through sharing their research within the health sector.

The Australian Centre for Industrial Relations Research and Teaching (ACIRRT)

In 1989, the Australian Research Council provided funding for a Key Research Centre, known as the Australian Centre of Industrial Relations Research and Teaching (ACIRRT), at the University of Sydney. The funding was obtained under a competitive bidding system and Key Centres were established at both the University of Sydney and Monash University. Although the centre at the University of Sydney was formally separate from the Department of Industrial Relations, Russell Lansbury was its Director from 1989 to 1991. The centre had its own staff, but members of the department were involved in its projects. The centre had an Advisory Board consisting of representatives of unions, employers and government and was first chaired by Sir John Moore, the former President of the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission.

The priorities for the centre during its first three years were improving research and teaching of industrial relations, with a particular focus on workplace industrial relations. Several conferences were held on various topics including the teaching of industrial relations, workplace health and safety, labour history and workplace innovation. A seminar series was conducted and research papers, monographs and newsletters were published.

In July 1991, Ron Callus took leave from the department to become full-time Director of the centre and Russell Lansbury returned as Head of the Department of Industrial Relations. Within a short period of time, ACIRRT was supplementing its Australian Research Council funding with grants from a variety of sources, as well as undertaking commissioned research. From 1988 to 1991 Ron Callus led a team that produced the Australian Workplace Industrial Relations Survey, the first comprehensive survey of workplace industrial relations. The project was funded by the federal Labor government. One of the Australian Workplace Industrial Relations Survey team members, John Buchanan, who was a public servant in the Commonwealth Department of Industrial Relations, joined the centre as Deputy Director. After the retirement of Ron Callus, John Buchanan became Director from 2005 to 2018. Perhaps one of the most important initiatives of ACIRRT was the establishment of a database of enterprise agreements. It was the principal source of information until the Commonwealth Department of Workplace Relations established its own publicly available database of enterprise agreements in 1997.

At the peak of its operations, ACIRRT employed 25 staff, with most on project-funded limited term appointments. Sources of funding included the Australian Research Council, the International Labour Organisation and the National Centre of Vocational Research. The centre published two major books, a number of refereed articles, and reports and working papers. One of the benefits of the establishment of the centre was to raise the profile of industrial relations research and teaching, although the numbers of students specialising in industrial relations was in decline. It changed its name to the Workplace Research Centre and operated successfully as a self-funded applied research centre until 2018.

Higher degree and postdoctoral research

Since the 1990s Work and Organisational Studies had given significant emphasis to Higher Degree by Research programs and the Honours programs leading to higher qualifications. Between 2007 and 2018, 31 PhD and MPhil degrees were awarded to research postgraduate students in Work and Organisational Studies. Among many distinguished doctoral graduates from the department were Michael Quinlan, who became Professor of Industrial Relations at the University of NSW, and a leading scholar of labour history and occupational health and safety, and Margaret Gardner, who, after a period at Griffith University and the University of Queensland, became Vice Chancellor of RMIT University and then Vice Chancellor of Monash University. Margaret Gardner has been appointed Governor of Victoria from August 2023.

The Higher Degree by Research program in Work and Organisational Studies has been strong for a number of years, with enrolments of between 10 and 30 PhD and MPhil students. The broad range of topics reflects the diversity of research interests of the discipline, including theses addressing issues in China, Korea and Vietnam. This is a considerable result for a moderately-sized discipline within the Business School. The discipline has attracted a number of postdoctoral scholars usually linked to a specific research grant. Overall these factors are indicative of the strong research record of members of the discipline which has benefits not only for the discipline, but has considerably boosted the overall research record of the Business School.

The following list of PhD completions in Work and Organisational Studies 2007–2020 illustrates the diversity of the curriculum as well as the research interests of both higher degree students and staff:

- Recruitment and selection in restaurants
- Remote working by mothers
- Executive coaching as a profession
- Economic orthodoxy on unemployment during the Depression
- Emotional intelligence and work wellbeing
- Corporate real estate and law firms
- NSW public employment services
- Older workers in the pharmaceutical industry
- International of employment relations in multinationals
- Enterprise bargaining in higher education
- Talent management
- Transfer management
- Workplace fatalities in NSW construction
- Comparative workplace anti bullying public policy
- Work care in South Africa
- Neoliberal reforms in NSW secondary education
- Banking CEOs
- Job evaluation
- Multinationals' labour utilisation strategies
- Paid and unpaid labour in NSW firefighting
- Knowledge and contract professionals
- Industrial relations in Vietnam
- Executive coaching in China
- Family provisions and equality bargaining
- Individuals, work and family
- Managing labour in residential age care
- Union mergers and post-merger integration
- History of NSW Master Builders Association
- Board capital and firm performance.

[www.sydney.edu.au/business/our-research/research-areas/work-and-organisational-studies/research-students].

Scholarly teaching fellows: opportunities for research?

A recent change at the University of Sydney has been the introduction of scholarly teaching fellows, with appointments made in the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies. This classification came into being following an enterprise agreement between the National Tertiary Education Union and university management. The adoption of this classification by the National Tertiary Education Union was controversial within the union's decision-making processes, with opponents arguing that these staff would become teaching-only staff with only a small opportunity to undertake research (O'Brien 2015: 282–284). Scholarly teaching fellows were expected to devote 80% of their time to teaching and associated administration. However the rationale for this new classification, as adopted by the union, is that casual academic staff would be given opportunities to build a teaching and research record in the context of the relative job security of a three-year contract, compared to casual and sessional employment. In practice such staff are expected to have a higher teaching load than other staff. At the same time, staff so classified are expected to develop a research record. The combination of a teaching and research record was designed to make staff more competitive in seeking more secure employment at the end of their contract.

This arrangement places considerable pressure on the discipline leadership to either use the staff as teaching workhorses with little opportunity to do research or alternatively arrange teaching in such a way as to maximise research opportunities within the boundaries of the classification. The discipline has adopted the latter approach for the three staff who currently hold these positions. The teaching arrangements are moderated to ensure that academic staff in this category do not have too many changes to their teaching load. The approach is to provide research opportunities for the teaching fellows eventually leading to appointment as a teaching and research academic. There is no attempt to use these staff as teaching 'slaves'.

The issue remains controversial within the union and within the sector more generally (Probert, 2013; Goodman et al. 2019). Indeed, it was central to a protracted round of bargaining at the University of Sydney (2021–2023) with the expiry of the enterprise agreement. For those holding these positions it is a considerable improvement on casual employment, provided that the staff do not become teaching workhorses, with little opportunity to develop a research record. It is not so surprising that a discipline that concentrates on the organisation of work and on employee rights would take such an approach. This is not necessarily the case elsewhere in the University of Sydney or indeed in the sector as a whole. Given the funding pressures faced by the sector, and the increasing tendency of Vice Chancellors to have teaching-only academics, there is the temptation to overload these staff with teaching responsibilities, with little opportunity for research. It falls heavily on academic groups in universities to ensure that the teaching fellows are developed.

Conclusion on research

When Russell Lansbury was appointed in 1987 there was a respectable teaching and research record in a small department. Russell Lansbury used his international contacts to insert department members into overseas networks and establish a research centre that attracted both public and commissioned funding. By the 2000s, however, there was increasing pressure on academics to publish. It was not good enough to publish in any relevant journal, and there was increasing encouragement to publish in highly rated journals especially those classified A and A*. From the point of view of individual academics' career progress, a publication record in preferred outlets was increasingly the prime measure for promotion and career progress. Happily for colleagues and the group as a whole, the discipline has had a series of Heads, who were themselves significant researchers as well as effective teachers and collegial administrators, who supported and encouraged research.

Chapter 6: Research dissemination and influence

For many years the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies hosted two significant journals: the *Journal of Industrial Relations* and *Labour History*. Both journals had strong institutional links with the University of Sydney and personal links with the academics in Work and Organisational Studies.

Journal of Industrial Relations

The *Journal of Industrial Relations* was first published in 1959. It was established by the Industrial Relations Society of Australia to promote research in industrial relations. Its foundation editor was Kingsley Laffer who filled this role until 1974. This enhanced Kingsley Laffer's reputation as one of the founders of academic industrial relations in Australia. Kingsley Laffer's aim was to make the journal useful to practitioners as well as academics interested in labour market regulation (Baird et al. 2019: 5). John Niland at the University of NSW served as editor from 1975 to 1991, and was succeeded by Braham Dabscheck at the University of NSW who held the post until 1998. After a selection process by the Industrial Relations Society of Australia (now known as the Australian Labour and Employment Relations Association), Ron Callus and Russell Lansbury became joint editors of the journal from 1999 until 2003. Russell Lansbury and Bradon Ellem then continued as joint editors from 2004 to 2009. When Russell stepped down as an editor, Bradon Ellem was joined by Marian Baird from 2009 to 2022. Other members of the discipline undertook associate editorial roles, including Rae Cooper, Stephen Clibborn, Chris F. Wright and Alex Veen.

During the period from 1999 to 2022, when the journal was edited by academics from the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies, it became less focused on Australian developments and increasingly published papers on international and comparative industrial relations. It attracted authors from a wide range of countries including Canada, China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Scandinavia, the United Kingdom and the United States. These articles reflected, in part, the international connections of the editors. Nevertheless, there was still a prime concern for industrial relations in Australia. The 'annual review' issue of the journal covered developments in Australia during the past year including the labour market and wages, recent legislation, women and work, unions and collective bargaining, judicial and Fair Work Australia tribunal decisions, and employers and employers' organisations. The annual review also often included reports on international developments in industrial relations.

The website of the *Journal of Industrial Relations* in 2020, when it was edited by Marian Baird and Bradon Ellem, included statements of support from two eminent industrial relations scholars: Edmund Heery and Harry Katz. Edmund Heery of the Cardiff Business School in the United Kingdom says of the journal:

"...it is a principal source of theory and evidence on global developments in the world of work and a desirable place in which to publish: Journal of Industrial Relations is a journal to which one sends one's best work."

Edmund Heery noted that the *Journal of Industrial Relations* had become an important link between Anglophone industrial relations scholarship, and the developing scholarship on Asian countries (Work and Organisational Studies website 2018 www.sydney.edu.au/business/our-research/research-areas/work-and-organisational-studies.html).

Harry Katz of Cornell University in the United States noted that not only is the '*Journal of Industrial Relations* ... a terrific source of information about the wide-ranging changes occurring at the workplace' but it also had an international and comparative focus publishing articles by 'leading academic authorities' making use of 'methodologies to analyse original data' (Work and Organisational Studies website 2018 www.sydney.edu.au/business/our-research/research-areas/work-and-organisational-studies.html).

The *Journal of Industrial Relations* was never the sole preserve of the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies. The journal's editorial advisory board included academics from universities in Australia and around the world, as well as representatives from the national committee of the Australian Labour and Employment Relations Society. While the editors were based at the University of Sydney, from 1999 to 2022, the journal was a leader in maintaining scholarship in industrial relations, while taking it in new directions, both internationally and in Australia. During this period, the *Journal of Industrial Relations* rose in the international rankings to be among the top industrial relations journals in the world.

Labour History

Between 1986 and 2016, the discipline was the home of *Labour History*, published by the Australian Society of Labour History. It has become a highly regarded journal, leading the field in Australia. In recent years, it has moved beyond Australian labour history to international work with special comparative issues on Canada, the United States (Patmore and Stromquist 2018) and the United Kingdom (*Labour History* 2005). Greg Patmore was editor of the journal from 1999 until his retirement in 2010. His personal research, over more than 30 years, has covered management strategy and labour relations in the NSW railways, in arms manufacture in Lithgow, and more recently the role of the cooperative movement in both labour movement and community settings. He managed to maintain his strong commitment to academic values, while operating effectively in a more managerialist environment. He never sought to underplay his working-class origins. He was critical of the nature and standard of research in business schools for being too short-term in focus. Colleague and fellow labour historian John Shields (2011) said of Greg Patmore:

“What he has done over the last 30 years, I would suggest, is to transform a solid but essentially inward looking, a-theoretical and timorous (Labour History) Society into an enterprising and innovative research powerhouse that is globally recognised and respected; into a body with an A-ranked journal status and a reputation for being Bolshie when a bit of biff is required.”

Greg Patmore was followed by John Shields who served until the journal 'moved house' to another university. Others from the discipline were (and remain) active in the journal: Bradon Ellem served as an associate editor for almost 20 years; Harry Knowles and Mark Westcott were also associate editors, a role Westcott still plays; and Rae Cooper was a book review editor.

Work and Organisational Studies and Work Choices

Academics from the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies have a long standing tradition of analysis of changes in industrial relations regulation and other work-related issues. While these contributions were often used in public policy debates, the prime motivation was research-based commentary and analysis, to underpin its commitment to public policy. A notable exception to this was between 2004 and 2007 when the federal government proposed major changes to the *Workplace Relations Act* through the 'Work Choices' amendments. Four members of Work and Organisational Studies, Bradon Ellem, Marian Baird, Rae Cooper and Russell Lansbury who had written their own critique (Ellem et al. 2005), were in the forefront of organising a submission to the Senate critiquing the Work Choices amendments. The submission was endorsed by 150 Australian academics working in industrial relations, labour market and labour law and related areas (Group of One Hundred and Fifty Academics 2005). Two prominent industrial relations academics, David Peetz and John Buchanan, were named in parliament by the federal Minister for Industrial Relations, Joe Hockey, for their criticisms of the direction of industrial relations policy of the government. The Minister characterised them as union and Labor 'stooges' with very little academic credibility (O'Brien 2015). However, the submission to the Senate was based on research undertaken by highly regarded industrial relations academics from across the country.

The submission received considerable publicity and gave academic authority to the widespread criticism of the legislation. Minister Kevin Andrews, who had replaced Joe Hockey, was rather more measured in his criticisms of the submission, noting that the academics had 'misunderstood' the legislation. The submission was one of thousands and was given little attention by the majority of the Senate committee although the Labor Opposition relied on it heavily in its minority report. Its purpose was to lend academic credibility to very widespread criticism of the legislation, under the cover of being 'research based', unlike other submissions. It was a notable political intervention and the *Journal of Industrial Relations* devoted an issue to the Work Choices legislation once it was passed (Hall 2006). The department and the discipline had always had a strong focus on public policy issues, but the direct nature of this intervention was a departure from the norm, particularly as it also mobilised most Australian scholars in industrial relations, labour law and related areas to join the discipline in a critique of this radical shift in labour market regulation.

Marian Baird and Rae Cooper were very active in publicising the implications of the legislation for women, particularly those in low paid sectors of the labour market (Baird, Cooper and Oliver 2007; Baird, Cooper and Ellem 2009). In addition, the Women and Work research group has continued to intervene in public policy debates about women in the labour market, including organising conferences, making submissions to the government, and to parliamentary committees as well as through publication (e.g. Baird, Williamson and Heron 2012; Cooper and Baird 2015). Prior to the 2016 federal election, Marian Baird gave Malcolm Turnbull a list of 12 measures he could take on behalf of Australian women, including asking him to apologise to those women whom the Coalition government (namely Prime Minister Tony Abbott and Minister Joe Hockey) had described as 'rotters and double dippers' (Dennett 2015).

Chapter 7: International linkages

Building linkages in industrial relations research

After the appointment of Russell Lansbury in 1987, the discipline began to develop a broad range of international connections. The department had grown very slowly after Kingsley Laffer's retirement and was in stasis. George Strauss, a leading US academic and Professor of Industrial Relations at the University of California, Berkeley, who had been invited by the Dean Stephen Salsbury to advise on the future of industrial relations, strongly advocated that the Department of Industrial Relations be maintained and strengthened. George Strauss was an external member of the selection committee which chose Russell Lansbury as Professor and Head of the department, and he maintained his connections with the department in the following years. George Strauss arranged for various members of the department to be visiting scholars at Berkeley. These included Ron Callus, Mark Bray and Greg Patmore who all played leading roles in industrial relations at the University of Sydney and more widely.

Subsequent connections were made between academics at the University of Sydney and the industrial relations group at the Sloan School of Management at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Boston. Marian Baird developed close collaboration with the Institute of Work and Family at MIT and Russell Lansbury was a Senior Fulbright Scholar at MIT and Harvard. These connections not only produced publications, but also set in place a long standing relationship with scholars at a range of leading US universities including Tom Kochan at MIT, Harry Katz at Cornell and Janice Bellace at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. Exchanges of doctoral students were arranged between Work and Organisational Studies and the Institute of Work and Employment Relations at MIT, through the goodwill of its co-director Tom Kochan. Funding for the exchange program was supported by a grant from the University of Sydney Business School.

Since the early 1990s the discipline has made a number of important international linkages. Mark Bray, Russell Lansbury and Jim Kitay collaborated with researchers at MIT working on a range of industries operating in the context of declining union membership and 'strategic choices' being made by employers, particularly the adoption of lean production in various industries. The leader of this project was Tom Kochan at MIT and a number of leading academics from the University of Toronto and the Japan Labour Institute (e.g. Kochan et al. 1997). The conceptual issues being examined were changes in work organisation, staffing arrangements, skill formation and pay and performance (Niland 1997: iv, c.f. Niland et al. 1994). A similar study, based on the MIT framework, was undertaken for Australia, with a number of industrial relations academics writing on changing industrial relations in Australian industries, including University of Sydney academics Russell Lansbury, Jim Kitay and Nick Wailes as editors and contributors. The project was funded by the Australian Research Council and produced a text, with the editors specifically acknowledging the instrumental role of Tom Kochan in facilitating the project in Australia, and his continuing interest (Lansbury and Kitay 1997: x). Indeed, Tom Kochan was awarded an honorary doctorate at the University of Sydney in recognition of his work with Australian academics.

The book on the study (Lansbury and Kitay 1997) discussed the domestic airline industry, the automotive industry, retail banking, information technology, steel and telecommunications. In a real sense this was the first attempt by Australian academics to incorporate both industrial relations and human resource management perspectives on workplace change, where employers were making 'strategic' choices about the structuring of relations with employees in the context of increased international competition. This work had long term significance for the discipline with Russell Lansbury becoming a leading figure in the International Industrial Relations Association and continuing relationships with leading US academics. Russell Lansbury continued Australian academics' involvement in international and comparative projects involving Japan, Korea and Scandinavian countries. A textbook on international and comparative relations was edited by Russell Lansbury and Greg Bamber. They were later joined by Chris F. Wright and Nick Wailes as co-editors. There have

been seven editions (with the latest being in 2021: *International and Comparative Employment Relations: Global Crises and Institutional Responses*) and the book has become the standard textbook in comparative industrial relations in industrial relations departments and schools around the world.

The department and discipline have worked with, and had visits from, a wide range of US academics such as Fulbright scholars David Weil, Joel Cutcher Gershenfeld, Peter Berg, Lee Hanson and Adam Seth Litwin. Edmund Heery from the Cardiff Business School and William Brown from Cambridge University were regular visitors from the United Kingdom, as was Andrew Pendleton from Durham University who was later appointed Head of the School of Management at the University of NSW. Peter Auer and Muneto Ozaki from the International Labour Organisation were involved in joint research programs. Russell Lansbury's early interest in industrial democracy, in part, led to connections to key academics in Sweden, particularly Olle Hammerstrom, former Research Director of the Swedish Union of Technical and Commercial Employees Union who was a prolific researcher of the industrial democracy and the 'Swedish' model of co-determination. There were research exchanges with the Korea Labor Institute and, more recently, there have been visits from Chinese and Vietnamese delegations. The Women and Work research group has sponsored a number of international visitors in the last few years including Jill Rubery of Manchester Business School and Ruth Milkman from the City University of New York. This research group is a significant participant in an international network of feminist scholars.

Continuing the international focus of Work and Organisational Studies, in 2018 Marian Baird and Chris F. Wright with Soren Andersen from FAOS at Copenhagen Business School, won an international collaboration grant to build research linkages and undertake comparative analysis of the industrial relations systems of the two countries. The Danish side was led by Soren Kaj Anderson, Director of FAOS, known as the Institute for Research in Work Organisations and Employment Relations. The University of Sydney team comprised Marian Baird, Chris F. Wright, Russell Lansbury and PhD candidate Daniel Dinale. Several publications were produced from this research in leading journals such as the *Industrial and Labour Relations Review* (Cornell University) and the *European Journal of Industrial Relations*.

These initiatives established a tradition of international cooperation in the field of industrial and workplace relations which has greatly expanded since the 1990s. A number of Work and Organisational Studies academics are either leading, or participating in, international teams undertaking comparative research. For instance, Rae Cooper and Marian Baird undertook commissioned research in 2016 on women and work in Australia and the United States. Marian Baird initiated an internal University of Sydney research grant that involved Work and Organisational Studies colleagues, and with Elizabeth Hill (Political Economy) and Michele Ford co-edited a book on women, work and care in the Asia Pacific (Baird, Hill and Ford, 2017). They later won a major grant from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to continue this research in four South-East Asian countries: Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Vietnam. Indeed, Australian research in Asia, increasingly with Asian colleagues, became a leading source of information on work and employment relations in both advanced industrial countries and developing economies in the Asian region. Other discipline members have been working closely with Chris Howell from Oberlin College in the United States on a variety of projects. In recent years, Chris Howell has visited the discipline a number of times and was the Laffer lecturer in 2019.

International Labour and Employment Relations Association

The increasing international profile of the discipline was demonstrated when the Australian Labour and Employment Relations Association was chosen to host the International Labour and Employment Relations Association (ILERA) World Congress in Sydney in 2009. The President of ILERA, chosen for the three years until the next Congress, was Russell Lansbury, who for some years had been a member of the Executive of ILERA. The organisation of the Congress was greatly assisted by members of Work and Organisational Studies. The Congress was attended by more than 1000 participants, with almost half from outside Australia. Papers were contributed from all over the world, some in plenary sessions, and in a number of symposia on specific topics. It had become the practice to publish selected papers in leading journals (e.g. Bach and Bordogna 2011). The Congress was opened by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industrial Relations, Julia Gillard. Among many other attributes it illustrated that research in industrial relations and cognate areas was still very strong in Australia and that Work and Organisational Studies at the University of Sydney played a leading role in maintaining that tradition.

Rae Cooper has been elected as President of ILERA for 2024–2027 and the World Congress of 2027 will be held in Australia. Hence, the influential role played by members of Work and Organisational Studies at the University of Sydney at the global level continues. The objective of ILERA is 'to promote the study of labour and employment relations throughout the world in the relevant academic disciplines' (<https://www.ilo.org/public/english/iira/index.htm>).

Members of Work and Organisational Studies are active in a number of other Australian and international associations such as the Association of Industrial Relations Academics of Australia and New Zealand (AIRAANZ), contributing papers, hosting conferences and acting as office bearers in the association. Among those who have been elected President of AIRAANZ are Marian Baird, Rae Cooper, Bradon Ellem, Russell Lansbury and Chris F. Wright.

The Australian Labour and Employment Relations Association (ALERA), which is the body representing Australia on ILERA, has also been strongly supported by members of the department and discipline at the University of Sydney since it was established by Kingsley Laffer and others. Both Marian Baird and Russell Lansbury have served as President of ALERA.

Other members of the discipline have become more active in the Academy of Management and other international academic associations.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

What was the nature of the changes in the Department of Industrial Relations and Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies from 1953 to 2023? One of the classic analyses within organisational change literature was formulated by Charles Lindblom in 1969. He argued that the most sustainable variety of organisational change is through incremental adjustment, rather than strategic planning imposed from the top of the organisation. He characterised it as the 'science of muddling through'. This formulation has been much criticised (e.g. Allison and Martin 2011), but it remains a classic in organisational analysis. It is useful, therefore, to examine the history of the Department of Industrial Relations and Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies through this framework.

When reviewing the career of Kingsley Laffer and the foundation of the Department of Industrial Relations at the University of Sydney, it is apparent that Laffer's primary goal was to introduce the subject of industrial relations and give it an identity separate from the concerns of economics. It took him more than 20 years to achieve departmental status for industrial relations in the face of opposition from some of the Heads of the Department of Economics and Deans of the Faculty. Kingsley Laffer achieved his goal by going over the heads of his opponents to the Vice Chancellor Professor Bruce Williams, an eminent economist, who finally agreed to grant departmental status to industrial relations, despite opposition from within the Faculty of Economics. Hence, the establishment of the Department of Industrial Relations was achieved incrementally due to the persistence of Kingsley Laffer .

After Kingsley Laffer's retirement in 1975 the department was largely in stasis, and for much of the time leaderless. Three Professors who were Heads of the department came and went. One could suggest the department resembled more of an academic collective, and was unable to benefit from the advantages provided by a leader who had access to the senior administration and powerful Professorial Board. In this period, the department could not be characterised as 'strategic' or acutely 'tactical'. In Charles Lindblom's terms the department had muddled through a period of stasis.

The appointment of Russell Lansbury in 1987 marked the beginning of a period when leadership was both strategic and tacitly adept in building the department. While the department had been moderately successful in research and publication up to this point, a conscious and largely successful attempt was made to promote research in a more strategic manner. Not only was research promoted within the department, but an Industrial Relations Research Centre was established to undertake public policy research. It was formally separate from the department, but was initially led by academics seconded from within the industrial relations group. Colleagues such as Ron Callus and Greg Patmore subsequently exercised leadership not only in the research centre but also within and outside the university. Access to students in the Faculty of Arts facilitated the recruitment of additional academic staff and the expansion of industrial relations as a field of research and education.

The next significant phase in the history of the department was its re-designation as the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies in 2000. This enabled industrial relations to be a major contributor not only to the new discipline but also to the Business School. It legitimised subsequent further expansion into organisational behaviour and management studies. The Dean wanted the new discipline to be part of a newly formed Business School, rather than the School of Social Science that included government, economics and political economy. The department made a strategic decision to become part of the new Business School. In pragmatic terms it provided the new discipline access to greater income flowing to the Business School from its students, many of whom were full fee paying overseas students. The discipline made adjustments to meet new demands as they arose. The decision to rename the department meant that, in a real sense, the new Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies was a product of 'strategic choice' about its orientation within the framework of the larger economic unit.

This is not to say that the new organisational arrangement ceased to have to 'earn its keep' by a more conscious decision to expand into new areas, as well as expanding its profile as a centre of research on all issues that could be classified as work-related. This period, up to the present, was characterised by agility in responding to the changing circumstances without abandoning its commitment to analyse the regulation of work.

In more specific terms, there is a considerable degree of continuity in the courses offered by the Department of Industrial Relations and the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies. The second unit of study originally offered by the Department of Industrial Relations was explicitly located in the organisational studies domain, concentrating on personal management and employee work groups. Nevertheless, over time human resource management became significant in the discipline. All current students enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate (by coursework) programs are exposed to theories of management and organisational behaviour. The linking narrative of the discipline, from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, is the experience and regulation of people at work.

The boundaries of the Department of Industrial Relations were fluid, which was helpful in expanding the offerings of the Department of Industrial Relations and the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies. On the other hand, the department and discipline were open to colonisation at the margins. For more than 50 years the boundary fluidity enabled the expansion of programs into various aspects of work. In 2018 another discipline was formed in the Business School concentrating on strategy, innovation and entrepreneurship, which had previously been accommodated, to some degree, within Work and Organisational Studies.

The unitarist versus pluralist dichotomy became less relevant as the external industrial relations system changed, with the decentralisation of industrial relations and the coming of enterprise bargaining in Australia. Members of the discipline were influential in public policy as well as trade unions and business organisations which were making increasingly strategic decisions about the best mode of labour management to adopt. In Australia, while union membership was declining, it remained more influential than in the United States, particularly when the Australian Labor Party was in government at the national level. The discipline has been able to maintain a commitment to providing critical analysis of developments in Australia, in the context of its history and its changing legal environment.

A broader range of subjects was offered from the early 1980s and particularly after 1987. The rise of human resource management was perceived, in some quarters, as a unitarist challenge to the more pluralist approach of industrial relations. In spite of this controversy, the department took the strategic decision to integrate human resource management into its programs. The alternative of a Department of Management to accommodate human resource management would have provoked an argument among various departments about who 'owned' management and would have diminished the reach of the Department of Industrial Relations. The decision to rename the department to a discipline, although imposed from above, nevertheless reinforced the role of the Work and Organisational Studies group as the best place to teach and research the workplace from a number of perspectives. This contrasts with the experience at the University of NSW, where the School of Industrial Relations and Organisational Behaviour became the School of Management and Organisation and was eventually absorbed into a much enlarged School of Management, as has been the case at Monash University for an extended period.

The management area was more open to expropriation, in part because other disciplines could make legitimate claims to teach aspects of management, although not necessarily with a focus on work organisation. The strength of the organisational studies scholars assists the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies in retaining its role in management teaching and scholarship. The employment relations model arrived at by Work and Organisational Studies resembled that which was more recently recommended by American academic John Budd who rejected the notion that industrial relations was pluralist, while human resource management was unitarist. Budd (2011) argued that a more integrated approach to employment relations was better captured by integration rather than continued separation.

The persistence of industrial relations teaching and research has assisted the discipline in retaining the capacity to influence public policy about work and intervene in debates at moments of widespread controversy as well as maintaining commentary on legislative and policy changes. Other approaches to work and employment have also contributed to public policy. Maintaining this capacity was possible because most of the Heads of the discipline were located in the industrial relations domain with an emphasis on fairness and equity in the workplace rather than a more managerialist approach.

The Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies has also provided a number of staff who took on leadership roles at the Faculty or Business School level and in the University of Sydney more widely, as well as in other universities. The leadership of the department and discipline was politically astute and pragmatic. This enhanced the influence and authority of the discipline derived from both its organisational flexibility and research record. The tradition of high quality and critical analysis of industrial relations developments in Australia has been maintained, accompanied by public policy commentary and interventions, where appropriate. The offerings of the discipline have expanded into new, but related areas, within the context of work and organisations, building on a tradition that dates back to the foundation of the teaching of industrial relations at the University of Sydney.

From the late 1980s to the 2020s, the discipline has developed a significant research profile, both locally and internationally, researching a wide range of industries and occupations, contributing to public policy debates, and developing research contacts in a wide range of countries. The research record of the discipline has enhanced its credibility as a significant contributor to the reputation of the Business School and the University of Sydney. The history of the Department of Industrial Relations and the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies provides an important case study which reflects changes in higher education, public policy and major developments in the sector over the past seven decades.

Appendix 1: Laffer lecturers

Year	Laffer lecturer	Position at time of lecture
2023	Tony Burke	Federal Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Minister for the Arts, Leader of the House
2022	Gail Kelly	Former CEO of Westpac
2021	Russell Lansbury	Emeritus Professor, University of Sydney
2020	No Laffer lecture due to COVID-19	
2019	David Weil	Professor, Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University, USA
2018	Tanya Plibersek	Deputy Leader of the Australian Labor Party and Shadow Minister for Women
2017	Chris Howell	James Monroe Professor of Politics, Oberlin College USA
2016	Tim Soutphommasane	Australian Race Discrimination Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission
2015	Jennifer Westacott	Chief Executive of the Business Council of Australia
2014	Peter Wilson	Chairman of the Australian Human Resources Institute
2013	Iain Ross	President of the Fair Work Commission
2012	Helen Conway	Director of the Workplace Gender Equality Agency
2011	Thomas A. Kochan	Professor of industrial relations and labor economics at the MIT Sloan School of Management. Co-Director of the MIT Sloan Institute for Work and Employment Research.
2010	Sue Bussell	Qantas Executive Manager Industrial Relations
2009	Russell Lansbury	Professor, University of Sydney
2008	Tim Costello	CEO of World Vision Australia
2007	Julia Gillard	Deputy Leader of the Australian Labor Party
2006	Kim Beazley	Leader of the Australian Labor Party
2005	Ron McCallum	Blake Dawson Waldron Professor in Industrial Law in the University of Sydney Law School
2004	Heather Ridout	CEO of the Australian Industry Group
2003	Russell Lansbury	Professor, University of Sydney
2002	Michael Kirby	Justice of the High Court of Australia
2001	Sharan Burrow	President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions
2000	Brian Pickett	HR Director of Email Manufacturing Australia
1999	Quentin Bryce	Principal and CEO, The Women's College, University of Sydney, Former Federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner
1998	Bill Fisher	President of the Industrial Relations Commission of NSW
1997	Jeff Shaw	NSW Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations
1996	Jennie George	President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions
1995	Deirdre O'Connor	President of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission
1994	Bert Evans	CEO, Metal Trades Industry Association
1993	Bob Hawke	Former Prime Minister of Australia

Appendix 2: Location of selected former staff²

A number of former members of the Department of Industrial Relations and the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies at the University of Sydney have moved to senior academic and administrative roles in other universities and institutions.

Susan Ainsworth is an Associate Professor in the Department of Management and Marketing at the University of Melbourne. Susan was a member of Work and Organisational Studies and an active member of the Women and Work research group. She has a strong record in applying discourse analysis to diversity within organisations, including gender, age and disability, as well as organisational communication and public policy.

Mark Bray is Emeritus Professor of Employment Relations at the University of Newcastle, where he was the Foundation Professor. He is also an Honorary Professor at RMIT University. He has published on trade unions, collective bargaining and award regulation, and the role of third parties, especially the Fair Work Commission, in promoting cooperation in the workplace. He was a senior academic in Work and Organisational Studies.

Margaret Gardner is Vice Chancellor of Monash University and has also held this position at RMIT University. From August 2023 Margaret Gardner will be Governor of Victoria. She gained her PhD from the University of Sydney where she also taught industrial relations. She has undertaken major reviews on industrial relations laws and labour market training for the Queensland government. She has published extensively on industrial relations reform and human resource management.

Richard Hall is Professor and Deputy Dean in the Business School at Monash University. He has published on industrial relations as well as on leadership and emotion within organisations. He was a Senior Researcher in the Australian Centre for Industrial Relations Research and Teaching at the University of Sydney as well as a Professor in the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies. He was an Associate Dean in the University of Sydney Business School.

Anja Kirsch is a Professor at the Free University in Berlin, Germany, a leading European university. Anja undertakes research on a wide range of subjects including women and men on corporate boards, governance of labour standards in international supply chains and the effects of the transition to electric vehicles on auto industry workers in Germany and the United States. Anja gained her PhD at the University of Sydney and lectured in Work and Organisational Studies.

Robin Kramar has been a Professor of Management at Macquarie University and the Australian Catholic University. She is a leading researcher in human resource management and was the editor in chief of the *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*. Robin gained her PhD from the University of Sydney where she was a lecturer in the Department of Industrial Relations before moving to the University of NSW.

Jane Le is a Professor of Management in Germany, as well as at Aston University in the United Kingdom. Her expertise is in organisational studies and she has published in a number of leading organisation and management journals. Jane is an Honorary Professor in the Discipline of Strategy, Innovation and Entrepreneurship and was a member of the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies.

Grant Michelson is Professor at Macquarie University. He has published in a wide range of areas including the role of time, space and discourse in organisational change, rumour and gossip in organisations, and shareholder value and social responsibility in organisations. He was a Senior Lecturer in Work and Organisational Studies.

² As at mid 2023

Richard Morris was the Foundation Professor of Industrial Relations at Western Sydney University. Previously, he was a long serving member of the Department of Industrial Relations with a wide range of publications on the maritime industry and labour history. He was the founding editor of the *International Journal of Employment Relations*.

Malcolm Rimmer was a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Industrial Relations before moving to the University of NSW. He held professorial roles at Monash and Deakin universities and became Head of the School of Management at La Trobe University. He published widely on industrial relations and labour history.

Peter Scherer was a lecturer in labour economics in the Department of Industrial Relations at the University of Sydney before becoming the Head of the Bureau of Labour Market Research. He later joined the OECD in Paris where he became Head of the Social Policy Division in the Directorate of Employment. He has published in the fields of labour economics, industrial relations and comparative social expenditures and social policy trends.

Trish Todd is Chair of the Commission for Occupational Health and Safety in Western Australia. She was Professor of Employment Relations and Head of the Management and Organisations Group in the University of Western Australia. She is a graduate in industrial relations from the University of Sydney where she was a research associate. Her research interests include the implementation of work–life balance policies and practices, union renewal and the gender pay gap.

Nick Wailes is a Professor and Deputy Dean at the University of NSW and Director of the Australian Graduate School of Management. He gained his PhD in Work and Organisational Studies and was an Associate Professor in the University of Sydney Business School. He has published on industrial relations in Australia and New Zealand, international and comparative relations and organisational change.

Keith Whitfield is a Professor of Human Resource Management at Cardiff University Business School in the United Kingdom where he undertakes research on the impact of human resource policies and practices on a range of employee and organisational outcomes. He was a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Industrial Relations at the University of Sydney where he taught and published on labour economics.

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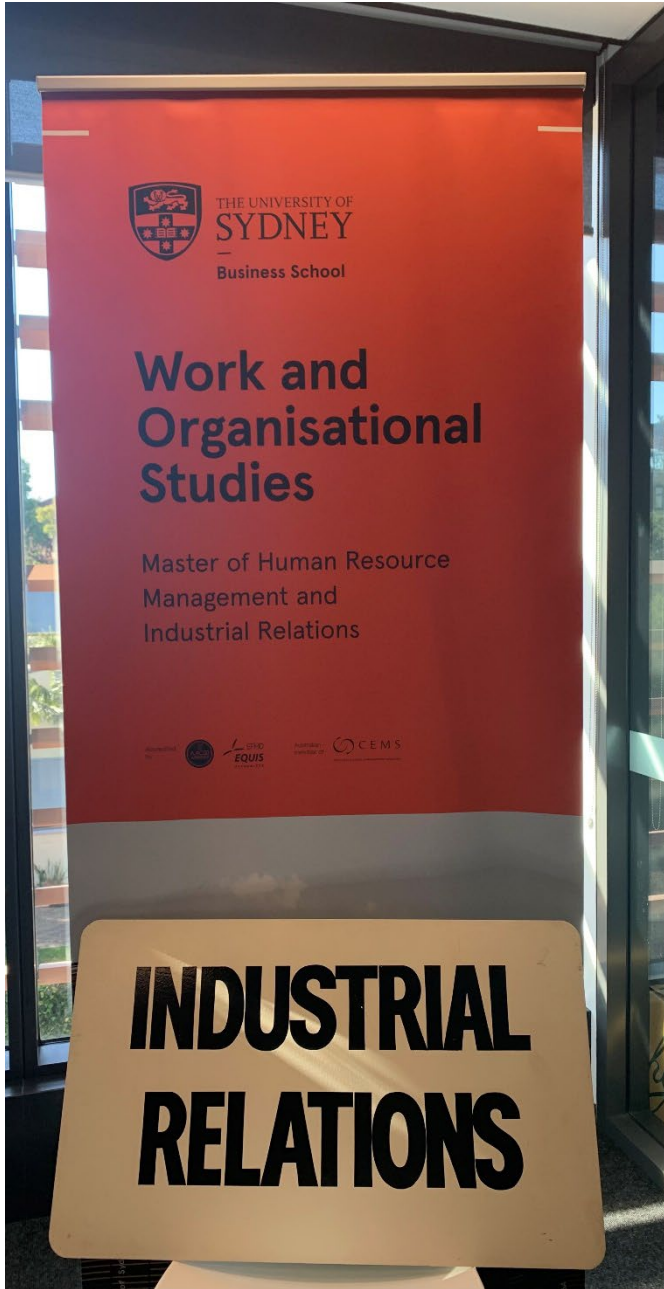
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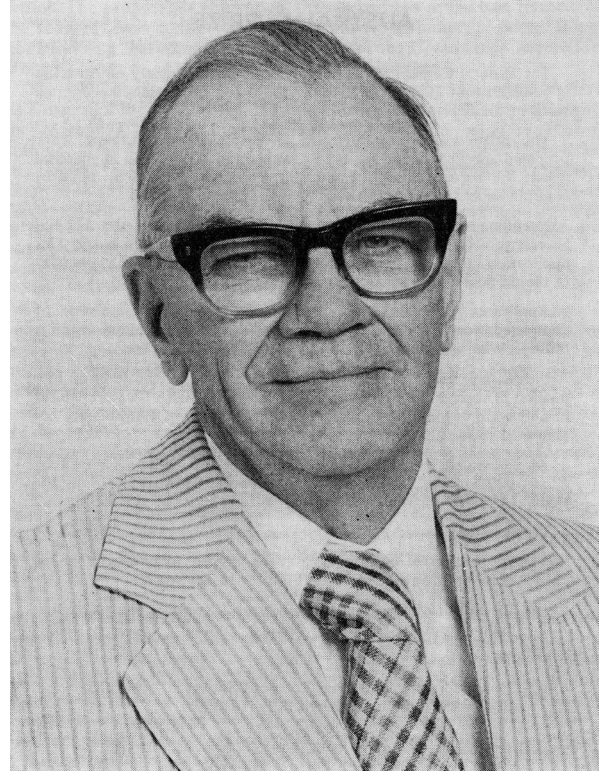
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Photo history addendum



Then and Now (~1970 – 2023)

Photo of an original metal sign for Industrial Relations (circa 1970) and current banner sign for the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies (2023).



Kingsley Middleton Laffer

Photo from 'The Journal of Industrial Relations', Volume 18 Number 4 December 1976, P412



**Inaugural Kingsley Laffer Lecture: "Industrial Relations in Australia; Turbulent Past; Uncertain Future?"
Presented by The Hon R.J.L. Hawke AC, 25 May 1993**



Australian Centre for Industrial Relations Research and Training (ACIRRT), University of Sydney (~1994)

Back row: John Buchanan (Deputy Director), Richard Pickergill (Skills formation expert), Murray Woodman, (WOS / Law Student and research Assistant at ACIRRT)

Front row: Linda Cowan (Training Coordinator), Marilyn Bryce (Librarian) and Ron Callus (Director)



Department of Industrial Relations, University of Sydney (1998)

Back row: Jim Kitay, Diane van den Broek, Grant Michelson, Vera Differding, Mark Westcott, Bradon Ellem, Susan McGrath-Champ

Front row: Greg Patmore, Suzanne Jamieson, Russell Lansbury, Marian Baird



Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies, Business School, University of Sydney (2020)

Back row: Susan McGrath-Champ, Alex Veen, Stephen Clibborn, Anya Johnson, Chris F Wright, Angela Knox, Shanta Dey, Karyn Wang, Vanessa Loh, Maria Ishkova

Second row: Hyacinth Alfonso, Mesepa Paul, James Donald, Russell Lansbury, Marian Baird Meraiah Foley, Megan Werner, Alison Williams, Bradon Ellem, Diane van den Broek, Frances Flanagan

Front row: Sunghoon Kim, Ju Li Ng, Sarah Mosseri, Helena Nguyen



Journal of Industrial Relations Editorial team (2021)

Marian Baird, Alex Veen, Anya Johnson, Stephen Clibborn, Bradon Ellem, Rae Cooper, Russell Lansbury, Chris F Wright, Rawya Mansour



**The 30th Annual Kingsley Laffer Memorial Lecture,
Presented by Tony Burke MP, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, 24 August 2023**

Published books addendum

Published books as of 1997



Back row:

- "Marginal Manager, The Changing Role of Supervisors in Australia", Gilmour, Peter, Lansbury, Russell D. (1984)
- "International and Comparative Employment Relations, A Study of Industrialised Market Economics", Bamber, Greg J., Lansbury, Russell D.
- "The Future of Industrial Relations, Global Change and Challenges", Leminsky, Gerhard, (1996)
- "In Women's Hands? A History of Clothing Trades unionism in Australia", Ellem, Bradon, (1989) [foreign language title]

Second row:

- "The Great Labour Movement Split in NSW, Inside Stories", Ellem, Bradon, (1998)
- "One Big Union, A History of the Australian Workers Union 1886-1994", Hearn, Mark and Knowles, Harry (1996)
- "Changing Employment Relations in Australia", Kitay, Jim and Lansbury, Russell D., (1997)
- "Managing Together, Consultation and Participation in the Workplace", Davis, Edward M. and Lansbury, Russell D., (1996)
- "Business In Australia", 2nd Edition, Hayward, Harold, Westcott, Mark, Tibbits, Garry, Lembach, Michael and Callaway, Mary (1996)

Front row:

- [foreign language title]
- "After Lean Production, Evolving Employment Practices in the World Auto Industry", Kochan, Thomas A., Lansbury, Russell D., Macduffie, John Paul (1997)
- "Australian Labour History", Patmore, Greg (1991)



Back row:

"New Technology, International Perspectives on Human Resources and Industrial Relations", Bamber, Greg, Lansbury, Russell D., (1990)

Second row:

"Delivering the Goods, A History of NSW Transport Workers' Union, 1888-1986", Bray, M., Rimmer, M. (1987)

"International and comparative industrial relations: a study of industrialised market economies", Lansbury, Russell, D., Bamber, Greg (1993)

Third row:

"The Australian Labour Market: perspectives, issues and policies", Whitfield, Keith (1987)

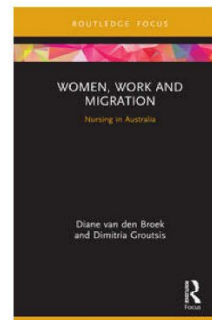
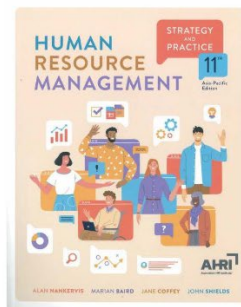
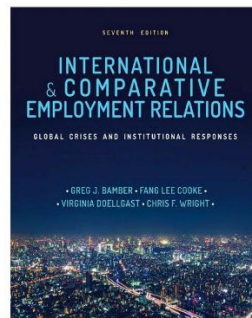
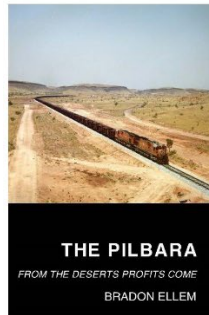
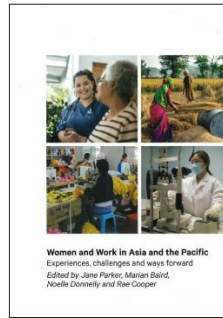
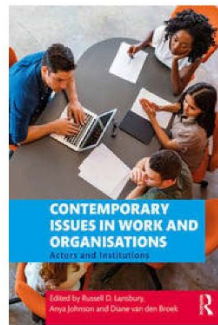
"New Technology and Industrial Relations in Scandinavia", Graversen, Gert., Lansbury, Russell, D. (1988)

"Managing Labour? Essays in the Political Economy of Australian Industrial Relations", Bray, Mark and Taylor, Vic (1986)

Front row:

[foreign language titles]

Published books as of 2023



Top row:

“Contemporary Issues in Work and Organisations, Actors and Institutions”, Lansbury, Russell D., Johnson, Anya, van den Broek, Diane (2019)

“Women and Work in Asia and the Pacific, Experiences, challenges and ways forward”, Parker, Jane, Baird, Marian, Donnelly, Noelle and Cooper, Rae (2023)

“Protecting the Future of Work, New Institutional Arrangement for Safeguarding Labour Standards”, Colfer, Barry, Harney, Brian, McLaughlin, Colm and Wright, Chris F. (2023)

Middle row:

“The Pilbara, From the Deserts Profits Come”, Ellem, Bradon, (2017)

“International and Comparative Employment Relations, Global Crises and Institutional Responses”, 7th Edition, Bamber, Greg J., Cooke, Fang Lee, Doellgast, Virginia L, Wright, Chris F. (2021)

“Women, Work and Care in the Asia-Pacific”, Baird, Marian, Ford, Michele, Hill, Elizabeth (2017)

Bottom row:

“Human Resource Management, Strategy and Practice”, 11th Edition, Asia-Pacific Edition, Nankervis, Alan, Baird, Marian, Coffey, Jane, Shields, John (2022)

“Employment Relations, Theory and Practice”, 4th Edition, Bray, Mark (2018)

“Women, Work and Migration, Nursing in Australia”, van den Broek, Diane and Groutsis, Dimitria (2019)

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Work and Organisational Studies

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