

Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme



**TEACHERS
HELPING
TEACHERS**

Welcome

to the Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme (PATS) newsletter which is published every two months. We welcome your feedback and input at any stage along the way.

In this seventh issue of the newsletter, we will present the Unit Evaluation (UE) results from semester 1, 2011 and provide an update on the exciting development of the PATS website.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter, and we look forward to engaging PATS within your Faculty.

Unit Evaluation results:

The unit evaluation results for semester 1, 2011 have been released with all participating units achieving excellent results. Of the fourteen units, eleven units were in the *meeting aspirations zone* and two unit in the *outstanding zone* in the University Wide-Item5:

SEMESTER	UNIT*	UW5	SEMESTER	UNIT*	UW5
Sem1, 2010	ART1001	2.33	Sem1, 2010	FIT1001	3.28
Sem1, 2011		N/A	Sem1, 2011		3.89
Sem1, 2010	ART1002#	4.5	Sem1, 2010	FIT1002	3.56
Sem1, 2011		3.94	Sem1, 2011		3.75
Sem1, 2010	BUS1001	2.88	Sem1, 2010	FIT1003	NEW UNIT
Sem1, 2011		3.78	Sem1, 2011		3.63
Sem1, 2010	EDU1001	3.11	Sem1, 2010	PHM1001	3.98
Sem1, 2011		3.79	Sem1, 2011		3.77
Sem1, 2010	EDU1002	3.11	Sem1, 2010	PHM1002	4.17
Sem1, 2011		3.79	Sem1, 2011		4.79
Sem1, 2010	EDU1003	3.93	Sem1, 2010	PHM1003	NEW UNIT
Sem1, 2011		4.93	Sem1, 2011		4
Sem1, 2010	ENG1001	3.65	Sem1, 2010	PHM1004	3.91
Sem1, 2011		3.9	Sem1, 2011		4.12

* All units have been anonymised

The mentee was teaching this unit for the first time in Sem1, 2011 and was previously responsible for a unit that was in the *critical attention zone*.

Common reoccurring themes for areas of improvement in units needing critical attention

The unit evaluation qualitative data from the Faculty of IT in thirteen units needing *critical attention* were recently analysed. The areas students perceived as needing improvement were placed into categories and sub-categories which are presented below:

Major categories:

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| 1. Lectures | 5. Assessments |
| 2. Lecturers | 6. Off Campus |
| 3. Tutorials | 7. LMS |
| 4. Tutors | 8. Resources |

Sub-categories:

Lecture

- structure
- access
- content
- challenge
- quantity

Lecturer

- knowledge
- presentation style/engagement
- support
- organisation
- response time

Tutorials

- type of activity
- clarity
- alignment
- available software
- length
- scheduling

Tutors

- knowledge
- presentation style
- support
- response time

Assessments

- marking
- alignment
- specifications

Off Campus

- support
- availability of recordings

LMS

- ease of use
- quantity
- accuracy

Resources

- relevance
- quantity
- availability

Further explanation on the data analysis process can be found on page 2.

Semester 2, 2011 PATS

This semester there are two partnerships participating in PATS — one from the Faculty of Engineering and the other from the Faculty of IT. The partnerships will be trialling the new PATS participant instructional workbook.

A number of national and international institutions have shown an expression of interest in using PATS.

- RMIT, Melbourne
- Deakin University, Melbourne
- Griffith University, Gold Coast
- Massey University, New Zealand
- University of the West Indies Open Campus, Jamaica

PATS website

We are currently in the development stage of a brand new and exciting PATS website. The website will contain all the PATS resources, videos, podcasts, event details, useful links and more. This will be up and running for the next cycle of PATS running in semester 1, 2012 which will enable the participants to complete their workbook tasks online.

Available on the website will be seven interactive online tasks which participants can complete:

1. Meet and greet
2. Break down the barriers
3. Set goals for improvement
4. Gather informal student feedback
5. Perform a peer observation of teaching
6. Critical reflection
7. Performance planning and strategies

OTHER NEWS

ACDS Conference

The Australian Council of Deans of Science (ACDS) Teaching and Learning Conference was held on the 18th & 19th July at the Mercure Hotel in Sydney.

ALTC Teaching Fellow's Final Report

The ALTC Teaching Fellow's final report is due on Friday 30th September, 2011. The report will detail the activities and outcomes of the Fellowship.

University of Newcastle

The ALTC Teaching Fellow has been invited to present a PATS workshop to Faculty teaching leaders who will perform the role of teaching mentors for their academic colleagues on Tuesday 4th October at the University of Newcastle.

Data analysis

On page 1 we covered the eight main categories that emerged from the analysis process. Each main category contains a set of sub-categories or attributes. The top five categories and sub-categories students highlighted as needing improvement are as follows:

1. **Lecture** — *content*
Relates to the relevance of the material to real world scenarios and whether the material was current.
2. **Assessment** — *specifications*
Relates to the clarity in which assignments were written and the submission process.
3. **Lecturer** — *presentation style/engagement*
Relates to the level of engaging teaching methods used to deliver the material.
4. **Assessment** — *marking*
Relates to consistency of marking, quality of feedback, timeliness of feedback, and clarity of marking criteria.
5. **Tutorial** — *alignment*
Relates to the alignment between tutorial activities with learning objectives.

The next phase of the project is to repeat the qualitative comment analysis process with unit evaluation data from the remaining faculties. This will be tackled by initially analysing the data from low performing units in the Faculties of Engineering and Science. This process will be followed by a further analysis on the data derived from faculties who are generally top performers (ie. the Faculties of Law; Business and Economics and Arts).

Making *Changes* and Achieving *Success*

The PATS participants in semester 1, 2011 achieved outstanding results in their unit evaluations. Below are just some of the successful strategies used by the participants:

1. Engaging more directly with students through questioning and the use of video clips.
2. Keeping more regular contact with tutors to ensure greater consistency in the tutorial classes
3. Including 1 or 2 slides at the beginning of the lecture which specifically explain the usefulness of the material relative to a) later material in unit; b) utility in other units or industry.
4. Announce on Moodle that (a) lecture notes will be handed out in lectures to encourage attendance and (b) lecture vodcasts will be made available to facilitate revisions.

What's next...

- **PATS website**

CONTACT

If you wish to provide feedback or comment on the PATS program, please feel free to contact:

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