

Abstracts – Posters

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The Tertiary Preparation Program Intensive Pathway (TPPIP) Project

Charmaine Davis (University of Southern Queensland)

USQ is a regional university which services a diverse student base, including those from rural, regional, remote, low SES, indigenous and non-English speaking backgrounds. Targeting Year 12 leavers, the Tertiary Preparation Program Intensive Pathway (TPPIP) is an intensive on-campus mode of offering USQ's Tertiary Preparation Program. It aims to prepare school leavers for successful transition into undergraduate study, and provide a direct pathway into undergraduate programs. TPPIP has been funded through the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) which aims to ensure that Australians from low SES backgrounds who have the ability to study at university have the opportunity to do so.

TPPIP includes intensive on-campus residential schools in December and January, each of which runs for two weeks. Online study complements this face-to-face study experience. Students from rural backgrounds are offered bursaries to stay in fully catered residential colleges on Toowoomba campus during the residential schools.

The principal factors contributing to the underrepresentation of students from 'non-traditional' backgrounds at university are well established within research literature. The TPPIP program is built around key focus areas that address some of these factors. These include academic skill development, familiarisation with university processes, the development of a sense of belonging through social engagement, and the removal of financial barriers. The TPPIP develops academic skills in communication, study management and mathematics reflecting the expectations of first year university entry. Students are also undertake activities which assist them to engage with university processes, discourses and practices. An emphasis on fostering social engagement, along with the fact that the program is fee-free, are other factors which are critical to its success in supporting students to transition into university study.

Evaluative data collected over the last three years demonstrates that the program has been successful in achieving its key objectives. Demographic information suggests the program effectively recruits students from HEPPP identified groups who are overrepresented in the program. The articulation rate from TPPIP into USQ undergraduate study has been consistently high, as has reported student satisfaction with the program. Achievement of the program's goal of raising the aspirations of students from diverse backgrounds is evident in survey data which consistently shows almost all students intend to undertake further university study.

The opportunity to experience university is highly valued by TPPIP students. Comprehensive evaluations have informed the ongoing development of this Year 12 leaver transition program, which is now a separate and important niche enabling program offered by USQ.

Games for Education, Learning and Orientation (GELO)

Sandra Elsom & Marguerite Westacott (University of the Sunshine Coast)

Our interactive poster introduces you to elements of an innovative alternate reality game developed to help orientate and support the success of University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) enabling students, through fostering autonomy, relatedness and competence (Deci & Ryan 2000; Ryan & Deci 2000).

The Games for Education, Learning and Orientation (GELO) Project is supported by a 2016 Exploratory Grant from USC. Informed by Kahu's (2013) framework of student engagement, that

recognises and encompasses three dimensions: affect (which includes sense of belonging); cognition (relating to learning) and behaviour (engagement based on what a student does), the game has been designed to support enabling program students to flourish in their new environment. It also draws on research from positive psychology (Seligman 2011; Csikszentmihalyi 2011), motivation (Deci & Ryan 2000; Ryan & Deci 2000), first year transition (Nelson & Kift 2005; Nelson et al. 2006) and serious game development (Whitton et al. 2014). It aims to help students develop self-efficacy, and foster a sense of belonging and well-being, whilst providing them with practical information about the facilities, resources and services available on the university campus.

The benefits of using games to engage students in learning are well documented, anecdotally and in education and game design literature. Arguably, the most attractive feature of digital games is their ability to keep players engaged and motivated whilst building high levels of understanding of the game-world and their actions within it (Gee 2008, Klopfer et al. 2009, Beavis et al. 2014). Moreover, games can elicit social interactions between players in the virtual game environment, in online communities associated with the game and in real life (Gee 2008). Educators and researchers alike, see the appeal in harnessing these features to engender better learning and with that in mind, the GELO alternate reality game includes both digital and social elements of play. UK researcher and game developer Nicola Whitton (Whitton et al. 2014) recommends alternate reality games for learning because they are uncomplicated to produce, they are accessible, and they allow people to participate in various ways. The GELO Project team contend that if we want our students to learn where (for example) Student Central is, and that they can ask for help there, then the best way to do that is to put them in a low-stakes situation where they physically visit the location and actually ask for help.

This project is collaborative across the university and involves students from the USC Bachelor programs in Film and Media, Drama, Digital Media, Serious Games Design Information Communication Technology and Event Management students.

Our poster invites you to interact with elements of the game and shares the outcomes of a pilot of the game implemented in Orientation Week Semester 2 2017 at USC.

Life Literacies: Learning for Life and Tertiary Preparation

Susan Hopkins (University of Southern Queensland)

Life Literacies is a HEPPP funded academic preparation and curriculum renewal project which will enhance the capacity of students from low SES backgrounds to successfully undertake undergraduate study, through the embedded teaching of 'real life' skills and knowledges in a tertiary preparation pathway. The project is based in the Open Access College of the University of Southern Queensland in partnership with academics from USQ Law and Justice Studies. The project is relevant to multiple NAEAA conference themes including, academic literacy and advancing the learning and success of learners from LSES backgrounds in enabling programs. The project *Life Literacies* will design, develop, deliver and evaluate an academic preparation package and service to teach both life skills and academic tertiary preparation skills in order to strengthen the capacities of students to retain their place in study and complete their study. The language and design of the program acknowledges that success, in tertiary study and in life in general, requires multiple literacies; the ability to critically read and confidentially negotiate multiple economic, social and cultural challenges, demands and opportunities. In particular, there will be a focus in stand-alone workshops on basic legal and financial education and the basic skills and essential legal and financial knowledges to enable disadvantaged persons to act and advocate for their own self-interest and empowerment. In every workshop there will also be a focus on embedded, contextualised, links and referrals to both USQ student services

contacts and networks and also appropriate external government agencies and support services. The *Life Literacies* program comprises a suite of stand-alone workshops delivering units of study which provide *both* enabling education (which develops communication and study management skills) and 'real life' contextualised information on: 1) University Life Literacy 2) Digital Life Literacy 3) Financial Life Literacy 4) Legal Life Literacy 5) Relationship Life Literacy. This Life Literacies approach to Tertiary Preparation recognises that to succeed in their university study, non-traditional students need to develop not only academic skills and confidence, but the skills and confidence to survive and thrive in the broader society. The Life Literacies project aims to reach and engage the most marginalised and vulnerable learners, including students from low socioeconomic areas who may be suffering from financial hardship. The project aims to make their journey through higher education less stressful, more empowering and more relevant to everyday life through innovative educational approaches and materials centred on essential 'life literacies.' The project will encourage risk awareness, self-reflection, resilience, critical thinking and problem solving in its teaching and learning activities through the face to face workshops. Hence, by incorporating legal and financial knowledges, supporting student empowerment, student well-being and academic competencies, this renewed alternative approach to tertiary preparation takes a multi-dimensional approach to developing multiple literacies, which in turn supports student readiness and retention.

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Introducing the 'Higher Expectation Framework': An approach to teaching adult learners in a fun and engaging environment.

Trixie James (CQUniversity)

The Higher Expectations Framework (HEF) is an andragogical approach to thinking, planning and actioning, and is an innovative and engaging model for teaching adults. Designed after trialling the Flipped Classroom Model, this framework aims to make the class environment a safe place where adult students feel empowered to step out of their comfort zone and become more engaged with the content. The HEF is an innovative, imaginative and creative approach to teaching adults which is fit to purpose, and grounded in research and scholarship. Underpinned by Adult Learning Principles, Brain-Based Learning Principles, and Self Efficacy Theory, this approach assists with ensuring these principles are being implicitly applied within the class environment. Through utilising the Review, Connect, Extend, Apply (RCEA) approach, educators are guided through the process of teaching and planning using reflective questioning techniques and guided experience commentary. The goal is to enhance the overall culture of academic learning and teaching in the university setting and beyond, with the vision to stimulate the student experience to see them succeed in their educational journey.

A poster outlining two of CSU's Enabling programs

David Ward & Sandra Fisher (Charles Sturt University)

A poster outlining two of CSU's Enabling programs is proposed. These are 1) **The Diploma of General Studies** (sub-degree) and **Study Link** (enabling or preparation short courses). These programs reflect the breadth of support offered by the University in preparation for university studies. The poster will identify key differences between the programs in order to demonstrate this. The two sections of the poster will be as follows:

1) The **CSU Diploma of General Studies** is aimed primarily at recent school leavers who want to study at CSU and have not achieved the ATAR to get into their chosen degree. It has grown from a small pilot on the CSU Albury-Wodonga campus in 2010 to established offerings on four CSU campuses in 2017. The Diploma is a full time on campus course consisting of four specifically designed introductory university level subjects representing the four broad educational fields of CSU degrees: Education, Humanities, Science and Business. Curriculum design incorporates Kift's (2009) transition pedagogy and the six first year curriculum principles.

TAFE NSW and Wodonga TAFE are partnered to teach the Certificate IV in Tertiary Preparation which provides foundational skill development in academic language and learning, and numeracy skills. The Diploma of General Studies results in two qualifications: The Certificate IV in Tertiary Preparation and the Diploma of General Studies, and provides guaranteed entry into most CSU degrees.

Course retention rates average 83% with graduation rates averaging 74%. 74% of Diploma students enrol in CSU degrees. First year retention rates of Diploma graduates average 89%. The majority of Diploma students report their efficacy in studying in the first year of their degrees. To date, 34

Diploma students have graduated from CSU degrees with a small number of Diploma students achieving Honours, Masters and PhD level studies.

2) **Study Link** is an enabling/preparation program, offering choices from a suite of 17 short, self-paced and online subjects, each of which take between 14 and 40 hours to complete. An additional two subjects are presented as Intensive Weekend Workshops. A Study Link subject is often a student's first experience of university study. The program is designed to bring students to a level playing field, particularly those students who are new to tertiary study and who may lack confidence, basic academic skills or assumed knowledge for their course. Study Link subjects are not credit bearing and thus do provide a pathway into the university.

The suite covers both skill and knowledge-based subjects, including: Mathematics, Writing, Grammar, Critical Thinking, Transition Skills, Statistics, Chemistry, Physics, Bioscience, Anatomy and Online Learning. Students have access to a Subject Coordinator in the same way that they do in their regular subjects and they benefit from using the online learning environment without the pressure of credit bearing assessment. Since its first implementation in 1999, 48,000 students have enrolled and benefitted from Study Link subjects.