

SA AALL Memberships

As of 8 October, SA AALL had 15 financial members, representing the University of Adelaide, the University of South Australia and Flinders University. The two state representatives, Saib Dianati and Rowena Harper, have both served for two terms and will step down at the end of this year. SA members have been encouraged to considering nominating as the new state reps.

SA AALL Meetings and Events

SA AALL held one meeting this year, but attendance was low. Staging meetings has been challenging, as both Adelaide and Flinders have been unable to host for some time due to restructuring and staffing uncertainties, and UniSA has not had the capacity to host on a regular basis without support from the other institutions. It is hoped that the situation at both Flinders and Adelaide settles soon to allow the local community to re-establish itself and introduce new mechanisms for connecting with each other.

University updates

Flinders University

The Student Learning Centre (SLC) at Flinders University is still undergoing a restructure and roles within the centre are still uncertain. After voluntary redundancies were offered to staff six months ago, with the Head of the SLC retiring, in the last few months forced redundancies have been deployed causing the disestablishment of administrative staff at the SLC. The future of academic staff positions in the SLC will be decided in the coming weeks, with the prospects of being professionalised, decentralised or disestablished on the cards.

The SLC started supporting online students by developing Skype online consultations to support its fully online student cohort. To date, 4 students have started using the service since August 2017. Professor Michelle Fleming from the University of Canberra has joined the SLC team as the new Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Life). Professor Fleming has endorsed Studiosity (previously YourTutor) and will be implementing the service at Flinders in the coming months. The SLC is also one of the last universities to adopt a PASS (Peer Assisted Study Sessions) model, with Professor Fleming also interested in developing this in the coming months.

In terms of programs, the SLC started a “Pop Up” workshop series that aimed to combine some of the best ALL workshops from across the country. An environmental scan of the different workshops from different universities was a starting point to develop a more comprehensive academic workshop series, now called “Pop-Up” workshops. Also the language and tone of our workshops have been changed to sound more “appealing” with more “use-value”. For instance, our “Essay Structure” seminar has been re-badged as “Get Better Marks for Your Essays”. A Mature Aged Academic Workshop was developed this year in an effort to develop specific academic, institutional, technological and digital literacies needed by this cohort.

The SLC has also developed BUSN9409 Academic English for Business. The topic is designed to improve students’ English language skills for effective communication in a tertiary setting. It covers a range of oral and written English language skills to support non-English speaking background (NESB) postgraduate business students studying in Australia. The topic will focus on the broad areas of

listening, speaking, reading and writing and will incorporate discussion and comparison of the social and cultural norms of academic communication in various international contexts. The SLC will also stop developing any print material from September 2017, including referencing guides, with all information now available at <http://www.flinders.edu.au/current-students/slc/>

Torrens University

No report available in 2017.

University of Adelaide

ALL through the Writing Centre

ALL assistance is available to all students from the Writing Centre through online resources, occasional seminars, one-on-one consultations (drop-in or appointment) and online feedback. The 'writing mentors' are current postgrads or recently completed students from a range of disciplines.

ALL for Postgraduate Research Students

The framework for provision is named Career and Research Skills Training (CaRST), administered from the Adelaide Graduate Centre. There is a graduation requirement for all doctoral students to complete 120 hours of CaRST accredited training during candidature (60 hours for Master by research and MPhil), with hours spread across 4 domains. Some generic writing courses are offered and funded centrally, but discipline-specific offerings must be run in faculties/departments, which vary widely in models for accessing and funding relevant staff expertise. For example, workshops in the School of Agriculture, Food and Wine in the Faculty of Sciences are given by an unpaid adjunct staff member who provides individual consultations on a fee-for-service basis; the Faculty of Arts has a 0.6 academic staff position; Mechanical Engineering has an hourly-paid position offering regular and on-demand workshops, Shut-up-and-write sessions and individual consultations. The Integrated Bridging Program – Research, which provides CaRST hours for commencing international students, is now taught by hourly-paid staff in the Professional and Continuing Education extension arm of the University.

ALL in Engineering

The ALL program in Engineering is an example of our Faculty based work. ALL in Engineering is provided by academic staff (contracted and hourly-paid).

ALL for Undergraduate Engineering Students

All undergraduate international Engineering students must complete the one semester Engineering Communication course, which covers ALL, basic research skills and critical thinking skills. The program for local students is School based, with two of the five Schools providing ALL to local and international students through collaboratively taught compulsory courses focussing on Professional Practice (in first and third year in Mechanical Engineering, and first and second year in Chemical Engineering).

ALL for Master by Coursework Engineering Students

All international Master by Coursework students must do the one semester Engineering Communication and Critical Thinking course. ALL input is provided through both collaborative and parallel teaching models. Both local and international Masters students receive ALL input in two

compulsory courses. In one course, the input is solely online. In the other, the ALL and Engineering lecturers work collaboratively. ALL assistance for the Masters research projects is currently being provided in two Schools through a pilot project.

University of South Australia

Language and Literacy Coordinators

The Language and Literacy Coordinators in the Teaching Innovation Unit have been working on a range of curriculum and staff development initiatives this year. The most significant has been UniSA Online, a suite of new fully-online programs to be launched in 2018. The team has been responsible for working with course coordinators on articulating assessment tasks and developing associated marking rubrics for every piece of assessment in each of the 12 programs. It has been an extraordinary undertaking, but an excellent opportunity to have meaningful conversations with staff about their assessment.

In addition, work with Divisions has continued. In Health, the team have contributed to a project on Clinical Communication, which developed a series of video scenarios and associated teaching packages to embed the teaching of clinical communication into curriculum across all Health Sciences disciplines. The team worked to develop rubrics that identified the primary components of clinical communication (e.g. tone, body language), and teaching and learning exercises that staff are using to raise students' awareness of these components, and how they can use them to improve their clinical interactions. In addition, the team worked with Pharmacy staff to articulate communication learning outcomes for their program, and identify where and how these would be achieved in courses. This project is ongoing. In Business, the team worked with staff on orientation videos for every course in the Division, advising on content and scripts to ensure that students received a clear and welcoming introduction to their learning. In Education, Arts and Social Sciences, the team has been working with a range of disciplines to embed developmental modules on academic literacies into courses. In social work, this project has been sustained over a number of years, such that literacies are introduced and staged incrementally over a series of four courses, and cover finding information, reading, reasoning and writing in increasing degrees of sophistication. In IT, Engineering and the Environment, the team has been mapping the development of a range of core capabilities, including communication and team work, across a range of programs. They are currently developing publications on this work, with the first under review.

Learning Advisers

In 2017, Learning Advisers in the Student Engagement Unit have enhanced the provision of core learning adviser activities through the development of a number of initiatives in the online environment and in peer-to-peer mentoring. The team has continued its regular delivery of academic skills workshops utilising virtual classroom which has allowed them to reach larger numbers, particularly external and regional students. In addition, the team has been responsible for developing an online orientation experience to sit alongside the face-to-face campus days. This has been very successful in terms of student use and has since been further developed for the UniSA Online cohort.

Earlier in the year the team collaborated with an external animation company to produce 6 short videos on academic writing, assignments, referencing and exam strategies. Library staff have

recently engaged the same company to produce complementary resources related to library and searching skills, which will sit nicely with the series of videos produced.

Learning Advisers at UniSA also piloted 'Study Help PALS', which is an initiative working with student volunteers who have been trained to provide just-in-time information to their peers, and point students to resources and other learning support services and programs across the uni. Study Help PALS volunteer in open learning spaces on metropolitan and Whyalla campuses. The pilot program attracted 170 applicants, with 82 being deemed eligible to become PALS and 33 trained. We are looking to extend the program further next year.