News from the Chair

Professor Paul Else

Greetings! As you're probably aware our Associate Dean of Research, Prof. Sandra Jones has stepped down from this position and until a suitable person is appointed I am filling in as FRC chair. As acting chair I would like to thank Sandra for her energetic leadership of research management in our faculty over the past five years. There is no doubt that her efforts have raised the research profile of the faculty in the eyes of the University and have produced consistent improvements in research outcomes across the faculty. I would like to wish her every success as head of her newly recognised research strength the Centre for Health Initiatives (CHI).

In other news it has been a busy period with the major rounds of ARC and NHMRC grants, reorganisation of the FRC, the build-up to the ERA submission and a new HDR grant round. Firstly grants, the university submitted 141 ARC discovery grants this year compared to 117 in 2009. It also submitted 40 NHMRC grant versus 27 in 2009. HBS contributed 11 ARC grants (7.8%) and 23 NHMRC (58%) to that tally. Congratulations to all those that committed so much of their time and creative energies into producing this mighty effort (also special thanks to the RSO). Also that survey (the Sustainable Research Excellence) – yes that’s the one, we managed to get over the line with a 82% completion – only phase two to go and hopefully we might get some extra research funds into the university – thanks for your help.

The FRC has been reorganised into two groups. The first group is a small processing committee (PC) that will advise the dean on dispersement and ranking for all competitive Faculty and University funding (eg small grants, RIBG, HDR scholarships etc). The second, larger committee is the strategic planning committee (SPC). This committee will advise the dean on strategic issues relevant to research within the faculty. It is hoped that this reorganisation will allow more streamlined processing and a chance for increased discussion of strategic issues relevant to research within the faculty.

The ERA process continues with draft copies of all FoR code summaries submitted and data on staff profiles, grant funding, journal and conference publications and research area that reach the cut-off point for assessment established. In our faculty those research areas that will be assessed (recognising that many researchers within our faculty also contributed to other areas within the university that will also be assessed) will include Public Health & Health Services (1117), Nutrition and Dietetics (1111), Human Movement and Sports Science (1106), Clinical Sciences (1103), Neuroscience (1109), Psychology (1701) and Cognitive Science (1702). What now remains is to complete a citation analysis using SCOPUS with final submission occurring in late July 2010.

The University announced a second round of HDR scholarships this year. This is the first time HDR scholarships have been offered mid-year. It attracted a very competitive and diverse field of applicants. The good news was that 5 new HDR scholarships were awarded to students within our faculty.

Overall there is a lot of research activity happening across the campus, including a review of animal house management and facilities, the imminent introduction of 4 year PhD’s for International Students, matching Academic teaching training PhD Scholarships and a host of other schemes under review but for the now I will simply wish everyone success in their research whether that be grant outcomes, experiments, publications or presentations – Cheers Paul.
Staff Profile
Visiting Professor Jan Dewing

Jan Dewing is a Visiting Professor of Aged Care and Practice Development. The appointment is the result of a growing partnership between Uniting Care Ageing South Eastern Region. Jan lives and works in England – when not in Wollongong! When in England Jan works as Professor of Person-centred Research and Practice Development which is a joint post between East Sussex Community Health Trust (an NHS organisation) and Canterbury Christchurch University Kent.

Jan is leading a program of work with Uniting Care known as Aspire to Inspire which is a complex action oriented program to transform the workplace and management cultures across the region in order to significantly enhance workforce capacity and capability and ultimately to ensure older people receiving care, thrive and flourish. A two year multi-site evaluation research project (one of the largest in the world in this type of work to date) is examining the outcomes and benefits from the program. Using an Active Learning methodology, Jan is also working with other staff in the SNMIH to reprovide e-based subjects in a more interactive and work based way.

Staff Profile
Dr Karen Walton

Dr Karen Walton is a lecturer in the School of Health Sciences. Karen completed a BSc (Chemistry/Nutrition) and MSc (Nutrition & Dietetics) with UOW in the early 90’s and provided guest lectures on clinical dietetics topics in the years following. Continuing her affiliation with UOW into the new millennium, Karen held short-term teaching contracts as a casual tutor and demonstrator in Health Sciences. After commencing a part-time PhD program in 2003, Karen obtained a lecturing position with the school in 2008 and completed her PhD in 2009. Her research interests include nutrition support and the hospitalised elderly, nutrition support in residential care, cost benefit of nutrition support on hospital length of stay and the role of food service dietetics on clinical patient outcomes.

Karen has excelled in her position within the Faculty in both research and teaching, being the recent winner of the 2009 Joan Woodhill PhD Excellence in Research Award (Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) NSW), and the 2010 OCTAL Award for the Health and Behavioural Sciences Faculty, University of Wollongong.

Karen enjoys eating well but advises that chocolate dipped strawberries make a great fortified food! On a serious note, she has two young children who got very used to visiting the ducks, eels (and herself) for lunch on weekends while she was finishing her thesis writing.
Welcome

Welcome to Dr Emma Barkus who has taken up the position of Lecturer, Permanent Full Time, in the School of Psychology.

After gaining first class honours in Psychology at Manchester Metropolitan Emma continued on to gain a PhD in psychology and neuroscience, exploring the correlates of hallucinatory proneness in the general population. She gained a Stepping Stone Research Fellowship to complete two years postdoctoral experience at the University of Manchester before moving to the Institute of Psychiatry for a further two years postdoctoral experience. Her research interests broadly reflect risk factors for psychosis including psychological and biological variables. She has brought a NARSAD Young Investigator Award with her to the University of Wollongong which will cover a project exploring the the personality and cognitive variables which are associated with psychotic-like experiences after cannabis. Additionally she will perform a small drug study to determine whether the cannabinoid receptor one is a potential target for cognitive enhancing drugs in psychosis-prone healthy volunteers.

Congratulations

Lifetime Achievement

Brian Davies, School of Health Sciences, has been awarded the 2009 International Occupational Hygiene Association Lifetime Achievement Award. The Award honours individuals who have made significant contributions to the promotion and development of occupational hygiene practice that improve the health and welfare of working men and women. The Award will be presented to Brian during the 8th IOHA International Conference, which will be held in Rome later this year. As part of the award Brian will deliver a lecture on occupational hygiene. Given that the International Occupational Hygiene Association represents occupational hygiene organisations in over 25 countries throughout the world, this is an exceptional achievement.

Outstanding PhD

A huge congratulations to Karen Walton who won the coveted Woodhill prize for outstanding PhD research in Dietetics. The award was announced at the Dietitians Association of Australia NSW Branch AGM on Friday 26 February. Karen was also the recipient of a prestigious OCTAL award for teaching.

Graduations

Congratulations to our recent Graduates. Graduation from Doctor of Philosophy:

- Samantha Broyd, Psychology, PhD, “Electrophysiological Correlates of Interference Control in the Eriksen Task”
- Jason Bruggemann, Psychology, PhD, “Eysenck’s P as a Modulator of Affective and Physiological Response to Media Violence”
- Sarah Marshall, Psychology, PhD, “Mental Health Consumers’ Evaluation of Recovery-oriented Service Provision”
- Thomas Matthias, Psychology, PhD, “A Conceptual Model of Information System Implementation within Organisations”
Research News

Centre for Health Initiatives

Adolescent Sun Protection Study

University of Wollongong’s Centre for Health Initiatives, as part of an ARC linkage grant with Cancer Council NSW are conducting research into the area of adolescent sun protection behaviour. With the increasing levels of skin cancer in our society, along with the decrease in the use of sun protection by young people, this research is designed to improve the sun protection behaviours and attitudes of adolescents.

As part of this study researchers from the Centre for Health Initiatives have spent their summer on beaches and in shopping centres throughout the Wollongong region as well as in secondary schools in Wollongong, Newcastle and the Shoalhaven.

Using an innovative UV (ultra violet) camera, sunscreen packs, cool wristbands and giveaways, the program is targeting the hard to reach segment of 14-15 year old adolescents. The impact sun exposure has on the appearance of your skin, a message particularly salient with young people, has been the primary message of the program.

Over the summer, more than four hundred UV photographs have been taken of youth to highlight the existing sun damage already sustained to their skin. Thousands of wrist bands, bookmarks and sunscreens have also been provided. Over 600 hundred students have participated in the evaluation of the study via their schools and in their community.

Analysis of the impact of the program is currently being undertaken and the final findings are expected by the end of 2010.

Invited Address on Point-of-Sale Advertising

Professor Sandra Jones was recently invited to present the findings of her project investigating the impact of point-of-sale alcohol advertising on the drinking behaviours of young people to the Liquor Control Advisory Council (LCAC).

The LCAC is established under the Victorian Liquor Control Reform Act 1998. Its role is to advise the Minister for Consumer Affairs on problems of alcohol abuse. It comprises a Chairperson and twelve members representing the legal, youth, and health sectors, industry, private enterprise, government, Victoria Police and the Director of Liquor Licensing.

The Minister for Consumer Affairs has requested that LCAC investigate POS alcohol promotions and advertising and provide high-level advice to contribute to the development and implementation of a broad range of solutions to the identified issues and potential harms. The NSW Minister for Health recently provided Professor Jones’ report: “Research into the impact of point of sale alcohol advertising and promotions on risky drinking by young people” to the Victorian Government, and this report will provide strong grounding for the development of the LCAC advice.

The LCAC meeting was held in Melbourne on Friday 9 April, where Professor Jones gave a presentation on the major findings of the project funded by NSW Health.
After grog fast, you deserve a drink

THE benefits of one-off booze bans lie more in changing attitudes than restoring livers, a Wollongong researcher says. As scores of Illawarra residents celebrated the end to the self-imposed charity big dry Febfast yesterday, University of Wollongong researcher Sandra Jones welcomed a small win against the region’s shocking risk-drinking levels. But while Febfast and other “themed” months Dry July and Oktoberfest have buoyed health campaigners concerned at Australia’s entrenched drinking culture, and generated short-term gains for participants, lasting benefit is more difficult to gauge.

“Healthwise, any break from alcohol is good for your system,” said Ms Jones, from the university’s Centre for Health Initiatives.

“It allows your body to get rid of a lot of the toxins that have built up, it gives your liver a break - gives all your organs a break from the constant assault of having alcohol go through your system. “But more importantly, it gives you that psychological break. It’s much more about what it says to you and to your circle of friends and to your social circle - that we don’t actually need to drink alcohol to enjoy ourselves.”

Can’t beat the real thing

Vitamin and mineral supplements are no substitute for a healthy, balanced diet discovers BREE FULLER. So who needs them, and when? To supplement or not to supplement, that is the question. If you believe the many famous athletes who appear on television ads spruiking the latest sports drink or multivitamin, there are lots of benefits to giving your diet the occasional artificial boost. But do dietary supplements really do anything? University of Wollongong academic Professor Sandra Jones says while sports drinks and vitamin and mineral supplements sometimes improve people’s health, they are generally unnecessary for anyone with a reasonably balanced diet. And sometimes, they can do more harm than good. Before people start popping tablets willy-nilly, Jones says it is important for people to look at their diets and ask themselves if they actually need a substitute.

“If you are eating a balanced, healthy diet you should be getting all of the vitamins and minerals that you need,” Jones, the director for the university’s Centre for Health Initiatives, explains.

“The problem is that most of us don’t eat balanced healthy diets and so there are times when taking supplements can be useful if your diet is lacking.

“Unfortunately people tend to not worry much about what they eat, and eat rubbish and anything they want and then think that vitamin tablets will counteract (it).”

Vitamin and mineral supplements are useful for people who smoke or take drugs, for vegetarians who may be lacking in iron, as well as pregnant and menopausal women. They also benefit people who are on a restricted diet, those suffering nutrient absorption problems and the elderly. Multivitamins, which contain very small amounts of several vitamins and minerals, are popular with people wanting to safeguard their general health. But Jones says using supplements as a cure-all can have a negative effect on people’s health.

“People have that misconception where they think ‘vitamins are good, therefore I will take lots of them’, and I don’t think that’s a good message at all,” Jones says.

“Some of the side effects aren’t too serious, and then others are very serious.”

“If you take large amounts of vitamin C it’s quite likely to give you diarrhoea - that’s not too worrying – but things like vitamin A and vitamin B6 have actually been associated with serious medical problems like nerve damage, liver problems and skin disorders.”

Like prescription medicines, vitamin and mineral supplements have important dosage directions for people to follow, and may actually interfere with other medications. Jones suggests people consult their doctors or speak with a nutritionist before self-medicating with dietary supplements. Energy and sport drinks can be equally damaging to people’s health.

“There is absolutely no nutritional value in energy drinks - it’s a lot of sugar and a lot of caffeine in a little, tiny can - and that’s it,” Jones says.

Energy drinks, which commonly contain ingredients like caffeine and guarana, can cause heart palpitations and dehydration, and should never be consumed before exercising. Sports drinks, on the other hand, can be a valuable dietary supplement - but only if you are a exercise maniac.

“Things like Gatorade contain sodium, sugar and they’re about restoring the chemicals that your body has lost if you’ve exercised really hard and you’ve sweated a lot,” Jones says.

“They’re useful for people who are exercising very heavily, say professional athletes .... “(but) I would say your average person playing a game of tennis or going for a walk on the beach is just as well with water and really doesn’t need those extra supplements.”

BREE FULLER
10 March 2010 Illawarra Mercury
UOW joins dad’s plight for safety cameras

A FATHER who lost his four-year-old son in a car accident three years ago is fighting to prevent more young lives from being lost. Bradford Berry is on a mission to convince the Federal Government to introduce legislation to make reversing cameras mandatory in all cars sold in Australia. Mr Berry’s son, Aston, was killed in 2007 in a car accident involving a family member. The Southern Highlands man said that although a reversing camera would not have saved his own son, the tragedy opened his eyes to a recurring problem.

“If there’s something that can come out of this grief that we’ve been through, and the tragedy of losing Aston, something should be done,” he said.

“My mission is to save families the same grief and suffering that I am going through and will continue to go through for the rest of my life.”

On average, one child a month is killed in a reversing accident in Australia. Shocked by these statistics, Mr Berry contacted the University of Wollongong to suggest that research should be conducted into driver support for the cameras. Director of UOW’s Centre for Health Initiatives, Professor Sandra Jones, was happy to take up the request.

“It seemed such an important thing to know about,” she said.

“There has been research on reversing cameras that has shown they’re very helpful in preventing accidents.”

A survey of 590 Australian adults found the majority would support mandatory reversing cameras, with two-thirds supporting the legislation if it increased the cost of new cars by $300 and more than half if it increased by $500.

“It suggests that a government subsidy scheme - similar to that offered for solar heating and rainwater tanks - would result in the installation of reversing cameras in a large number of Australian cars, potentially saving the lives of many young people,” Prof Jones said.

Mr Berry has started a petition calling for new legislation. Members of the public can show their support at www.gopetition.com/petitions/reversingcameras.html.

By EMMA SHAW
9 April 2010 Illawarra Mercury
Research News

School of Nursing, Midwifery and Indigenous Health

Funding for UOW’s Dementia Training Study Centre

In February, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (research) announced that UOW’s Dementia Training Study Centre has been granted $2.2 M in Commonwealth funding to continue its activities for an additional 3.5 years. The NSW/ACT DTSC (formerly the Eastern Australia DTSC) is one of only five Dementia Training Study Centres funded nation wide.

The Centre, located in the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Indigenous Health (Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences), was established in 2007, partnering with Aged Care providers across NSW, QLD and the ACT. During its first 3.5 years of operation the EADTSC, under the Directorship of Associate Professor Victoria Traynor, provided education and training to more than 8,000 trainee and graduate health professionals through the development of undergraduate material such as Dementia Education on-line, specialist postgraduate subject content, the conduct of clinical workshops, the hosting of a Guest Lecture series as well as other research and consultancy activities.

With this most recent round of funding, the UOW based Centre, in collaboration with its partners the Hammond Care Group and UnitingCare Ageing, and with the future addition of new partners, will focus its activities within NSW and the ACT. The NSW/ACT DTSC will continue to promote dementia studies in Australian graduate and undergraduate curriculum, provide tertiary dementia career pathways and deliver training for health professionals.

Congratulations to A/Prof Victoria Traynor, Professor Patrick Crookes, Mr Luke Oborn and Mr Richard Fleming (Hammond Care Group) on this success.

School of Psychology

Invitation to WHO

Professor Rodney Croft has been honoured with a fully funded invitation to the World Health Organisation in Geneva, to assist with the development of the WHO Radiofrequency Research Agenda. The output from this meeting will be a document that highlights the research that the WHO believes is most crucial for clarifying the possible relation(s) between health and radiofrequency emissions (such as those from mobile phones, base stations and fMRI). This is a great accolade for both Rodney and HBS, placing them at the forefront of international electromagnetic health policy.

REACH out in Dementia

Brin Grenyer is part of a team that has been successful in a grant application to the Department of Health and Ageing with Prof Jan Potter (IHMRI), and Prof Nagesh Pai (GSM/IHMRI). They have received $545,461 in funding over 18 months under the Local Palliative Care Grants Program for the project: “REACH out in Dementia- Recognise End-of-life and Care Holistically”. The team will collaborate with a number of colleagues from the SESIAHS, the Illawarra and Shoalhaven Divisions of General Practice and representatives from Residential Aged Care Facilities.

NSW Health Grant

Brin Grenyer has been awarded a $2.5 million grant over 3 years from NSW Health for “An integrative collaborative model for personality disorders prevention and treatment”. Brin is the CI and the team includes Andrew Chanen (Uni Melb), Beth Kotze (SESIAHS Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol) and Adrian Keller (Justice Health). This reflects very well on Brin, the School, Faculty, and IHMRI. Congratulations Brin!
Research News

Smart Foods Centre

Expert Working Group

Professor Linda Tapsell has been appointed to the Expert Working Group (EWG) on Australia & Food Security in a Changing World of the Prime Minister’s Science, Engineering and Innovation Council. The appointment has come through the Chief Scientist, Professor Penny Sackett. The terms of reference have been provided in confidence and the work is to be completed by October this year. The expertise she is providing to the group is in nutrition and functional foods. Her current NHMRC appointment on another Working Group overseeing the development of the Australian Dietary Guidelines has been extended and is consistent with the EWG area. Both appointments are clearly relevant to the Strategic Research Initiative in Smart Foods and Public Health.

Conference Presentations

The Smart Foods Clinical Team have had the following abstracts accepted at the National DAA conference to be held in Melbourne at the end of May. The abstracts were developed from the NHMRC SMART clinical trial.

- Beck Thorne - oral presentation on dietary fibre intakes
- Kiefer Zhang - poster and oral presentation on calorimeter and questionnaire methods for measuring activity and energy expenditure respectively
- Elizabeth Neale (and Liz’s major project student Amanda) - poster presentation on her work on omega 3 FA and fish intakes
- Deb Nolan - oral presentation on dairy food intake patterns in the trial
- Jane O’Shea - poster on trial attrition rates
- Brent Venning (Masters of Science Nutrition and Dietetics who is currently completing a Summer Scholarship), supervised by Anne McMahon - oral presentation

Yasmine Probst had her work accepted on grains for poster presentation and Karen Walton is presenting a plenary on foodservice and aged care. Linda Tapsell will be the keynote speaker on Functional Foods, so a big presence this year!

Centre for Translational Neuroscience

Training Fellowship

The NHMRC recently announced the awardees of Training (Postdoctoral) Fellowships in 2010. Congratulations to Mei Han from the Centre for Translational Neuroscience who has been awarded an Australia-China Exchange Fellowship worth $318,600.

Mei has previously been awarded an Schizophrenia Research Institute Postgraduate Scholarship and more recently has been employed as an RA with the Institute.

Her project will link with the Centre for Beijing Psychiatric Research at Beijing Huilongguan Hospital in China and explore the link between the neuregulin-1 gene and schizophrenia.

This is the 2nd NHMRC- Chian Exchange Fellowship awarded to CTN following Dr Yinghua Yu last year ($328,000). Establishment of broad research collaboration at national and international level is a main goal of CTN.
Grant Success

Some recent success for HBS staff in a number of grants. Congratulations to all successful members and good luck with the projects:

Brin Grenyer, Andrew Chanen (Uni Melb), Beth Kotze (SESIAHS Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol) and Adrian Keller (Justice Health).
“An integrative collaborative model for personality disorders prevention and treatment”.
NSW Health
$2.5 million over 3 years

Brin Grenyer, Prof Jan Potter and Prof Nagesh Pai
“REACH out in Dementia- Recognise End-of-life and Care Holistically”.
Local Palliative Care Grants Program
$545,461 over 18 months

Professor Sandra Jones, Professor Don Iverson and Dr Andrew Bonney
“Promoting Healthy Lifestyles in IRT Self Care Communities”
Illawarra Retirement Trust (IRT)
$38,470

Professor Sandra Jones and Lance Barrie
“The schoolies experience: Expectencies, gender roles and social norms of recent school leavers”
Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation (AER) Foundation
$19,996

Prof Sandra Jones, Dr Gillian Stillfried and Dr Samantha Reis
The efficacy of emotional apeals in asthma campaigns”
ASTHMA Foundation, NSW
$44,868

Prof Sandra Jones and Dr Heidi Gilchrist
“Alcohol sponsorship of the national rugby league: what is its impact on young males”
NSW Health
$19,829

Mr Roy Brown
“Online problem-solving framework to support student investigation of case studies”
University Educational Strategies Development Fund Grant
$11,800

NHMRC/ARC Grants 2010

Both the NHMRC and the ARC have instituted new online grant application and management systems. These can be difficult to negotiate at first, and tend to encounter problems at busy times. It is highly recommended that all staff register with both systems and keep their details up to date, rather than waiting until grant application times. More information can be found at the links below.


All grants are submitted and administered by the Research Services Office (RSO) who must be notified when you intend to apply, and who need to check all grants for compliance. The RSO operates to strict deadlines and timelines which must be adhered to. More information can be found here:
Publications

Book Chapter


Journal Articles

Andrews, K. L. & Jones, S. C. (2009). “We would have got it by now if we were going to get it...” An analysis of asthma awareness and beliefs in older adults. Health Promotion Journal of Australia, 20 (2), 146-150.


Publications

Journal Articles


Conference Publications


Publications

Conference Publications

Phillipson, L. & Jones, S. C. (2009). Factors influencing the non-use of respite services by caregivers of people living with dementia differ according to respite product and by caregiver and care recipient need. 8th National Conference of Emerging Researchers in Ageing (pp. 5-5). Melbourne: Monash University.


Conference Publication Published in Journal


Invited Presentation

(J. Joyce & P Crookes) The Health Roundtable Nursing Workforce Sustainability on Magnetism in Australia: Strategies for Improving Retention Group. Invited presentation Sept 2009:


Current Grant Opportunities

(as on 31st May 2010)

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<th>Closing Date</th>
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| 10th June | NHMRC Development Grants | Development Grants provide funding support to individual researchers, research teams, or a health and medical research company, in partnership with a researcher/s, to undertake research at the early proof-of-principle or pre-seed stage. The Scheme supports the commercial development of a product, process, procedure or service that if applied, would result in improved health care, disease prevention or provide health cost savings. Applications must demonstrate a basic understanding of the process and steps required to move from research to outcomes that can be commercialised, including:
- the process and steps to a market, the nature of the market;
- the milestones and risks of the venture; and
- an understanding of possible means of handling intellectual property connected with the project. The NHMRC Research Grants Management System (RGMS) must be used to submit a Development Grant Application. For documentation on how to apply, and information on RGMS, please see http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/grants/apply/development/index.htm |

| Contact | Sharon Clarke x 5815 clark@uow.edu.au |

IMPORTANT DATES
The UOW timetable can be found at http://www.uow.edu.au/research/rso/UOW009255.html Please note the first draft deadline of Thursday 17 June to allow for review and feedback. Applications are due to the NHMRC on Wednesday 14 July 2010. Intending applicants should advise Sharon Clarke, Grants Officer, at clarke@uow.edu.au