2014: A Celebration of Learning and Teaching
Cover Photo: In the cover photograph, University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) students and staff gather at the yarning circle (Nga Tana Lui Dhar) in the beautiful Buranga garden in the foreground of the new Learning and Teaching Hub (Building E) on Gubbi Gubbi/Kabi Kabi land at USC's Sippy Downs campus.

The photograph depicts USC’s commitment to student-centred learning and teaching spaces and pedagogies, and also represents a tiny subset of the many, varied staff and students who can collaborate, partner and show agency to collectively progress learning and teaching opportunities and outcomes as part of their everyday lives.

Building E, pictured at rear, was custom built to host simulation-based learning as a significant new technology. It includes the Immerse Lab as a space where USC students and staff can use complex visualisations to create new experiences of learning and teaching, and also a tiered floor collaborative learning space designed to facilitate problem-based learning in group situations via BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) and dual projection. As well as the yarning circle, the Buranga Garden Cultural Space includes sculptures of local Aboriginal significance, a variety of native plants with traditional Gubbi Gubbi/Kabi Kabi uses, a billabong and fire pit. It also has an outdoor study space with power source facilities and Wi-Fi access. The garden demonstrates the value the University places on cultural inclusivity and student engagement in higher education.

Pictured from left: Jesse Shearer, Kamilaroi tribe, Bachelor of Business graduate and Marketing Assistant; Cecilia Severin, International student, Sport Science PhD candidate and sessional tutor; Rose Raymond, Yindjibarndi tribe, Bachelor of Social Work student; Tania Stevenson, Learning and Teaching Grants and Awards Officer; Maxine Mitchell, Foundations of University Teaching Course Co-ordinator and Education PhD candidate; and Kylie Readman, Director, C~SALT and Education PhD candidate.

We would like to acknowledge the traditional owners, their knowledges, and elders past and present of the lands upon which USC learning and teaching takes place.
I am delighted to introduce the fourth edition of *A Celebration of Learning and Teaching* which showcases the successes and advancements in learning and teaching at USC over 2014.

USC has a close relationship with the Commonwealth Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT). On the national stage we punch above our weight with regard to recognition through Citations for excellence in teaching and also in competitive funding for research projects that will progress the learning and teaching agenda nationally.

Our involvement in the learning and teaching community means that we are well-informed, able to contribute to higher education sector issues and align ourselves with national and international best practice. Grants and awards give national recognition to excellence and identify role models who inspire others and promote scholarship of learning and teaching. This ripple effect embeds and disseminates good practice to improve learning experiences for all students. The continued dedication of our staff to the scholarship of learning and teaching is an inspiration to staff and students.

USC has been preparing for the demand driven system and is committed to transforming the student experience by providing a variety of student focused spaces for learning. USC now has six study locations, new locations being Gympie, South Bank in the Brisbane CBD, North Lakes, Caboolture, the new Law Clinic at the TAFE Maroochydore campus and existing locations at Noosa and Dilli Village on Fraser Island.

In addition, pioneering infrastructure and technology has continued to expand at existing sites. This year heralded the opening of USC’s Learning and Teaching Hub at Sippy Downs sponsored by the Federal Government’s Structural Adjustment Fund, USC and TAFE Qld. This building was designed for simulation-based learning as a significant new technology adding to the quality of learning and teaching. It includes the Immerse Lab as a space that enables USC students, researchers and partners to use complex visualisations to create new experiences of learning, research, and engagement. The next major building due to open in 2015, also supported by the Commonwealth, contains 3-D modelled visualisation resources second to none that, in combination with staff ingenuity, will provide USC with a world class simulation and visualisation precinct that impacts on student learning.

What sort of changes do these new buildings and facilities represent for learning and teaching at USC and how do they prepare us for the next decade and beyond? These learning spaces have been designed to facilitate 21st century learning. They lay the groundwork to create transformative student experiences and student inspired places for learning. They are but one within a suite of strategies to position USC for the new challenges posed by the changing higher education environment of learning and teaching innovation at an exciting and dynamic time.

My congratulations to all those who appear in this publication and to those staff who strive for excellence in delivering high quality teaching, learning and graduate outcomes daily. I have been at USC for 10 years, initially as DVC and now as VC. In that time we have repeatedly demonstrated that we can compete on the national stage and hold our own—and that is a great outcome for not just the University, but for our students and the region as well.
It gives me great pleasure to reflect on the University’s learning and teaching achievements in 2014. The Australian higher education sector is undergoing big changes and USC is poised to benefit from these changes.

We are well on track to reach our growth target of 12,000 by 2015, having a student population of over 10,000 students in 2014.

The challenge for universities today is to cater for a diverse student cohort and provide engaging learning environments that are student-centred. Sectorally, the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching Research provide tertiary students with an independent mechanism to provide feedback on their educational experience, shaping the national agenda. The recent appointment of a Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) signals the emphasis that USC places on the importance of engaging students and student outcomes. Professor Karen Nelson brings a wealth of experience on student engagement and her leadership is recognised nationally.

There has been a wide range of work conducted by individuals and teams, creating 21st-century student experiences that enhance engagement and success in learning. The causal link between excellent teaching and productive learning outcomes is a given. In this global knowledge era being a discipline expert is not enough, being a teacher is about practising scholarly teaching.

This publication celebrates staff led learning and teaching initiatives. Internal grants support the investigation of topics of strategic importance to USC. Internal recognition via USC Advance Awards demonstrates the achievements and commitment of USC staff. National OLT grants help raise the profile of USC and the calibre of learning and teaching across the whole sector.

Once again, this year three USC staff were awarded prestigious OLT Citations, confirming our contribution to the sector. This continues a tradition of excellence supported by the five star ratings for ‘teaching quality’ and ‘generic skills’ and the ‘overall satisfaction with experience’ graduate ratings in the 2015 Good Universities Guide.

This year also heralded the USC Blended Learning Strategy 2014-2016. Technology can enable access to education and flexibility for the 21st-century student. Through a combination of face-to-face teaching and contemporary technologies, USC creates a vibrant, engaging learning environment for our students. The university ventured into the new world of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) developing a successful small online course on the topic ‘Blended Learning Demystified’. The PebblePad ePortfolio roll-out continues with a number of key programs embedding its use at all year levels. A third focus has been the design and delivery of innovative learning spaces to enable visualisation and simulation to be incorporated into lectures and tutorials.

C-SALT supports the development and dissemination of excellent learning and teaching practice, provides professional development for staff and promotes the scholarship of learning and teaching. This includes a range of well-attended professional development activities for the improvement of learning and teaching at USC, including Foundations of University Teaching course, Sessional development days, Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme and workshops with both internal and national scholars.

The Learning and Teaching Week theme this year ‘Teachers as learners’ emphasised the importance the university places on reflective practice, scholarly teaching and the scholarship of learning and teaching.

Congratulations to all those who have received recognition over the past year. I look forward to working with staff in our ongoing commitment to promote excellence in learning and teaching at USC.
Introduction

From the Director, C~SALT

Kylie Readman

Achieving excellence in learning and teaching is a challenging task that can only be achieved and maintained by a collective focused on a shared goal. At USC we have a large group of colleagues, both academic and academic support staff, who understand that student engagement is the first step in student learning and work together to support students’ achievement of learning goals.

Throughout our organisation there are many examples of staff leading learning, inspiring colleagues and enabling student success. Further, through a range of professional learning experiences, they are able to reflect on, share and be recognised for their practice. Throughout the pages of this publication, there are many examples of staff who have taken the opportunity to work together to achieve a goal, implement an innovation, test out a theory and have encouraged others along the way. These activities contribute to a greater organisational understanding of learning and teaching and position USC to shape our own future regardless of the particular challenges that we encounter. The activities demonstrate that sharing practice, mentoring others and so on, rather than being individually excellent, is what makes the biggest impact organisationally.

C~SALT is in the lucky position of being able to partner with staff from other areas, or support them in many of these activities. Through this partnering process we are able to join various pockets of innovation together to create greater institutional impact. The partnership model extends beyond partnerships with academic staff to include other cost centres. An example that has come to fruition this year is the Learning and Teaching Hub, Building E, where we were able to partner with students, academic staff, Facilities Management (FM), Information Technology Services (ITS) and a range of other areas to introduce a new standard of learning space to USC.

C~SALT is but one of the partners contributing to strategic learning and teaching development within the university. Our staff offer expertise in approaches to learning and teaching, including blended and online, scholarship of learning and teaching and curriculum quality, including a focus on transition pedagogy, authentic assessment and student engagement. We also develop and promote educational technologies and learning systems that make the work of academic colleagues easier. The marks and grades project is an example of a partnership with ITS, Student Administration and faculties that has made processing marks and grades through the interim results module (IRM) easier. Enhancements made to the IRM throughout 2014 will extend the usability to include change of grade, selective importing of grades and change to course coordinator all within the system.

As we move into a new year, change will continue to be the only constant in C~SALT and throughout the University. 2015 will see the establishment of a C~SALT Academic Advisory Committee. The same team that developed the IRM will work to develop a system for program and course design. New minimum standards for flexible delivery will be established. The Expansive Learning Leadership Initiative will welcome a second cohort. Flexible delivery models will be the focus for the Blended Learning strategy. The Engineering Learning Hub will bring new and exciting technology-enhanced learning opportunities for students and staff. The University will begin a comprehensive project to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and perspectives into the curriculum. New programs will begin!

I would like to thank the many colleagues I have worked with this year for their commitment to collaboration and quality, especially the Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching) and C~SALT colleagues—thank you.
In April this year, Professor Karen Nelson commenced as USC’s inaugural Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students). A nationally and internationally acknowledged expert in student engagement and student retention and success, Karen’s remit is to bring together the good work that is currently in place and provide a focus for further collaboration and innovation at USC to support student success.

Professor Nelson’s research focus has been on enabling student learning engagement, the first-year experience and related institutional information and knowledge management practices. Her teaching and learning leadership has been recognised by six learning and teaching awards from her previous institution (QUT), two AAUT (ALTC and OLT) Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning and as the leader of an OLT Award for Programs that Enhance Learning.

The Critical Issue of Student Engagement

My vision is for USC to be a great regional university that leads the sector in student engagement, scholarly practice and related research.

This means that over the next few years we will focus on enhancing the experiences and outcomes of our commencing cohorts. We will be creative and innovative about how we provide access to learning opportunities and deliver courses. Importantly, we will support our staff as USC transitions into a mature regional university. It is my goal that by 2024, we will have maximised student engagement through providing high quality curricula offered in ways that allow contemporary and diverse student cohorts to access quality learning opportunities as a part of their complex and busy lives. We will have capitalised on a culture that has student engagement at the core of all activities. We will have amplified evidence-based and research-led practice by investing in and applying research and scholarship to benefit USC and its students.

Student progression, retention, achievement and strong graduate outcomes (employment or ongoing study) are key measures of the quality of learning and teaching at USC and in the Australian higher education system. These measures reflect USC’s commitment to its strategic priorities: to enable access to the USC experience; deliver high quality teaching, learning and graduate outcomes; and develop USC for a sustainable future.

Theoretical and empirical research shows that a variety of factors contribute to retention. These factors combine and manifest differently for each individual student.

The influence they exert on student attrition/retention is contextual, complex and nuanced. Nationally and at USC, the retention rate for commencing students is considerably lower than the rate for continuing students. Many of the students that leave, do so in the first few weeks of their first semester (before the first census date) and are followed by another large group who leave during their first year at university.

Retention is a consequential outcome of the level or state of student engagement. For individual students, the state of engagement is both transient and normative. Engaged students are more likely to have successful first year experiences (FYE) and a successful FYE is critical for engagement. Engagement is believed to have a compensatory effect for students who come from underserved backgrounds. Furthermore, engaged learning promotes the development of highly desirable graduate attributes such as problem solving, critical thinking, communication, self-directed learning and collaborative working.

Some of the factors that impact on students’ abilities to engage are beyond our control, and these factors are inherent within the diversity of contemporary student cohorts. These factors include cultural, social and economic backgrounds, students’ previous educational experiences as well as those of their immediate family. More immediate issues, such as pressure to work, personal finances and family commitments will influence students’ decisions to remain engaged at university.

However, we do have control over the one thing that almost all students have in common, and that is they come to our institutions to learn. We design and manage their learning environments and we know what students need to do to be successful. To improve retention at USC we will focus our efforts on creating environments that minimise barriers to engagement and enable access to a quality university learning opportunity for all our students. I believe these environments foster a sense of belonging and have three key features: well-designed courses and programs, good teaching, and timely proactive access to life and learning support.

I look forward to working with USC staff and students as together we create a uniquely USC learning environment and a culture in which all students are given the best possible opportunity to rise and shine.

Curriculum that engages students in learning

- Course and program, design, development and improvement
- First year experiences
- Timely access to support
- Sense of belonging
- Support for learning
- Access, equity and diversity

From the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students)

Professor Karen Nelson
Faculty of Science, Health, Education and Engineering (FoSHEE)

FoSHEE provides diverse ways for students to engage and learn. Looking beyond the classroom, FoSHEE students can go to Fraser Island to study a variety of environments and creatures and combine this experience with learning in courses such as “statistics with teeth”; collaborate to experience immersive, simulated, health care interactions where they learn complex communication and decision making processes as well as hone clinical skills; create, manipulate and share images using virtual microscopy to increase their understanding of cells and their functions; engage with clients from our community who receive care in our on campus clinics in occupational therapy, nutrition and dietetics, sport and exercise science, antenatal maternity care, and wound care to name a few. The list goes on...

In collaboration with many areas of the university, FoSHEE staff have been working hard to develop, revitalise, prepare and deliver quality curriculum, and engage students in authentic learning to meet their graduate capabilities. This strengthens our capacity to support student engagement through innovative and flexible delivery. New programs are on offer including animal ecology, health and community care management, health sciences with a range of variants including health promotion, applied environmental health, epidemiology and public health. There will be more to come.

FoSHEE staff have been recognised within the university for their innovative and quality contributions to higher education teaching. Dr Michael Carey was awarded a prestigious Commonwealth Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) Citation for his outstanding contribution to student learning. An OLT grant was awarded to Dr Susan Simon and team, Associate Professor Michael Christie and Dr Wayne Graham (School of Business, Faculty of Arts and Business). Innovation and scholarship in teaching practice and the development of learning materials has been supported in the internal Learning and Teaching Grants Scheme grants. These have been awarded to Dr Helen Fairweather. In addition, Associate Professor Michael Christie, Ms Sam Edwards, Dr Rebecca Mellifont and Dr Rebecca Donkin also received grants in round two 2013 that have been implemented this year.

Hot off the press are the recipients for this year’s Advance Awards, including Dr Terry Lucke, Dr Michele Verdonck, Dr Kieran Broome and Dr Ton Stewart. In addition, Kelly Chambers and Marguerite Westacott from TPP, and Suzy O’Brien and Kristine Cox from Nursing and Midwifery clinical learning and technical support, were noted with Encouragement Awards. All deserve hearty congratulations.

Behind the scenes and also deserving of acknowledgement and gratitude are the people who keep this diverse faculty group and its educational business in order and moving forward. They are the faculty administrative and professional staff teams in student support and program advice, learning and teaching academic support, assessment, grades support, timetabling support, workplace learning support, and learning systems and e-learning management and support.
In 2014, the Faculty of Arts and Business (FAB) continued its commitment to excellence in learning and teaching. The faculty has been actively involved in providing courses from several programs across the existing and new learning centres, from Noosa and Gympie in the North down to South Bank, Brisbane.

The programs have provided the opportunity for students to undertake university study without having to travel long distances and have resulted in an increase in the number of young and mature age students being attracted to study at USC.

Program reviews are a key part of the mechanism for ensuring the level of excellence is maintained in existing programs. The Business, Property, Psychology and Planning programs underwent program reviews during the year. From this, changes will be implemented in line with the various recommendations and feedback. As a result of last year’s program reviews, the Bachelor of Arts program and the Bachelor of Legal and Justice Studies in particular have undergone major regeneration. The Bachelor of Legal and Justice Studies has now become the Bachelor of Criminology and Justice. Also, a series of new programs were created and processed during the year – Bachelor of Psychology Honours; Graduate Diploma of Psychology; Master of Professional Psychology; Bachelor of Design and Marketing; Master of International Development; Bachelor of Business (Supply Chain Management); Diploma of Social Science; Diploma of Business; Diploma of Communications; and Diploma of General Studies.

The FAB Student Engagement and Retention Project, which started in 2012, continues to evolve. The faculty-wide intervention strategy continues to focus primarily on first-year students. This year saw the development of first-year co-ordinator groups in the faculty with emphasis on having a unified approach to interventions. Of particular note in 2014 was the introduction of a faculty funded specified tutor role to implement interventions within each first-year course.

This year also saw COR109 become the single core course for the entire university. This offers a challenge to provide a learning experience that will meet the needs of a diverse cohort and at the same time retain the high level of excellence in learning and teaching.

The FAB Learning and Teaching Seminar series continued success as a valuable conduit for the scholarship of learning and teaching. It provided opportunities for showcasing new and innovative learning and teaching approaches from a wide community of academics. It served as a community of practice forum bringing people from diverse backgrounds together with one of the seminars being incorporated into the university’s Learning and Teaching Week.

This year, FAB celebrated the Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) Citation success of Dr Geoff Lovell from the School of Social Science. Congratulations also to Dr Wayne Graham who partnered with Dr Sue Simon and Dr Michael Christie in winning an OLT grant, and to Dr Leone Cameron-Tucker with Oscar Imaz-Mairal from the School of Business for completing their OLT Extension grant project. Five FAB staff, Dr Marcus Bussey, Ms Michelle Joubert, Dr Geoff Lovell, Dr Jo Loth and Dr Paul Williams were also duly recognised with USC learning and teaching Advance Awards. Internal grants for scholarship of teaching projects were awarded to the School of Social Science’s Dr Athena Lathouras in partnership with Ms Carey Shaw and Ms Carol Smith from the School of Education.

Of further note, there were 13 refereed journal papers published in the field of education by members of the faculty in 2014. These awards and grants along with the publications are testimony to the exceptional standard of learning and teaching aspired to within the faculty. Consequently, 2014 has been a year of reflection leading to an evolving and dynamic basis for continued development of the commitment to excellence in learning and teaching positioning the faculty in readiness for the future.
2014 OLT Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning

USC held its own as a leader in the competitive 2014 national learning and teaching arena with three staff duly recognised in the Commonwealth Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning program. OLT Citations recognise and reward the diverse contributions made by individuals and teams to the quality of student learning in Australian higher education and provide an opportunity for distinctive institutional missions, values and priorities in learning and teaching to be acknowledged.

The three USC staff members recognised for their exceptional contributions to student learning in 2014 are:

- **Dr Michael Carey**
  For excellence in developing curricula, resources and services that improve the English language skills and knowledge of pre-service teachers, colleagues and the wider student cohort.

  In his ‘flipped classroom’ for pre-service education students, Michael Carey blends online and cooperative learning, using authentic, experiential English language resources to put his students in the shoes of the school students they will eventually teach. His curriculum is informed by research and his scholarly contributions include consultancies with international publishers of educational resources. Michael is also the highly respected ‘go-to guy’ for colleagues requiring assistance with any aspect of language in the academic context.

- **Ms Caroline Cottman**
  For academic development activities that create ‘ripples on the pond’ by inspiring and motivating scholarly teaching, fostering collaboration and promoting reflection and active, learner-centred experiences.

  Caroline Cottman is passionate about the practice of scholarly teaching. Throughout her distinguished career as instructional designer, learning and teaching consultant, and academic developer she has created a ripple effect by inspiring academic colleagues to collaborate, reflect on their practice and adopt active learning principles that enhance the student experience. Her influence at all levels of higher education act and interact to promote high-quality, evidence-based teaching.

- **Dr Geoff Lovell**
  For 22 years of excellence in inspiring and motivating psychology and sports science students to actively engage in learning through enthusiastic, student-centered teaching practice.

  Geoff Lovell’s teaching credo is ‘Enthusiasm is Everything!’ Through his passionate, enthusiastic and theoretically grounded teaching practice, Geoff actively engages students in the learning process. He has an extensive repertoire of real-world examples, data, case studies and stories drawn from his extensive experience in research, applied sports psychology and coaching at the elite level with which he enlivens his classes and motivates his students to succeed in both their studies and professional lives.
At the end of 2013, Associate Professor Jennifer Rowe and Ms Irene Visser each received a prestigious Vice-Chancellor and Presidents Medal for Excellence in Learning and Teaching.

Associate Professor in Nursing and Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) Faculty of Science, Health, Education and Engineering, Dr Jennifer Rowe, was awarded for her exemplary practice in learning and teaching and for her drive to enhance student outcomes within the University and beyond. Her insight into learning and teaching was recognised as progressive, engaging and dynamic. She actively encourages collaboration and supports innovation in program and course design.

Jennifer’s academic leadership in teaching has had a broad impact within the University. Through mentoring several staff, she has fostered in others a deep appreciation of effective learning and teaching practices and how they influence student engagement and success.

Jennifer is engaged in University-wide initiatives, such as the Expansive Learning Leadership Initiative (ELLI). Her collaborative approach has advanced the quality of learning, teaching and graduate outcomes at USC.

Ms Irene Visser, Faculty of Arts and Business, has taught at USC as a sessional staff member in the Faculty of Arts and Business since 2002 and, during that time, has demonstrated sustained dedication to her students.

Irene is an enthusiastic and passionate educator who is committed to quality teaching practice and enhancing students’ learning experiences and success. She has sustained a high level of motivation, professionalism and commitment over a substantial period of time at USC.

Irene is regularly involved in strategies to improve student retention, address first year attrition and enhance students’ first year experience. She lectures and tutors across a range of art, design and communication courses, demonstrating her capacity for multidisciplinary practice. She is also able to exploit her industry experience and expertise to influence students’ successful transition to professional practice. Through her academic contributions, Irene has advanced the quality of learning, teaching and graduate outcomes at USC.
2014 USC Advance Awards

USC’s Advance Awards advance what is important to learning and teaching at USC. They recognise and reward the breadth of contributions and diverse ways in which our staff contribute to the USC experience as part of their everyday lives. Three different award categories recognise commitment in different but equally important areas. Collectively the people awarded advance a rich USC experience. Another important purpose of the awards is to recognise leaders in learning and teaching and to support and advance a culture where leadership is distributed across the breadth of learning and teaching via a personal commitment to the USC experience by USC staff.

The recipients of the 2014 USC Advance Awards for Learning and Teaching are:

Advancing Quality Teaching

Dr Kieran Broome, School of Health and Sport Science

What I did to enhance quality teaching at USC

Having inherited a paediatric occupational therapy course, an area outside of his usual sphere of expertise, Kieran had the opportunity to consciously reinvent aspects of both his teaching and the course itself. Some highlights included grounding himself in contemporary occupational therapy paediatric practice, integrating in-course fieldwork with innovative assessment and teaching, and flipping the classroom. Student grades improved by around 10%, attendance improved, and both students and the industry partner commented on the success of these changes. Whilst challenging, a legacy of enhanced learning outcomes, engagement in learning activities and greater industry relevance made the investment well worth the effort.

Dr Marcus Bussey, School of Social Sciences

Developing a ‘Whole of Student’ approach to the Teaching of World History

A quality learning experience needs to engage the students’ intellectual, emotional and physical beings. World History invites students to apply their imaginations within a scholarly context to develop commitment to inclusive histories and interdisciplinary practice. Students are drawn into the world historical domain via the DNA testing of three of their peers. The participating students are drawn from ‘the hat’.

They are tested early in the course, and the results shared with the class towards its end. This creates a sense of drama but also really underpins the course’s commitment to Global Citizenship.

The findings are 1. Always a surprise, and 2. Emphasise how similar our genetic profiles are. Students connect themes of the course to their own lives in ways that would be unavailable to them in a more formal learning context.

Ms Michelle Joubert, School of Business

Advancing Quality Teaching—Keeping it Simple and Supportive

Michelle’s contribution as a teacher comes from a determination to remain firmly in touch with the student perspective. She is a firm believer in the importance of heart-centred motivation and persistence over the long term. Her teaching is peppered with subject knowledge, real life examples, humour and an openness that is embraced by students.

One particular challenge for her students is understanding the complex process of accounting consolidations, which ultimately form the bulk of their final assessment. Michelle creates an environment of trust in which students and teacher embark on a committed journey to understanding.

It requires diligence and attention to detail, but students emerge with a tremendous sense of achievement and strengthened connections as they move forward in their studies.

Dr Geoff Lovell, School of Social Sciences

‘Enthusiasm is Everything!’

Geoff truly enjoys teaching and works hard to share his passion for learning with his students. His goal is motivating and engaging students, and teaching philosophy is ‘Enthusiasm is Everything!’. He purposely adopts a teaching style that is enthusiastic, vibrant, and dynamic.

It is heavily focused on bringing the content to life through use real-world examples, data, case studies, and stories. The nexus between his research, applied sports psychology, and coaching, combined with his teaching, enlivens his classes and engages students. Geoff’s outstanding contribution to student learning was also recognised in 2014 by a national OLT Citation.

Dr Tony Stewart, Genealogy Research Centre

Re-empowering students to become lifelong learners

We are all born to be lifelong learners. But somewhere along the way, students can lose their inquisitive and questioning nature. What educators need to do is change this mindset and re-empower students. To do this, Tony employs an alternative teaching method that draws students in to real world issues that will be found throughout their career. It is a student-centred pedagogical approach in which students consider what they want to learn, selectively focus on topics, and skill pitfalls that they need improvement. Tony’s approach to education is one that creates a student that has a thirst for knowledge and has the ability to learn independently: qualities of a lifelong learner.
Advancing the Blended Learning Environment

Dr Terry Lucke, School of Science and Engineering

A Flipping Good Way to Learn!

Terry introduced Flipped Learning into his classes using a combination of online eLectures and classroom response systems. This has been a resounding success and students have embraced this effective new learning and teaching method. Terry’s approach encourages students to deeply engage with their learning and motivates them to think outside the box. It also actively encourages student collaboration and peer learning.

Terry continually reflects on and improves his teaching practice. This ensures that his students are equipped with the best resources and opportunities to maximise their full potential and to attain their educational goals. Terry’s commitment to high-quality teaching and blended learning is demonstrated through excellent student learning outcomes.

Dr Michele Verdonck, School of Health and Sports Sciences

My Blended Learning Gallery

Michele has made a distinctive contribution to advancing the blended learning environment at USC. In one of the inaugural classes delivered in classroom EG.18, a technology-enhanced tiered learning space, Michele engaged students in active learning. Her teaching philosophy centres on establishing a community of enquiry with a focus on pedagogy before technology. Michele’s ‘normal classroom’ is characterised by students working in small groups with access to computers.

The classroom integrates blended learning tools and strategies including YouTube videos, Prezi presentations, PowerPoint eLectures, and ‘flipping’ the classroom. These technological tools complement traditional teaching approaches such as practical skills sessions which involve moving away from desks.

Mr Kelly Chambers and Ms Marguerite Westacott, School of Science and Engineering—Encouragement Award

Student Voices from the SoapBox

In the Tertiary Preparation Pathways program (TPP102—Computer Literacy), Kelly and Marguerite introduced a series of lectures incorporating blended learning and creative pedagogy, designed to engage students with the use of modern educational technologies. This empowered the student voice, which in turn influenced the lecturers to produce a dynamic series of lectures in a cycle of feedback and response.

Advancing the Student Experience

Mr Scott Dukeson, Information Technology Services

Enhancing Learning Spaces

USC has recently made a number of major investments in new technology to enhance learning environments and improve the student experience. Scott’s work has been focused on working with key stakeholders and a variety of disciplines in developing learning environments that enhance blended learning.

These environments include a collaborative Tiered Learning Space (TLS), nursing simulation suites and USC’s first visualisation space. These enable USC to meet its strategic priorities of enhancing the student experience and supporting diverse learning and teaching styles.

These learning spaces have enhanced USC’s reputation amongst other universities as well as the wider Sunshine Coast community. Feedback from staff and students on these environments has been very positive.

The Client Services team, Student Administration

Tahnee Leman, Anna Hodkinson, Bonnie Lindsay, Cathy-Anne Jones, Christine Pozzi, Dean Roelink, Melissa Bovey, Nathan Dodd, Philip Papas, Rita Leon, Beth Standing

The Client Services team was nominated on the basis of ‘their great customer service delivery’. The Client Services team consists of staff drawn from the admissions, enrolments and student finance areas. Each person contributes on average one day per week.

These staff are supported by an excellent group of students@work, current USC students trained to provide peer-to-peer support and advice.

Based upon student and staff feedback the Client Services team developed a Client Services Model which has six key categories: (1) Positive working environment, (2) Expectations and consistency, (3) Be a welcoming presence, (4) Present a professional image, (5) Setting up staff for success, and (6) Respecting cultural diversity.
Developed to encourage and retain students in Creative Writing, it links students to the professional world and has resulted in a cohesive and dynamic community of productive writers.

Mrs Suzy O’Brien and Mrs Kristine Cox, School of Nursing and Midwifery—Encouragement Award
Suzy and Kristine work closely with faculty to create authentic learning environments replicating hospital settings. Using their expertise, they assist faculty in other programmes at USC engaging in simulation, create new teaching tools, run school workshop and careers days, and participate in recruitment. Nationally they have raised USC’s profile presenting research to promote safe teaching environments at national conferences.

The extra-curricular Drama performances of Hamlet and Psyched in 2014, and a physical theatre performance for Learning and Teaching Week (September 2013), advances of the student experience.

One of the nominations commented that the performances ‘compliment student learning whilst providing a context for the broader community to experience what USC students are producing’.

Mrs Angeline Medland, USC Gympie
As the Administration Officer for USC Gympie, Angeline has adopted and developed a range of processes and support services to provide Gympie students with access to a ‘One Stop Shop’ for information, referral, advice and advocacy. Working closely with the Manager of USC Gympie, she leads a small administration team focused on providing the best possible student experience.

Providing support to students from initial enquiry all the way through their degree program as required, she is actively involved in creating a better environment for students with the aim of ultimately creating a ‘Sticky Campus’ as well as organising USC student events.

Dr Joanne Loth, School of Communication
Performance Enhancement
Jo Loth began teaching the new Drama program in 2013. At this time, the only Drama course with a public performance outcome was to be in the third year of the program (2015). In response to this situation, Jo decided to stage extra-curricular public performances to:
• provide industry relevant experience
• develop a vibrant student community and culture
• encourage and support artistic expression and communication
• develop students’ passion.

Dr Paul Williams, School of Communication
Paul delivers an exceptional quality of supervision to his Higher Degree by Research students. In late 2013, he was instrumental in facilitating an undergraduate writers’ community, USC Inklings, which now has around 100 members and meets regularly for workshops, provides peer support, and organises social events. In January 2014, Paul (along with Jo Loth, Drama) successfully advocated for a demountable building for creative writing and drama students as a community hub. This has enhanced the learning experience greatly for these students.

He was also instrumental in setting up Storyboard, a showcase of student talent online and student resources.

2013 Advance Award winners

Advancing Quality Teaching
Ms Phyllis Araneo, School of Science and Engineering
Ms Sam Edwards, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Adjunct Professor David Hollinsworth, School of Social Sciences
Mrs Colleen Kneale, School of Health and Sport Sciences
Mr Daniel Mellifont, School of Health and Sport Sciences
Dr Greg Nash, School of Communication
Dr Anna Potter, School of Communication
Dr Janet Wyvill, School of Education

Advancing the Blended Learning Environment
Ms Anita Hamilton, School of Health and Sport Sciences
Mr John Hunt, School of Education

Advancing the Student Experience
Academic Skills team, Student Life and Learning: Mr Peter Cahill, Ms Audrey Dickson, Mr David Duncan, Ms Johanna Einfalt, Mr Brian Higgins, Mr Daniel Meloncelli, Ms Irene O’Leary, Ms Margot Reeh, Ms Donna Thompson, Ms Faye Thompson, Ms Gaby Ziegan
Reflections on awards worth winning

2013 OLT Citation recipient
—Dr Terry Lucke, School of Science and Engineering

For bringing engineering to life for my students through personal passion, enthusiasm and engaging curricula based on experiential learning.

I was fortunate to receive an OLT Citation in 2013 based on my teaching in the engineering program at USC. As it happens, I am writing this while sitting in Amsterdam. With the $10,000 prize money I received for my Citation, I am undertaking a European teaching study tour to look at a new teaching method for engineering students.

As many of those who have traveled the path would attest, applying for an OLT Citation is a difficult experience that should not be entered into lightly. However, on the plus side, winning a Citation is extremely rewarding and satisfying personally. My Citation was based on my passion for introducing student-centred and experiential learning into the engineering curriculum at USC and it was nice to have that passion recognised on the national stage.

One of the most difficult things I found was that I was the one who had to tell everyone else how good I am at teaching. Although I understood the process and knew that nothing would happen if I didn’t apply, I sometimes felt uncomfortable about having to blow my own trumpet. However, I also realised that there are many good teachers, particularly at USC, and that is just how the game is played.

One piece of advice to anyone applying for an OLT award is to listen to any advice the Grants and Awards team in C-SALT provide. They are very experienced and talented in the whole OLT application process and their advice is extremely valuable. Also, ask as many people as you can find to read your application and give you feedback.

Having said that, going through the application process is a very valuable and informative experience and a really great way to reflect on your teaching practice. The process forces you to clearly describe and articulate your teaching methods and it provides a valuable resource which can be used for many other purposes. Even if you don’t manage to get one of the awards, you will have learnt a lot about yourself and your teaching, and it will definitely not be a wasted effort.

So, the bottom line from me is: if you decide to apply for one of these awards, be prepared to put in many, many hours of work, expect to be knocked back at least once (but probably twice), and keep persevering until you crack it. It will be worth it in the end. Good luck!

2013 OLT Citation recipient
—Dr Uwe Terton, School of Communication

For designing and delivering innovative, student-focussed curricula that prepare and enable students to succeed in the digital design industry.

In 2013 I was awarded an OLT Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning.

This came after teaching digital design curricula at USC for over a decade. I never thought I would have considered applying for an OLT Citation or any other award related to my work or achievements. I guess this is because of my upbringing in Germany, where it is not very common to put yourself in the limelight.

So it took a lot of encouragement to start the thinking process: ‘Why should I go through the tedious process of writing about myself to an unknown panel that would decide on my qualifications as a teacher?’ A recommendation letter from DVC Professor Birgit Lohmann pushed me over the edge and I gave in, sat down and started to think and reflect about what I was doing.

It was this process that made me realise how important it actually is to reflect critically on curricula development and teaching strategies. After much drafting and reiteration, I finally submitted my application.

Even if I had not been successful, preparing the nomination was still a very worthwhile process. It helped me to understand further what is involved in designing curricula that engage, motivate and support students in attaining an industry-relevant foundation in digital design practice.

Being awarded $10,000 provided me with the opportunity to travel to the 6th International Conference on Computer Supported Education. I was very excited to go and learn more about new educational environments, best practices and case studies on innovative technology-based learning strategies as well as institutional policies on computer supported education. Since returning I have been able to disseminate some of the newly gained knowledge to my colleagues and apply new strategies to curricula design and program development.

The opportunity my Citation provided to further my professional development and to identify new ways of using blended learning strategies is benefiting the University and most importantly my students—for that I am very proud.
Inaugural 2013 Advance Award recipient for Quality Teaching
—Adjunct Professor David Hollinsworth, School of Social Sciences

Learning to teach emotionally and politically challenging content.
I was delighted to receive a 2013 Advance Award for Quality Teaching, which I see as an endorsement of my 35 years of teaching emotionally and politically challenging content. I received my award for my work at USC where I currently teach undergraduate and postgraduate social science courses in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Cultural Diversity and Anti-racism within a ‘collaborative social justice framework’. The framework is underpinned by a teaching and learning contract that stresses student motivation and collaborative learning, combined with a teaching style that is built on conversational facilitation and dynamic, interactive experiences that help to realise transformational outcomes in students.

The courses I teach address controversial and very challenging issues around personal, group and national identity that require students to confront their previously held assumptions, values and ways of knowing. For example, students are usually more comfortable learning about Aboriginal disadvantages and how ‘we’ can ‘help’ them, than about how our unearned advantages have depended on their dispossession and oppression. Teaching such content, especially in compulsory courses, requires skill and flexible strategies as much as passion for social justice. Morgan (2012) terms this sort of education “troublesome knowledge” and notes that students often resist such “unsettling” learning, especially in compulsory courses for professional programs. The intense and political nature of the content and the debates and often partisan and passionate nature of the literature are quite challenging for students used to more passive ways of learning. In this challenging learning environment, the primary teaching and learning need is for students to collectively transform their own positions about the content. My approach requires me to instil in students their need to unpack their assumptions and values in a culturally safe and supportive environment.

I have used my own experiences and those of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal colleagues, along with SETAC feedback, informal conversations and specific research projects to explore student resistance and transformation around these learning and teaching questions. By using a conversational style of lecture delivery and tutorial facilitation, (most) students become committed to undertake sometimes painful and always challenging transformational learning. Such responses are consistent with studies on the importance of academic emotions in effective student centred learning.

Inaugural 2013 Advance Award recipient for Quality Teaching
– Mr Daniel Mellifont, School of Health and Sport Sciences

Students engaging in clinical learning often feel threatened (Rose & Best, 2009) and experience “bewilderment” (Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992). This response is entirely valid, particularly in a challenging field such as sports medicine. Hence, my approach to learning and teaching seeks to focus on the student, provide a safe environment for learning, and promote engagement through respect, authenticity, collaboration and innovation.

The real value of a safe learning environment is in empowering students to explore and make mistakes where necessary in order to develop reasoning skills for professional practice and lifelong learning. Within this safe environment, I demonstrate to students my engagement with critically reflective practice by actively seeking feedback and explicitly describing my reasoning for change.

The immediate care of a patient spans a mind boggling array of possible presentations. In working with paramedics at USC we identified a dovetailing of the relative strengths and weakness of Paramedicine and Sports Medicine Australia’s (SMA) principles for management. Through ongoing collaboration we developed an innovative clinical care template, the Systems Approach Tool ©, that combines the best of both sports medicine and paramedics. This non-linear flow chart prioritises and integrates paramedics’ dynamic approach to assessing systemic function with sports medicine’s structured approach to assessment of injury.

Our investigation into the impact of the Systems Approach integrated with a combined focus on critical reflection and case-based learning (Mellifont, Barr and Dunn, 2014) indicated that:

• This learning and teaching practice “…is strongly associated with improved student confidence in engaging in emergency primary health care scenarios” and that,
• Students agree or strongly agree that use of the Systems Approach helps them to build their capacity to engage in key components of first responder practice.

I was delighted to receive an Advance Award recognising our work in this area in 2013. 2015 offers opportunities to further develop the systems approach tool using a blended learning approach.

Students agree or strongly agree that use of the Systems Approach...

The immediate care of a patient spans a mind boggling array of possible presentations. In working with paramedics at USC we identified a dovetailing of the relative strengths and weakness of Paramedicine and Sports Medicine Australia’s (SMA) principles for management. Through ongoing collaboration we developed an innovative clinical care template, the Systems Approach Tool ©, that combines the best of both sports medicine and paramedics. This non-linear flow chart prioritises and integrates paramedics’ dynamic approach to assessing systemic function with sports medicine’s structured approach to assessment of injury.

Our investigation into the impact of the Systems Approach integrated with a combined focus on critical reflection and case-based learning (Mellifont, Barr and Dunn, 2014) indicated that:

• This learning and teaching practice “…is strongly associated with improved student confidence in engaging in emergency primary health care scenarios” and that,
• Students agree or strongly agree that use of the Systems Approach helps them to build their capacity to engage in key components of first responder practice.

I was delighted to receive an Advance Award recognising our work in this area in 2013. 2015 offers opportunities to further develop the systems approach tool using a blended learning approach.
OLT Grant Scheme

Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) grants provide funding for academics and professional staff to investigate, discover, develop and implement innovations in learning and teaching to promote systemic change in the national higher education sector. The grants play an important role in providing esteem for learning and teaching scholarship and practice.

USC led projects funded in 2014 were:

OLT Seed Project

The PIVOTAL Leadership Model: Innovative curriculum design and enhanced postgraduate learning experiences for school leaders

PROJECT TEAM: Dr Sue Simon, Associate Professor Michael Christie, Dr Wayne Graham, Ms Kairen Call from University of the Sunshine Coast; Associate Professor Karen Noble and Associate Professor Jane Summers, University of Southern Queensland (USQ)

The effective application of leadership theory, improvement in leadership performance within complex learning communities and capacity to respond to changing situations are important anticipated outcomes of this project. The findings will make a unique contribution to the design of innovative leadership programs at national and international level, through an initial investigation of the needs of school leaders undertaking postgraduate study in particular regional settings. The project will inform future direction of postgraduate leadership studies, within both Education and Business disciplines and enhance communication with and develop partnerships between higher education institutions and external education colleagues, employers, schools and associations.

Project deliverables include the PIVOTAL (Partnerships, Innovation and Vitality—Opportunities for Thriving Academic Leadership) Model and accompanying set of guidelines for effective leadership curriculum design, which will be used at USC and USQ initially and then extended to other universities and education providers. USC and USQ share a vision to be regionally relevant and both institutions anticipate that innovative developments to leadership courses in specific geographical settings will be increasingly aligned to the needs of practising school leaders. This improvement in study relevance will ultimately be of benefit also to schools, teachers and, most importantly, the students in those school communities.

Reference Groups in the Sunshine Coast region and the Toowoomba region comprising local school principals have highlighted current professional learning needs for undertaking leadership roles in their schools and their contributions have informed the design of focus group discussions with both past and current students of post-graduate leadership courses. These outcomes, in turn, will inform the re-design of leadership courses in both discipline areas in both universities to be offered in Semester One 2015. Subsequent feedback from students undertaking the re-designed courses next year will assist in evaluation of the research outcomes and application, and in future development of the leadership courses in both institutions.

PHOTO: A Reference Group of local Sunshine Coast School Principals held at USC in October facilitated by Dr Sue Simon and Dr Wayne Graham launched the OLT-funded research focus on School Leadership postgraduate study.
OLT Extension Grant

Assessing student engagement, success and retention in regional higher education institutions

PROJECT TEAM: University of the Sunshine Coast—Professor Karen Nelson (lead), Ms Kylie Readman, Dr Eva-Marie Seeto, Associate Professor Jennifer Rowe, Dr Greg Laing; Queensland University of Technology—Mr Ian Stoodley, Ms Tracy Creagh; James Cook University—Professor Angela Hill

In 2012-2013 the OLT commissioned the project Establishing a framework for transforming student engagement, success and retention in higher education institutions.

The project was led by Professor Karen Nelson whilst at Queensland University of Technology, with Griffith University and the University of Queensland participating as team members. This original project developed and provided a holistic framework consisting of a series of sequential and increasingly sophisticated stages to allow higher education institutions to manage and improve their student engagement and retention strategies/programs. The framework and main project deliverable was a Maturity Model (MM) for Student Engagement, Success and Retention (SESR-MM), with case study exemplars. The project involved three Australian Higher Education Institutions, with acknowledged experience and reputations in SESR activities, working cooperatively to develop and trial the project deliverables.

The SESR-MM has the potential to positively transform the holistic—academic, social and personal—engagement experiences of students in Australian universities by providing the sector with a mechanism for benchmarking and improving programs designed to enhance student experience.

This extension grant makes a distinctive contribution by creating a baseline SESR-MM for one regional university, the University of the Sunshine Coast, while simultaneously mentoring another regional university, James Cook University, to apply the framework to develop a JCU baseline SESR-MM. The extension project will produce three deliverables, consisting of two new baseline Institutional SESR Maturity Models, which will be disseminated in the form of Institutional Case Studies, and a ‘how-to’ guide that other institutions can use to conduct baseline SESR-MM assessments.

USC was successful in partnering on the following OLT grant projects:

Gathering valid data for quality enhancement: assessing, reviewing, benchmarking and closing the loop for assurance of learning in regional universities

PROJECT TEAM: Associate Professor Romy Lawson, University of Wollongong (lead) Dr Margarietha Scheepers, School of Business USC.

In this project USC will partner with the University of Wollongong to improve the quality of Business and Management Programs in regional universities through: professional development to support valid data collection and implementation of Assurance of Learning; benchmarking and continuous improvement; and building networks and relationships to share ‘best’ practice and create case study exemplars.

The project extends the outcomes of OLT project Hunters and Gatherers: Strategies for Curriculum Mapping and Data Collection for Assuring Learning led by Associate Professor Romy Lawson.

The project activities will:
• improve the current collection of quantitative and qualitative measures of learning outcomes compared against standards;
• improve the quality of student performance and learning;
• enhance the professional development of academic staff and build relationships between regional universities;
• collect best practice case studies of current practice in regional universities; and
• encourage scholarly reflection on the change management and benchmarking process in this setting.

Adapting and extending PATS—Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme: variations on purpose, people and process

PROJECT TEAM: Dr Jo-Anne Kelder, University of Tasmania (lead) with Ms Caroline Cottman, USC; Swinburne University, University of Newcastle and Victoria University

The aim of the project is to adapt the Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme (PATS) for varying contexts, needs and desired outcomes. Partner institutions will document and evaluate the adaptations of PATS designed for their specific contexts along three dimensions:
• Variations in PURPOSE
• Variations in PEOPLE
• Variations in PROCESS

Intended outcomes will be a Guide to implementing PATS, implementation framework and case study examples outlining the various contexts and methods for adapting the Scheme.
Outcomes from USC led projects funded in 2013

Developing a Regional Community of Practice for Transformative Climate Change Education

PROJECT TEAM: Dr Dana Thomsen, Dr Noni Keys, University of the Sunshine Coast (lead); Dr Aidan Davison and Dr Emma Pharo and Ms Kristin Warr, University of Tasmania

Sustainability program renewal, materials for life-long learning and the foundation of an interdisciplinary community of practice for teaching sustainability and climate change are some of the tangible outcomes from a one-year extension grant funded in May 2013 by the Australian Government Office of Learning and Teaching. Awarded to Dr Dana Thomsen and Dr Noni Keys for ‘Developing a Regional Community of Practice for Transformative Climate Change Education’, the project became known as SCOPE (Sustainability Community of Practice for Transformative Education) and was supported by project officer, Dr Lila Singh-Peterson.

Building on the learnings from an original OLT grant ‘Demonstrating Distributed Leadership Through Cross-Disciplinary Peer Networks: Responding to Climate Change Complexity’ (conducted by a consortium led by the University of Tasmania), a major aim of SCOPE was to facilitate dialogue between educators, students and employers in sustainability related fields throughout the Sunshine Coast region. Two regional workshops, hosted at the University of the Sunshine Coast, strengthened links between education providers and employers to improve graduate outcomes. A survey of educators and employers in the sustainability field, further identified expectations of sustainability and climate change courses and graduates, and the needs of employers.

These findings resulted in new and revised courses in Foundations, Measuring, Communicating, Problem Solving & Applying Sustainability to target professional needs. The team also developed a library of short sustainability films for use in lectures, tutorials or through self-access available from the USC website and also the national learning and teaching for sustainability website.

SCOPE has continued with the support of C-SALT who have facilitated a series of informal morning teas and the development of an online organisation to encourage the sharing and development of teaching and learning innovations amongst educators from diverse disciplines at USC. Dana and Noni welcome all those interested in teaching and learning for sustainability to attend a morning tea or to join the online organization, as they note ‘the highlight of the community of practice has been the opportunity to discuss challenges and to be inspired and supported by peers, practitioners and students alike’.

Emerging Academic Leaders Project enters a second phase

PROJECT TEAM: Ms Kylie Readman, Associate Professor Jennifer Rowe, Dr Maria Raciti, Mr Mark Nugent, Ms Jenny Nemeth

In 2013, the OLT funded a grant project to engage emergent academic leaders in a series of Professional Learning Conversations with University executive leaders and one another. These were based on the five principles for action explored in the ‘Handbook For Executive Leadership Of Learning And Teaching In Higher Education’ (McInnis, Ramsden and Maconachie, 2012). The 21 participants from across the schools have engaged in conversations about how each principle is relevant for emerging leaders and how they should structure their own academic leadership work in response to these new understandings.

The Expansive Learning Leadership Initiative (ELLI) enabled participants to move their leadership practice from a conversation space to an action space as part of a defined group. In pairs, participants from the Emerging Leaders group identified a need in the University and designed a learning and teaching leadership project that required action to improve the outcome. These projects have been the focus of a year-long Leadership Initiative they propose to bring the principles into action. The emerging leaders have supported each other throughout the year by participating in leadership laboratories. DVC Professor Birgit Lohmann acted as the senior sponsor and further support was provided by Professor Karen Nelson, PVC (Students) and other members of the senior leadership group as the project required.

The projects have dealt with issues as diverse as the first year experience at USC, student engagement with student evaluation and working across disciplines to provide innovative learning experiences for students to supporting staff to take on new pedagogic approaches and engaging in new approaches to research. Equally important, the participants have gained insights into the complexities of leading learning and teaching and have strengthened the impact of their projects through collaboration across faculties and schools.
USC’s Learning and Teaching Grant scheme (LTGS)

USC’s Learning and Teaching Grants Scheme (LTGS) provides funding to support learning and teaching scholarship and activities that explore, develop and advance innovations to enhance the student learning experience. Proposals for funding address learning and teaching priorities and plans at faculty, institutional and national levels. The LTGS consists of Exploratory Grants (funding up to $10,000), Enhancement Grants (funding up to $20,000), Commissioned Grants (funding at discretion of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor) and OLT Grant support funding (small grants up to $500 to support OLT grant application development).

Grants funded in round 2, 2013 and round 1, 2014 were:

**Virtual patient case studies as a training resource to develop critical thinking for self-directed learning in a distributed program**

*PROJECT TEAM: Dr Rebecca Donkin (lead), Dr Mark Holmes, Mr Geoff Simon, Associate Professor Jason Ford, Mrs Amanda McAleer*

Virtual microscopy has been utilised at USC to teach Histology and Haematology for the past two years. This online technology translates traditional glass slides from the light microscope to the computer and therefore provides increased access to learning material and further engages the student in the teaching material.

From 2015, MLS110 Haematology and in 2016, MLS210 Advanced Haematology, will be offered at the USC South Bank study location. To combat budget restraints, limited resources and staffing, a blended learning curriculum has been proposed for the distributed learning courses. It is anticipated that a blended learning approach utilising virtual microscopy and online interactive lessons will play a central role in the distributed delivery of two haematology courses through the two geographical sites.

A curriculum with significant blended learning is currently being developed and trialled at USC Sippy Downs campus in the first instance before distributing to another geographical site. It is hoped this model may also become a precedent for future courses with a distributed program.

By developing programs that have a significant blended learning approach plus virtual microscopy and online learning activities with real time analytics to monitor student learning, it is expected that these technology rich developments will be more sustainable than the current practice. To further the connection with blended learning at USC, virtual microscopy will be show-cased on USC’s Blended Learning portal and during the USC Learning and Teaching week.

**The impact of a flipped classroom approach in higher education on students’ engagement in learning (Short title: Evaluating Flipping).**

*Project team: Dr Jane Taylor (lead), Dr Rachel Cole, Ms Julie-Anne Foster, Ms Rebecca Nicholas, Ms Kara Lilly, Dr Mary Kynn*

Many academics are ‘flipping’ their classrooms. Flipping aligns with constructivist educational principles and integrates educational technologies with face-to-face teaching to enhance students’ learning experiences. While there is an increasing body of work on ‘how to flip’ there is much less on how flipping impacts on students’ engagement in learning.

The aim of this project is to evaluate the impact of the flipped approach on students’ engagement in learning in the higher education setting. The project commenced in Semester Two 2013 and includes Public Health and Paramedic Science academics who had trialled flipping in Semester One 2013 and are still doing it.

The team has developed an evaluation framework which includes the Flipped Classroom Student Engagement Questionnaire (FCSEQ). This assesses students’ overall level of engagement in a course, level of pre-class engagement with the flipped approach, in-class activities and level of post-class engagement. It is based on six course-level constructs and related indicators: skills engagement, participation/interaction engagement, emotional engagement, performance engagement, active and collaborative learnings and total time on task. The FCSEQ has been administered in 11 courses taught by team members. We are on track to produce a validated instrument in addition to impact evaluation results on our flipping by the end of 2014.

The team is also compiling a suite of flipping protocols and associated movies on learnings about flipping and evaluating flipping which will be made available on the USC Portal. Resources will include the flipping approach and evaluation framework adopted, flipping reflections and learnings of students and academics, and blended learning technologies used by the team.

Weebly is an example of an online medium for delivering pre-class activities and learning materials.
Multi-disciplinary experiential entrepreneurship model (MEEM): Empowering students to create the future through experiential entrepreneurship.

PROJECT TEAM: Dr Margarietha Scheepers (lead), Dr Renee Barnes, Dr Uwe Terton

Relentless changes in information technology, intensified competition and globalisation are revolutionising the industries our graduates enter. The ability to be entrepreneurial, innovative and ready to adapt is crucial for USC students. Most industries have to ‘reinvent’ themselves to adapt to the changing landscape, requiring multi-disciplinary skills from entrepreneurial teams.

The Multi-disciplinary Experiential Entrepreneurship Model (MEEM) sought to address these challenges by trialling and evaluating an experiential entrepreneurship model to empower students to create a new venture. Students in business, design and journalism were targeted, given the rapidly changing industries they will enter upon graduation.

MEEM brought an industry innovation in the form of a Start-up Weekend to USC as part of a credit-bearing project. During one weekend, multi-disciplinary student teams, with an industry mentor, created start-up ventures through an authentic and engaging learning experience.

In 2014, business, journalism and design students took part in the first iteration of the MEEM project. Students discovered entrepreneurship theory through workshops and online resources, created start-up ventures by participating in Start-Up Weekend and used the experience to conceptualise and test business models of the future.

MEEM also demonstrated a flexible format for teaching and learning entrepreneurship skills experientially, offering an innovative methodology that can be adopted university-wide across disciplines. Specifically, MEEM took a student-centred learning approach encouraging students to bring their own ideas to the classroom, using relevant learning materials as these met their expressed needs.

As a result, some course components were adapted and changed to best fit individual student needs.

The MEEM project will continue in 2015, building on the successes of 2014 with a broader goal of increasing its impact and reach across the university.

Using blended learning and international online peer review to improve the learning of beginning researchers at the Master’s level: The PEER Project.

PROJECT TEAM: Associate Professor Michael Christie (lead), Associate Professor Deborah Heck, Dr Susan Simon, University of the Sunshine Coast; Janeil Ray, Karen Lillie, Xiaoning Chen, Fredonia

In this project we are developing a transferable, online, blended learning model of peer review for research-related Master of Education courses at the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) and Fredonia College of Education, State University of New York (SUNY). The model is designed to improve the quality of students’ verbal and written presentations and will involve up to 75 Master of Education students from USC and SUNY.

The project builds on a successful collaboration between the two universities involving an exchange visit of pre-service teachers in 2013 and ongoing Skype contact between faculty members. The planned outcomes of the project are:

• to provide pedagogically sound blended learning opportunities;
• introduce an online peer review model aimed at increasing students’ ability to plan, implement, review and disseminate the results of their professional learning projects;
• increase international networking for students and staff;
• raise student awareness concerning the impact of cultural diversity on learning and research;
• disseminate, via workshops, good pedagogical practice in designing and formatively assessing verbal and written presentations; and
• publish jointly authored ‘professional’ papers on the results of the project.

In June 2014, Michael Christie visited Fredonia and also set in motion a new exchange of student teachers between USC and Fredonia. The project was divided into three sub-projects with staff from the two universities paired: Christie and Dahlgren focusing on assessment tools; Heck and Fitzgerald on thesis proposal presentations; and, Simon and Rey on project writing in leadership programs.

The project is already a success in terms of an increased amount of internal as well as international peer-reviewing among students and peer review of course material by colleagues from both campuses.
Students as co-creators of simulation curriculum in Higher Education

PROJECT TEAM: Ms Sam Edwards (lead), Associate Professor Margaret Barnes, Associate Professor Jennifer Rowe, Associate Professor Patrea Andersen and Ms Jessie Johnson-Cash

Academics are traditionally the gatekeepers of simulation curriculum design; however, consideration must also be given to students’ experiences and expectations of learning.

Increasing value is being placed on engaging and empowering students as active participants in the development of student-centred learning initiatives that effectively prepare them for Work Integrated Learning (WIL) (Bovill, 2013). Preparation for professional practice has been identified as a key issue in nursing workforce productivity and retention (HWA, 2013). This project investigated opportunities to engage students as co-creators of simulation curriculum and learning materials, to create authentic, engaging learning experiences in preparation for practice.

Action research cycles were utilised in this project to engage students in identifying elements of the curriculum which would best assist them to prepare for clinical challenges. During phase one students participated in focus groups and utilised the ‘Model for simulation integration’ (Andersen, Heaton & Carter, 2011) to reflect on their recent WIL experience. This enabled them to work backwards through the curriculum spiral to identify their learning needs. While engaged in this process students were invited to identify areas in the curriculum offering potential to enhance authentic preparatory learning and what that might be.

In the phase two Workshop, students worked with the project team in the development of learning exemplars for simulation learning and WIL preparation. These exemplars will be embedded in simulation learning activities in the undergraduate Bachelor of Nursing Science and Bachelor of Midwifery curriculum.

The findings from this project will inform a best practice model for involving students as co-creators of simulation curriculum, the curriculum mapping tool, student narratives and key outcomes from student curriculum mapping, including lessons learnt.

Acting 4 Health: The preparation of Drama students as ‘simulated patients’ for learning events within Nursing and Midwifery and beyond

PROJECT TEAM: Dr Jo Loth (lead), Associate Professor Patrea Andersen

The Acting 4 Health project is developing an education program in which drama students are prepared for engagement as ‘simulated patients’ in Nursing and Midwifery training and assessment. For health care students, the use of simulated patients offers a significant engagement with the practical circumstances of their future employment and the human and health care challenges that they will face. The quality of the simulation patients’ ‘performance’ is vital to maintaining equitable and appropriate standards of practice for successful pedagogy.

Acting 4 Health will result in a best-practice document and training manual for future simulation-learning events in Health and other faculties at USC. This initiative is enhancing the quality of the learning experience and preparing both drama students and nurses for professional practice. The learning events allow academic staff to make accurate assessments of students’ clinical knowledge and their ability to apply this knowledge in practical face to face situations.

For drama students, simulated patient work provides employment opportunities and opportunities to deploy their skills in work that contributes to the development of health practitioners. This innovative inter-disciplinary partnership will contribute to the development and use of immersive simulation in other study areas of the university.

Enhancing students’ learning and engagement through the use of a critical pedagogical curriculum intervention in the Social Work program

PROJECT TEAM: Dr Tina Lathouras (lead), Ms Carol Smith, Ms Carey Shaw

In 2013, enrolments into the Social Work program from students holding International Student visas increased exponentially. These students were facing a range of barriers to education. To better assist them, an action-research project was instigated to enhance their social well-being, learning outcomes and retention. Findings from the research concurs with literature which suggests that using a range of innovative and creative teaching strategies facilitates students’ engagement with curricula and positively impacts on students’ deep learning.

The current learning and teaching project builds on the action-research and aims to better accommodate the diverse student population and learning styles of students at USC. Specifically, it explores how critical pedagogy enhances both domestic and international students’ engagement and learning in the social work program.

In Semester One 2015, teachers will be invited to participate in the research project aimed to develop new teaching and learning skills across diverse cohorts. The project will develop resources that teachers will be able to draw from and systematically reflect on their use in the classroom. At the conclusion of the semester, students whose teachers are involved in the project will be invited to a focus group. The project team can gain their perspectives on the specific teaching strategies that have enhanced their engagement and learning. With increased confidence about teaching approaches it is expected that both international and domestic students will experience a deeper learning of curricula, better preparing them for social work careers.
Develop your own Lifelong Learning Resource: Learners as Active Collaborators

PROJECT TEAM: Dr Helen Fairweather (lead), Associate Professor Peter Dunn, Ms Goksu Dines, Mr Ian Wright

This project aims to:

1. Explore how development of a personalised electronic resource that blends learning materials with the implementation of hydrological techniques can enrich learning.
2. Enhance students programming skills through the use of a cutting-edge programming environment and implementation of hydrological techniques.
3. Evaluate the ‘develop your own’ learning resource concept and its effectiveness in improving student learning.

Blended learning will be used to merge hydrological concepts with contemporary technology for deep learning. The hydrological concepts include advanced techniques currently being adopted in practice (eg. the revised practices in Australian Rainfall and Runoff; the ‘standard’ for hydrology). Traditional methods of teaching and assessment are no longer appropriate for these advanced techniques as their implementation requires sophisticated computing methods.

Learning support material (text, videos, animations, graphs, statistical output) will be integrated with an application of hydrological techniques in an open source statistical package. Using the programming language ‘R Markdown’ the students write the commands to produce a web-resource, which is reproducible. This will create a personalised life-long learning resource that students can update over the course of their careers, in lieu of a traditional text-book.

Commissioned Learning and Teaching Grants

Train and Sustain: A model for quality supervision in WIL

PROJECT TEAM: Associate Professor Fiona Pelly (lead), Ms Judy Tweedie, Associate Professor Lainie Cameron, Professor Marion Gray, Ms Michelle Small, Ms Penny Taylor

The aim of our project is to enhance quality supervision for students undertaking Work Integrated Learning (WIL). This will be through the adaptation, delivery and evaluation of an online training module for staff involved in supervision of USC students (preceptors). It covers the disciplines of Nutrition and Dietetics, Sport and Exercise Science and Occupational Therapy.

Currently at USC there is no uniform approach to training the day-to-day supervisors of students across the different disciplines. Existing resources target the clinical supervisor or facilitator, and much of the material is focused on specific disciplines (in particular, nursing) and lacks an integrated approach. Furthermore, there appear to be issues with sustainability of online training resources due to a lack of focus on strategies to update, promote and embed them in WIL.

Thus, we aim to empower preceptors so that they can directly influence the quality of supervision of students while completing WIL by creating a training module to benchmark professional development of external WIL supervisors. We also envisage that this will be a transferable resource that can be adapted and embedded into other disciplines at USC, thus contributing to strategic change to work integrated learning policy and procedures across the university.

We are in the process of developing the training module on an interactive user-friendly software platform.

WIL Knowledge in Motion: Using mobile technology to facilitate authentic WIL assessment and learning practice for 21st century practice settings.

PROJECT TEAM: Dr Jane Taylor (lead), Mr Christopher Dann, Dr Rachel Cole, Ms Julie-Anne Foster, Ms Kara Lilly, Mr Tony Richardson, Ms Jane-Louise Lampard, Ms Elizabeth Toohey

Timely feedback during the Workplace Integrated Learning (WIL) experience is critical to strengthening professional skills and competency. The project team identified the need for an opportunity to utilise technology to facilitate constructive, standardised feedback in real-time for education, public health and paramedic students on placement. The WIL Knowledge in Motion project aims to enhance the formative and in turn summative assessment of professional skill development for WIL students. The project has expanded and contextualised the CeMee application initially designed for tracking teacher development in the primary and secondary education sectors for Public Health and Paramedic programs.

This project uses mobile technology for assessment using standardised feedback criteria explicitly linked with professional competencies and/or accreditation standards. In contrast to receiving summative assessment at the end of work placement, students can seek formative, ongoing real-time supervisor feedback and collaborate to set goals for improving professional skills in the workplace.

University of the Sunshine Coast Education, Public Health and Paramedic students are currently trialling the CeMee application while undertaking work placement in a range of classroom, clinical, field and office settings across Queensland and New South Wales.
Knowledge gained from this project will inform future curriculum development and approaches to WIL and assessment across USC programs. Benefits for WIL curriculum design include enhanced alignment between WIL learning outcomes, industry competencies, learning activities and assessment criteria and standards.

**Discipline Specific Engagement and Evaluation for Dissemination Support (D-SEEDS)**

**PROJECT TEAM: Dr Florin Oprescu (lead), Ms Anita Hamilton, Mr Ian Wright**

The aim of this project is to disseminate, embed and evaluate existing and emerging blended learning resources within the USC context. The three stages of the ‘D-CUBED guide: planning for effective dissemination’ (Hinton, Gannaway, Berry & Moore, 2011, p.13) and its framework informed the three proposed stages of the project:

1. Assess the climate of readiness for change
2. Engage throughout the project
3. Enable transfer of project outcomes

The findings from a Blended Learning Environment Scan, conducted by C–SALT in 2013, were used to assess readiness for change. According to the environmental scan, the following factors may influence the success of adopting blended learning at USC: Staff perception of usefulness of blended learning approaches, Digital literacy skills, Support for staff and students, Workload issues, Technology provisioning, Agility (ability to change quickly), and Environment support.

Engagement with staff in this project has been achieved through two blended learning workshops held in April and July 2014. Focus groups and surveys were conducted alongside each workshop to gather further information from staff about their readiness for blended learning and the supports they want. Over 100 staff responded to the surveys in this project.

A secondary aim of this project has been to design and deliver two courses as blended learning ‘exemplars’. Review of the exemplar courses is underway and preliminary findings will be reported at the next workshop which is planned for mid-December 2014. The workshops in this project have been designed in collaboration with C–SALT to engage USC staff in activities that may help them to improve their knowledge and skills in blended learning.

---

**Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Knowledges and Perspectives into the Curriculum**

In 2014, USC resolved to establish a Working Party of Academic Board with responsibility to undertake significant consultation in relation to embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and perspectives into the curriculum at USC. The Working Party’s Terms of Reference are to:

- Consult widely with stakeholders at USC to identify and articulate a guiding framework for embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and perspectives in USC curricula.
- Adopt a two stage process, with a view to the Working Party consulting the Academic Board on the range of available options prior to developing an implementation plan to advance the work.
- Develop an implementation plan to advance the work.
- Identify resources required to support implementation including staff capacity building activities, and local and national examples of good practice to support implementation.

The inaugural meetings of both the Working Party and the Working Party Reference Group, which both include representation from members of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, were held in October and November 2014.

---

**The School of Nursing and Midwifery’s story**

*By Lynne Stuart, (Mandandanji) Senior Lecturer in Nursing*

Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and perspectives in higher education curriculum is the catch cry of Universities Australia. From an industry stance, it is now mandatory for Australian Schools of Nursing and Midwifery to include these in their curriculum, as a requirement of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC).

The School of Nursing and Midwifery at USC has taken an all-encompassing approach to Indigenising their curriculum on an individual course basis. Their philosophy includes a strong position in social justice with a focus on Indigenous history, culture and contemporary Indigenous health issues. Academic and clinical staff, as well as students are provided with cultural safety education and training, and exposure to Indigenised experiential learning and teaching spaces. In addition the clinical school prepares students for clinical placement in Indigenous settings, inviting participation into ‘yarning circles’ where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pedagogical approaches are utilised.

The School’s philosophy is aimed at developing a strong, culturally capable academic and professional nursing and midwifery staff. These staff will in turn help to equip students with graduate attributes to work with and acknowledge the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within the Australian health care setting.
USC is in the enviable position of having a range of 2D and 3D visualisation facilities purpose-built for use in teaching and learning. The spaces available in the Teaching and Learning Hub (Building E) will be extended when the Engineering Learning Hub comes online in 2015. The capacity to visualise concepts and information in 2D, 3D and immersive ‘in the round’ 3D is a valuable tool in engaging students, accelerating and deepening learning. It’s exciting to think about the possibilities across all disciplines, beginning with Engineering in 2015.

C~SALT hosted the Visions of Visualisation forum in July 2014 to promote sharing of perspectives on engagement with visualisation and use in the Higher Education sector. Experts from across Australia shared their knowledge and experience with USC colleagues, and guests from USQ Engineering and Macquarie University’s school of Archaeology.

Professor Paul Bonnington, Director of Monash eResearch Centre (MeRC) examined how the CAVE2 facility at Monash opened up a range of possibilities for research, engagement and teaching using immersive visualisation. Associate Professor Christian Jones, Director, Engage Research Cluster at USC talked the audience through some frontier technologies likely to change the way we learn and live into the future. Gavin Winter, Institute for Future Environments, QUT explained the CUBE at QUT, its functions and genesis as a visualisation tool. Karen Whelan, Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching), Faculty of Science and Engineering, QUT described how she could see visualisation being used as a tool for learning in Engineering. Professor Roy Tasker, University of Western Sydney, OLT National Senior Teaching Fellow, was the final speaker for the day, discussing cognitive load, difficult concepts and learning through the use of low-tech visualisations in Chemistry.

The forum was the first in a series of gatherings to promote and strengthen our knowledge of the learning and teaching applications for 2D and 3D visualisation and the pedagogies most likely to capitalize on them. Watch this space for 2015 as we roll out commissioned grants on immersive visualisation and train targeted staff in using the new visualisation spaces in the Engineering Learning Hub!
**2014 Learning and Teaching Week**

‘Teachers as learners’ theme captures attention

This year’s Learning and Teaching Week theme of ‘teachers as learners’ captured wide attention and recognition with both teaching staff and students.

The Twilight Keynote Speaker Dan Gregory from The Impossible Institute addressed the theme on 4 September ‘Collaborative intelligence (We-Q): Teaching and learning in partnership’. Dan commented on the significance of our capacity to collaborate, that in this age ‘we don’t do anything alone’, whether it be making our homes, food or technology. Is it still appropriate to measure an individual’s capacity, or is it more pertinent to ascertain the degree to which we successfully work together to reach outcomes collectively? We are in an ever-increasing connected world, where ‘one individual cannot easily have all capacities at a significant level, so depends on being part of an organisation or community’.

2014 Learning and Teaching Week emphasised that partnerships are significant in our lives and livelihoods. The potential for partnerships with students and between disciplines were evident in many papers and presentations over the week.

More than 50 individual and group presentations were given over the week, including the three rated as the People’s Choice Awards:

- **Overall winner**—Gail Crimmins for presentation *The lived experience of women casual academics, what we have learned about those that teach at university.*
- **Faculty of Arts and Business winners**—Renee Barnes, Retha Scheepers, Sandra Elsom for *Pitches and Pivots: Bringing Silicon Valley to the Classroom*; and
- **Faculty of Science, Health, Education and Engineering winners**—Sam Edwards, Margaret Barnes, Patrea Anderson, Jesse Johnson-Cash for *Students as co-creators of simulation curriculum in Higher Education.*

Our two New Zealand visitors led the two Master-class workshops; Peter Coolbear and Nyk Huntington from Ako Aotearoa were sponsored by the Rotary Club of Nambour Teaching Fellowship. They facilitated discussion around hearing and heeding the learner’s voice, and ways to improve outcomes for students.

Highlights of the week were noted as the Program Coordinators’ Forum, contributions from USC Choirs and USC Theatre and the panel of teachers who contributed to the Opening Session on 2 September. The panel comprised staff/learners who addressed their various perspectives on the theme and how their lives reflect diverse dimensions of their roles as teacher and learners. More than 300 staff and students attended activities during the week.
Sessional Development 2014

Semester One: Making Spaces Learning Places
Semester Two: Practicing Engagement: Engagement Practices

In 2014 we had two amazing and inspiring all-day professional development workshops focusing on the practical aspects of good learning and teaching. The main focus for these days has been ‘walk out and use’, where sessional teaching staff come together to develop teaching practices that they can apply in their learning environments to enhance student engagement.

Topics explored include:

• closely looking at the role of space in learning,
• Buranga Centre services and support,
• graduate attributes,
• strategies in science,
• Blackboard sessions and Blended Learning ideas.

Our culminating workshop for Semester Two was hosted by Professor Karen Nelson, PVC (Students) reflecting on OLT research and practical advice for teaching staff and sessional staff. They produced a collage of advice ideas for new sessional staff that complemented this research.

Special guests this year included Beverly Hand, who gave us an informative Welcome to Country in the Buranga Garden; Dr Gwen Lawrie, Director of First Year Chemistry at UQ (2013 Pearson RACI Educator of the Year Award, 2013 OLT Australian Award for University Teaching), and Paul Hamilton, an Edtech pioneer and blended learning leader.

In C~SALT we understand the diverse, dedicated and extensive contribution sessional staff make towards quality learning and teaching outcomes for USC students.

Foundations of University Teaching

The Centre for Support and Advancement of Learning and Teaching (C~SALT) has facilitated Foundations of University Teaching since 2006. Foundations is a well-established USC professional development course that provides an introduction to teaching, learning and assessment in higher education. Foundations primary audience is early-career and mid-career ongoing and fixed term academic staff, sessional staff, and USC academic support staff. To support the diversity of those participating, the course is offered in a blended learning setting with some aspects of the course content and learning activities taking a self-paced, online approach while other aspects facilitated face-to-face, on-campus using a workshop-based approach. This approach enables flexibility and accessibility in ways of engaging in continuing professional development and practice for USC staff.
Learning Spaces

Transforming the student experience through new learning spaces

Innovative learning spaces continue to emerge around USC and the vision does not stop there. As the new buildings appear on campus, the focus remains on transforming the student experience by providing student-focused, technology-rich and welcoming learning spaces.

At the start of 2014 the Learning and Teaching Hub, Building E, opened its doors for students. It ushers in a new era of education including visualisation and simulation, greater community engagement and stronger links between the University and TAFE Qld East Coast, particularly in nursing education. USC currently has the best programs supported by specially designed facilities for nursing students in Australia.

Visualisation has long been used in research, but USC will be one of the first universities to incorporate it into everyday lectures and tutorials. Such learning experiences enable students to be fully immersed in real life situations. This type of experience is provided to students in Building E and Gympie in the nursing simulation labs and in Immerse.

Immerse is an exciting space connected to the Engage Research Lab that enables new ideas to come alive on the 270° projection surface. The projection surface is used for simulations in nursing and can be used for serious gaming, virtual art galleries, and even the display of Big Data to name a few. The term, ‘big data’, refers to the tools and processes that can be used to handle large amounts of data, such as in research.

Collaborative learning takes place in Building E, with a tiered floor and 14 tables, each seating 5-6 students. It facilitates problem-based learning in group situations and accommodates 75 students. Each table has a movable PC, is BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) enabled, with cables allowing dual projection from any table and/or device.

In 2015, the new state of the art Engineering Learning Hub will open. This five-green-star-rated facility spans four levels and includes a world-class visualisation studio, a collaborative learning studio and an advanced computer laboratory for development of visualisation content.

USC is dedicated to transforming the student experience by providing a variety of spaces for learning. Rise, and Shine.