

Education Advancement  
Centre for Learning & Teaching

# RECOGNISING EXCELLENCE



Australian  
National  
University

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARDS  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION 2023



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# RECOGNISING EXCELLENCE

The 2023 Vice Chancellor's Awards for Excellence in Education is an opportunity for ANU to celebrate and make visible just some of the achievements of the ANU teaching community. The processes of teaching, and those of learning, are complex and challenging: our successes have come from the dedication, care and skill of the University's educators. Within these pages you will encounter a broad range of innovative approaches to education that draw upon principles of active learning, project based learning and work integrated learning, to situate students as builders and organisers in the construction of their own knowledge.

With nearly 60 applicants, the selection panels particularly sought to highlight teaching stories that exemplify key aspects of our Learning and Teaching Strategy in their selection of the finalists. We hope the projects and approaches highlighted by these awards provide inspiration and a source of pride for all of ANU.

The Education Advancement team

## CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

None of us would be who we are today without the extraordinary teachers in our lives: people who took the time to cultivate our curiosity and broaden how we see the world.

At ANU, we are lucky to be part of an incredible community of such teachers. These exceptional educators are using their passion for their subjects, their ingenuity and their genuine care and empathy to enrich the intellectual lives of our students. They are fostering critical thinking skills and a lifelong love for learning in our future leaders and decision makers. And these are the best gifts a university can offer.

To every award recipient and nominee, let me say congratulations and offer you my heartfelt thanks for everything you do. I know it's not always easy, but it is not an exaggeration to say that you are truly changing people's lives for the better.

Genevieve Bell

Vice-Chancellor and President



# 2023 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S CONGRATULATIONS

## Honouring exceptional educators: a tribute to teaching excellence at the ANU

The Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Excellence in Education are an opportunity to recognise and pay respect to the effort, innovation and care our teaching community provides to our students through the University's high-quality subjects and programs.

Teaching and learning, at every level, is experiencing incredibly rapid change. All educators have been deeply challenged, first by a global pandemic, and now more recently by the emergence of generative artificial intelligence. Our understandings of the most fundamental components of education, and society more broadly, are being reevaluated: the nature of knowledge, the role of the human, how social connection occurs, and who we should trust. The University's educators are at the coalface of navigating these complexities. It is testament to their dedication and innovation to see just some of their incredible work represented in these awards.

It is with great pride that we congratulate and thank all the recipients and candidates of the Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Excellence in Education. Your commitment to teaching excellence is an inspiration to us all.

Professor Brian P. Schmidt AC  
Vice-Chancellor and President  
2011 Nobel Prize (Physics)





## HIGHLY COMMENDED

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

#### Professor Sara Bice

ANU College of Asia and Pacific, Crawford School of Public Policy

**Synopsis:** The first time Sara Bice stood at the base of a lecture theatre, she was home. Sara's teaching is enthusiastic and professional. Her commitment shows in the attention she gives each student, teaching hundreds annually and knowing them all by name. It shows in the mentoring and research training she has developed for Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates and Early Career Researchers (ECRs) stepping into their first teaching roles. Her outstanding research-led teaching and advising in social and policy science draws upon her deep industry knowledge, diverse international experience and study of education theory, policy and practice to place students at the centre of cutting-edge case learning, innovative assessment tasks and interactive online learning spaces. Across two decades of teaching, Sara's students remember her courses for the energy and creativity she brings and for the learning legacy she leaves behind.

The classroom is a space ripe with life-changing opportunity and I feel privileged to be trusted to deliver for my students. I find teaching so invigorating, enjoyable and affirming. I am incredibly grateful it is part of my everyday work.

My teaching practice focuses on building students' capacity to integrate theories and approaches into their professional lives and is informed by knowledge translation. I work with students to generate innovative materials and methods, including assessment tasks linked directly to core professional skills.

I aim to be an education leader and champion of student learning. It is an

honour if others see me as such. My research-led, creative course design is steeped in higher education literature and my own research and reading in knowledge translation. I am committed to developing my own and others' educational excellence beyond the classroom.

My classes start with music – from Saint-Saens to Taylor Swift, Abba to Midnight Oil; it's clear from the moment you walk in, this is not the lecture theatre as usual. My aim is to set students at ease with me and with each other from our first moments together. I have a rapid memory game (great party trick) I use to learn all my students' names on day one.

We talk about the classroom atmosphere and how we'll work together. Influenced by the work of sociologist Brene Brown, I introduce students to the idea of being ok with discomfort and coming to their studies with vulnerability and what I call 'critical curiosity'. Time spent building relationships makes a huge difference to students' experiences, and their sense of belonging to Crawford and capacity to seek support and collegiality beyond my class.

The priority I place on relationships for learning is directly informed by my research in community engagement, which shows early, accessible and genuine communication is one of the major influences of social cohesion, inclusion and resilience – all factors I hope my students will take from the classroom into their working lives.

**“Out of all courses at Crawford, truly from my heart, this course was delivered to its best.”**

Student comment, 2018







## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

#### Dr Stephen Dann

ANU College of Business and Economics, Research School of Management

**Synopsis:** Mine is a story of developing a technology augmented learning delivery in ways that can bring students together across mixtures of in-room and digital platforms. My aim in education is to show that technology enabled learning can create spaces for students to apply life integrated learning within authentic assessment and supportive learning spaces and to grow as individuals and cohorts.

**M**y teaching philosophy is underpinned by putting theory to practice and to the practice of applied theory. In 25 years of teaching, I have had the fortune of teaching 15 different marketing courses across undergraduate and postgraduate cohorts.

As a marketer, I use my discipline's theories of consumer behavior and innovation adoption to create learning opportunities for my students to collaborate, co-create and celebrate life-integrated learning outcomes in their assessments and beyond. I bring a marketing orientation of finding balance between the customers' needs (students) and stakeholder demands (employers) within the constraints of what we are willing to offer to the market (course content and pedagogical expertise). Marketing is always about offering something that someone can use to find value that is meaningful to them. In creating a marketing experience through education, I've used authentic assessment to prioritise meaningful connection between course content and personal goals and through life-

integrated learning, while embracing new technologies.

From an origin as an early adopter of colour laser printed transparencies on overhead projectors in 1997, through to now, there's always been something on the testing process with my education delivery. I went from printed overhead transparency media to PowerPoint over to in-room projectors to live Zoom room and hybrid teaching. I've recorded lectures on cassette tapes, minidisks, VHS tapes, and eventually digital video formats. I've run YouTube live streamed lectures in 2016, had a teaching channel since 2012, and was there when we wrote the deep magic of digital media distribution to turn printed blocks of class notes into USB drives and Learning Management System (LMS) uploads collections. I brought Twitter to the classroom in 2008, WordPress in 2010, and Instagram in 2012 and 2023, as I look for ways to bring the experience of the room beyond the four walls of the class, and to the hearts and minds of my cohorts.

**"Stephen was a phenomenal course convener who cared about his pupils which seems to be rare throughout my university journey thus far. He is very agile with solutions so that I and other students I know of could complete this course to the best of their ability."**

Student comment, 2023

## RECIPIENT

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

#### Associate Professor Creina Day

ANU College of Asia and Pacific, Crawford School of Public Policy

**Synopsis:** Creina Day is an exceptional, innovative educator who supports diverse student needs and stimulates interest by promoting the 3R philosophy: Relevance, Research-led curricula, and Reflection. Creina's broader and deep contributions to inclusivity in learning and teaching practice by evolving curriculum and digital learning initiatives improve student engagement and advance early career educators, fostering gender equity in economics.

Economics need not be dismal or exclusive. Through reimagining curriculum at the grassroots level, and through leadership and mentoring, my learning and teaching approaches have transformed what economics means and how it can be applied to resonate more deeply with students from diverse backgrounds and abilities.

My profound influence on student learning experiences is remarkable and enduring. Evidenced by recurrent praise as the "best teacher I have learnt from, in my life" (SELTs), the 3R's teaching philosophy consistently fosters student engagement and curiosity. My influence, recognition, creativity and scholarly practice in learning and teaching extends across colleagues at the ANU and the broader educational community, as demonstrated by testimonials, three college teaching awards, and outstanding contributions to the Education Fellowship Scheme (EFS) and learning and teaching scholarship.

My commitment to excellence is long-standing and supported by robust evaluation. Innovative approaches to

promote inclusivity and digital learning have resulted in sustained improvements through reflective practice informed by student performance, survey feedback and leadership in formal reviews. The evolution of my teaching strategies is further underscored by the sustained upward trajectory to "superstellar SELT scores" (Director, Education, Crawford School) and consistent acknowledgements of my ability to create an engaging and accessible learning environment.

Through creativity, imagination and innovation, I redefine the postgraduate learning experience. My ability to bridge theoretical concepts with real-world applications, integrate a feminist perspective, and foster interdisciplinary connections demonstrates a versatility in enhancing traditional learning environments. Whether facilitating engagement in live virtual classes or through pre-recorded videos, my dedication to continuous improvement remains unwavering. My transformative approach sets new standards for innovative and impactful educational practices, as evidenced by international benchmarks for student performance.

**"Creina's courses have been of enormous motivation for learning and applying macroeconomics. Her unique materials on gender, population and development have inspired me to pursue development-based empirical research in my Masters Research Essay[...]."**

Student comment







## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

#### Associate Professor Will J Grant

ANU College of Science, Australian National Centre for the Public Awareness of Science

**Synopsis:** Associate Professor Will J Grant is a researcher and teacher in science communication at the Australian National Centre for the Public Awareness of Science (CPAS), focused on the interaction of science, society, and political decision-making. Throughout his teaching he has used innovative and highly engaging techniques to foster a focused critical attention amongst his students, leading to transformative educational experiences.

I love being in the classroom. I teach three core courses. I am a frequent guest in other courses around campus, and am sought after around the country for science communication workshops. While there are differences in the topics of my different classes, my approach is consistent: I seek to foster a focused critical attention amongst students, to be, as Socrates described himself in useful but weird language, 'the midwife' of the critical thinking of my students.

How do I do this? I use a range of techniques: focused storytelling; Socratic questioning; structured dialogue; improv-based theatre techniques; and, conversations with guest experts. My goal in all is to foster focused critical attention – to get students to drop all other concerns and interests, and be as critically engaged as possible in the question at hand.

One activity I've used in a range of classes is an improv theatre game/ learning-by-doing activity/opportunity for Socratic questioning called The Time Traveller. In this activity, students form

pairs to take part in a short period of structured role play. One will pretend to be from 500 years ago; the other is a welcoming person from today. The problem begins when the person from today is given two minutes to explain a smartphone or an x-ray to the time traveller. Once the two minutes is up, I ask the students who was successful, and who was getting (metaphorically) burned at the stake.

The conversation and Socratic questioning that follows allows me to understand their existing skills and attitudes, and then to discuss and explore a wide range of key science communication concepts, from the introductory to the nuanced, tuned directly to their recent experience and wider science communication needs.

At heart, in activities like this I'm seeking to understand what students know and need to know, and then to get them critically focused on building the knowledge they need themselves.

**"I wanted to say a huge thank you for being such an amazing teacher across all of the courses I have taken with you. I've learnt so much from you and all of your courses have been really fun and engaging and it has been a pleasure to be your student. Thank you so much!"**

Student comment

## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

#### Dr Katerina Kormusheva

ANU College of Business and Economics, Research School of Management

**Synopsis:** Dr. Kormusheva is a passionate educator, determined to weave inter-disciplinarity into the teaching of core management disciplines. Katerina provides authentic learning experiences for her students by often taking the classroom out into the world, and by bringing the real-world context into the classroom. Katerina applies her professional background in marketing, telecommunications and agriculture and uses her multi-disciplinary experience to spark enthusiasm for the courses she teaches.

**B**y pioneering the inter-disciplinary approach at the College of Business and Economics, collaborating with other colleges, and applying experiential learning in the design of my courses, I have managed to make a difference in the teaching of unusual subjects and in engaging unusual cohorts of students. I have overcome difficult moments for experiential courses during the COVID pandemic, and I am re-inventing and re-invigorating my teaching with the return on campus and the return of organisations to workplace collaborations.

I have been among the first lecturers at the College of Business and Economics to embrace an inter-disciplinary approach to teaching. My course, Special Industry Project, is an unusual course as it places students in a real-world business or organisation for one semester, with the task to solve a real-world problem that the organisation has put to the students. The variety of the problems reflects the variety of modern strategic decision-making in business, and ranges from

reporting to fossil fuels substitution, population health, government policy design, private sustainable energy investments, aboriginal cultural tourism, coin minting, and superannuation. In addressing the problem, the students must very quickly become reasonably well-conversant in the subject matter of the industry. No lecturer could be an expert at everything, so I have strived to achieve this by strategically recruiting students across all colleges, getting the students to work in teams for delivering on the project, and organising a variety of expert speakers, tailored to each semester's project.

My 'doing and learning' approach has been instrumental in creating a flexible assessment framework that relates to industry. My approach demonstrates empathy and consideration for my students, and encourages them to engage with complexity and to think critically and creatively, when preparing to be leaders in management and business fields.

**“Coming into this semester, I had no idea what to expect but was excited by the prospect of a practical experience[...] I come out the other end having a far greater appreciation for the critical importance of communication and teamwork skills in delivering outstanding results.”**

Student comment, 2023







## RECIPIENT

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

#### Dr Nicolò Malagutti

ANU College of Engineering, Computing and Cybernetics, School of Engineering

**Synopsis:** Dr Nicolò Malagutti has revitalised and delivered Engineering curricula at ANU for over 10 years, spanning foundational, advanced and project-based courses. Nicolò embraces pedagogical innovation and technology to deliver excellent student experiences, and draws on his direct industry expertise as a source of authentic and engaging resources. He is a passionate advocate for quality teaching and collaborative communities of practice.

**F**or an engineer, few prospects beat the appeal of getting one's hands dirty crafting novel technological solutions. I know because I routinely heed this existential calling. However, a good friend once told me that "as a professional, you create one solution at a time; as a teacher, you can inspire thousands". This simple but profound idea sparked my passion for Engineering education.

My teaching approach is centred on dialogue and shared experiences, both in teacher-student and student-student interactions. I favour non-hierarchical learning environments, where students receive theoretical and methodological foundations but are then encouraged to reinforce/extend these through independent enquiry (case studies; projects) and experiential learning (practical labs, co-designed with ANU researchers where possible). I encourage students to socialise their journeys and discoveries (course fora; group work; peer assessment), and often adopt Socratic questioning to constructively challenge their understanding. Throughout this

process, I act as a friendly expert, seeking to support and inspire rather than intimidate, and I always welcome students' challenges to my own explanations. Notably, even amid the COVID-19 pandemic, I strived to maintain a strong, direct dialogue with my students by developing a custom audiovisual setup that would enable the delivery of more expressive and personable live online sessions.

Alongside my academic role, I serve as Chief Technical Officer of a MedTech start-up company. This experience has enriched my teaching, by helping me embed industry-relevant skills into my courses and pair them with motivating real-world examples. Additionally, it informed my redesign of a final-year project course, where I streamlined processes for external projects, resulting in greater uptake of industry-supported topics.

It is a privilege to contribute my passion, skills and experience to help inspire the next generation of intelligent yet humble, creative yet pragmatic, industry-ready engineers.

**"Nicolò has managed to create a fantastic lab-based experience [...] by including advanced techniques[...]. These are the kind of experiences that inspire future generations of engineers and researchers."**

Colleague email



## RECIPIENT

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

#### Dr Bernardo Pereira Nunes

ANU College of Engineering, Computing and Cybernetics, School of Computing

**Synopsis:** Bernardo is a dynamic educator bridging the gap between computer science and education. His teaching philosophy is centred on active methodologies, focusing on innovation, quality and social impact. By combining these methodologies with games, his teaching increases retention and enhances student experience and their capacity to tackle real-world problems by developing the skills required by the fast-moving IT industry.

I am passionate about teaching Computer Science (CS) in an engaging, immersive and authentic way, by integrating project-based, student-centred approaches with game-based learning and active methodologies. Because concepts in CS are abstract, I use innovative methodologies and intuitive analogies to make them easier to understand.

One of my most innovative teaching strategies is the 'Escape Room' experience, which goes beyond traditional assignments and offers students a window into real-world scenarios. It encourages problem-solving, cultivates creative and critical thinking, and improves learner engagement. The skills students develop during this experience align their learning with the demands and expectations of professional careers.

To enrich the learning experience, I also developed Stubents, a video platform to promote the creation of learning resources by and for students. It takes advantage of the learning-by-teaching methodology to engage students in

actively authoring, researching and experiencing transfer, enhancing deeper understanding and fostering autonomous learning. With thousands of videos, this platform introduces students to diverse perspectives, promotes multicultural representation, and ensures content is delivered in a meaningful and effective way that students value and feel part of.

In essence, my goal as an educator is to demystify CS using multiple teaching methodologies and, more importantly, to listen to my students and consider their needs and differences. By embedding them in holistic experiences, I aim to cultivate a generation of learners who are not just knowledgeable, but who are also dynamic, reflective, collaborative and ready to contribute proactively to their academic pursuits and societal needs. My teaching philosophy is underpinned by a commitment to transform abstract theories into tangible competencies, ensuring every student is primed for success in the ever-evolving world of CS.

**“Bernardo's ability to teach advanced concepts is enhanced by his acute understanding of learning processes and human cognition.”**

Student comment, SELT

**“This is truly one of the best courses I've ever enrolled in!”**

Student comment







## RECIPIENT

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

#### Associate Professor Caroline Schuster

ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences, School of Archaeology and Anthropology

**Synopsis:** Dr Schuster's teaching philosophy centres independent student learning and direct application of analytical skills to real-world issues through self-designed research. She accomplishes this through an innovative curriculum and assessment regime directly linked to the core skills and competencies of ethnographic analysis and interpretation: grounded theory based on immersion in other, globally diverse social worlds.

Students are encouraged to put their understanding of cross-cultural analysis into practice through independent project-based learning and self-designed research outputs – channelling the joy and exhilaration of being transported into alternative ways of being, knowing and relating, and incorporating these into their personal learning pathways. To support independent student learning, Dr Schuster has introduced “un-essays” (scaffolded, individually designed, applied assessments) to ANU and internationally to her discipline and has designed a curriculum suite of hands-on practicums that support students “doing ethnography” themselves.

That students are able to apply the skills developed through un-essay assessments beyond the classroom, and even beyond the ANU, is supported by student projects that have been published, translated and shared by international students in their home country, and developed into supervised research.

Caroline integrates ethnographic theory and methods into her teaching practice as well as her leadership of postgraduate programs and HDR training at the ANU. Anthropological fieldwork raises significant issues of human research ethics, and as a longstanding member of the Human Research Ethics Committee she has worked to develop best practices for student training in classroom settings as well as provided extensive guidance and mentoring for Honours and Master students submitting ethics applications.

Her passion for communicating anthropological insights to diverse publics has led her to develop pedagogical applications attached to some of her highest impact research on economic anthropology, gender and sexuality, and climate change. These have been published in international scholarly outlets, thereby advancing research-led teaching in the fields of anthropology, and environmental and feminist studies.

“I really had the sense of going on a journey of learning. The assessments were extraordinary – again, perfectly positioned to ‘make real’ the learnings from the readings. Probably the best course I have studied at ANU.”

Student comment, SELT



## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

#### Ann Smith

ANU College of Business and Economics, Research School of Management

**Synopsis:** In teaching management decision-making, Ann's evidence-based approach to course design recognises the importance of context in shaping students' learning. Her team-based approach to teaching draws on both feedback and research to create learning environments that develop students' meta-cognitive capacities and enable them to continue their learning journey long after their formal education ends.

**F**orty years of adult education and industry practice inform my tertiary teaching skills, honed over the last 6 years in academia, transferring new knowledge to society. The power to change the world, one class at a time, structured now by the ANU Strategic Plan and learning and teaching frameworks. I must lead with consistency between my teaching, my values and the culture I wish to see. If I want a more inclusive, more generous world, one where people can change and grow, then that is the student-centred, team-based teaching environment I must provide. And the literature of adult learning has blossomed since my early introduction; it is now an important evidence-based resource. Different students and different contexts may best be addressed with different approaches – and I have also observed the subversive nature of teaching across them all, and the unexpected outcomes that emerge when new learnings and new insights illuminate people's worlds anew.

Some students apply their new learnings to enhance their career; for others the effects are transformative, leading to career-changing decisions. But for education to be of greatest benefit it

continues in impact long after classes finish. Learning activities must go beyond learning outcomes to develop students' capacities for meta-cognition and independent learning both now and across the whole of their lives.

So, as a teacher I am also a student. I understand teaching to be a team-based process and never more so than in contemporary tertiary education. I learn from teaching teams and from learners, from insights driven by different contexts and different perspectives. I support colleagues and contribute to literature – to learn in turn from colleagues and from literature. I learn from the effects of my evolving evidence-based approaches, driven by research, feedback and meta-cognition. The one life-long lesson to impart to my learners: be a teacher, of yourself if not of others, and be a student, of others and of yourself.

**“Ann has a unique ability to create a culturally safe environment, recognising and building on thought processes and learning styles specific to our Indigenous culture and shaping them into a way that empowers us to use our unique worldview to solve everyday management problems. Ann taught with genuine heart, challenging us to question our own assumptions about what we could achieve.”**

Student comment







## RECIPIENT

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

#### Dr Junwen Chen, Dr Olivia Evans

ANU College of Health and Medicine, School of Medicine and Psychology

**Synopsis:** Drs Olivia Evans and Junwen Chen co-developed and are now co-conveners of a new undergraduate course, Culture and Psychology, which is now a core course in the accredited sequence for ANU Psychology degrees. The aim of this course is to explore the concept of culture and demonstrate how psychological science is a product of the culture in which psychologists are embedded.

**C**ulture and Psychology is an undergraduate course that started running in Semester 1, 2022. Held as an elective in 2022 and 2023, the course is now mandatory for all students seeking entry into honours in Psychology at ANU.

The course situates mainstream psychology in the culture from which it has emerged and then explores some psychological implications of practicing psychology as a Eurocentric science, particularly in the context of the colonial history of Australia. Students also learn how to apply their knowledge of cross-cultural differences in their real lives and work, and develop an understanding of difficulties practitioners may face in working with clients whose culture is different from their own.

At its core, the course integrates a diverse array of guest lecturers, each bringing their unique expertise and cultural background to the course and offering unique perspectives on the discipline. The knowledge the guest lecturers bring not only broadens students' understanding but also creates an atmosphere of mutual

respect and shared learning.

The course is grounded in Indigenous psychology and decolonisation, delving into the historical context, challenges and strengths of Indigenous peoples, fostering a sound understanding among students. This section of the course is purposefully led by Dr Evans, an Indigenous academic, who aims to nurture a sense of social justice and critical thinking within the students. The carefully developed tutorials also offer a platform for students to engage in dialogue and reflection activities that facilitate a deeper understanding of the course material. This interactive approach ensures that students actively engage with Indigenous research methods and knowledge systems, allowing them to internalise and apply the concepts covered in the lectures.

**"I think this course is probably the most important course that I will ever take. The content that it taught is so important and the fact that the course did not just state the relationship between culture and psychology, but it also presented how this plays out in clinical work."**

Student comment



## RECIPIENT

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

**Amanda Stuart, Aidan Hartshorn, Alison Simpson, Shane Herrington**

ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences, School of Art and Design

**Synopsis:** The ANU School of Art and Design's Environment Studio team's tertiary electives and community programs are the culmination of many dedicated minds, hearts and hands. They are made possible due to the generous contributions of First Nations artists and educators.

These field-based initiatives provide students from across the ANU with meaningful learning opportunities that encompass aspects of the depth and vibrancy of First Nations culture. Key values of respect, reciprocity, truth telling/listening, and cultural safety are central to course objectives and emergent community outreach programs.

**T**eaching approach: The Environment Studio team's Balawan and Buugang electives are internationally unique in their repeat format, field-based delivery. They are co-designed with First Nations staff and collaborators who, alongside non-Indigenous contributors, engage students in culturally safe, respectful and, at times, challenging learning environments.

Camping on country, participants experience the potency of peer learning and course content directly from local cultural knowledge holders. Such a format is not only intellectually invigorating, but often personal, and a deeply motivating means to inform creative practice. Experiential field-based learning opportunities provide students the "breathing space" to reflect and creatively respond within a culturally safe framework, in opportunities that are

frequently described as "life changing."

The Environmental Studio provides opportunities for transformational learning, encouraging students to explore their own creative learning journeys in a multitude of ways. Students are drawn from a wide range of creative practices, spanning all visual arts workshops, as well as from the wider University. A healthy respect for diverse perspectives and approaches to the creative process results.

At the heart of these courses are sustained collaborations with contemporary First Nations voices and an unequivocal commitment to including these perspectives—unfiltered. Alongside nuanced cultural material and truth telling/listening opportunities, students frequently encounter challenging themes. Consequently, great care is taken to support pastoral needs, alongside individual academic learning requirements.

Field-based educational environments are internationally recognised in promoting transformational pedagogical learning opportunities. The Environment Studio team's First Nations focus, and co-delivery ensures culturally appropriate ways to learn on Country as a means to foster experiential, reflexive creative responses and collaborations.

**"As teachers, they transform learning, transform lives, and transform and encourage creative futures between First Nations people and students."**

Julian Laffan, Sharing Stories Arts Exchange, 2023







## HIGHLY COMMENDED

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR PROGRAMS THAT ENHANCE LEARNING

#### Technology-Enhanced Learning and Teaching

**Associate Professor Alexandra Webb, Dr Katharina Freund, Ms Vinuri Wijedasa, Ms Thao Tran, Mrs Leesa Grimm, Ms Yili Peng**

ANU College of Health and Medicine, School of Medicine and Psychology

**Synopsis:** The School of Medicine and Psychology (SMP) Technology-Enhanced Learning and Teaching (TELT) team is a collaborative group of passionate education professionals strongly committed to inclusive education. TELT has led a substantial program of work since 2016 to develop an effective digital environment and interactive activities to enhance the teaching and learning experience in the medical program.

The TELT team's work on the Doctor of Medicine and Surgery (MCHD) program is grounded in a pedagogical approach known as the TELT Framework for the creation of a sustainable flipped and blended learning environment. It focuses on the use of active and authentic learning during face-to-face classes supported by digital pre-class activities and formative assessments with feedback. The outcome of this work has been the creation of hundreds of reusable digital resources integrated within student-centred learning approaches.

The TELT team has worked on several major digital uplift projects. From 2016 to 2019, a holistic evaluation of the digital learning environment was conducted which led to significant changes to improve the use of WATTLE, including introducing a learning content management system to better manage teaching resources and allow students to search; reducing the number of WATTLE sites from 127 to 5; and, improving the design, navigation and organisation of the

sites for clarity and consistency. Since 2020, the TELT team has collaborated with staff to implement a digital clinical portfolio system for student work-integrated learning (WIL) during clinical placements in hospitals and GP practices to document student learning. This cloud-based platform includes a dashboard that enables students and staff to easily provide feedback and track progress.

Staff and student development is a critical component of the TELT program of work to enhance digital literacy and educational practice. To support the development of our future medical educators, medical students in the final years of the medical program are engaged as co-creators in TELT projects. Since 2017, 19 students have been employed to contribute to 13 projects across a range of disciplines and have provided insightful student perspectives to enhance educational offerings to their peers and future student cohorts.

To learn more, please visit our website:

<https://telt.weblogs.anu.edu.au>.

**“The [Australian Medical Council Accreditation] Team was particularly impressed by the professionalism, skills, enthusiasm and leadership of the TELT team in providing innovative and relevant resources for students [...].”**

SMP Director Professor Paul Fitzgerald



## RECIPIENT

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR PROGRAMS THAT ENHANCE LEARNING

#### French

**Associate Professor Leslie Barnes, Dr Ashok Collins, Dr Solène Inceoglu and Dr Gemma King**

ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences, School of Literature, Languages and Linguistics

**Synopsis:** Providing classroom and in-country experiences that explore francophone cultures, societies and histories at all language levels, the ANU French program is a close-knit, vibrant, collaborative and transdisciplinary team comprised of Associate Professor Leslie Barnes and Senior Lecturers Ashok Collins, Solène Inceoglu and Gemma King. Together, they are devoted to nurturing their diverse student cohort.

instance, we regularly invite guest speakers, such as diplomats and researchers from New Caledonia, Canada, France, Mauritius and Switzerland, who bring new perspectives and expert knowledge into our courses to inspire and engage students. We have also developed strong relationships with cultural institutions and the film and theatre communities in Canberra, with internship, writing and presentation opportunities for our students with the Alliance Française, the Embassy of France, the Street Theatre and the French Film Festival.

Whether in the classroom, the city of Canberra or abroad, we work together to help our students feel safe and valued, and to make French a central part of their studies, lives and ways of thinking about the world.

**“Taking French courses at ANU has been greatly enjoyable! Each course has progressively pushed me to expand my knowledge and proficiency in French. [...] The high quality of teaching and significant support provided by the French faculty have enhanced my experiences, and I look forward to continuing to complete French courses as part of my studies.”**

French student comment, 2022

The French program seeks to advance knowledge in the language, literature, film and philosophy of the French-speaking world by delivering world-leading research and an outstanding student learning experience. Whether on campus, through internships or through our long- and short-term study abroad programs, we are committed to engaging students with the global French-speaking community, especially in Europe and the Asia-Pacific region. Our teaching guides students to develop deep understandings of francophone language and culture, and to build their own meaningful relationship with them. We work closely as a team on innovative co-teaching, co-publishing and outreach work to further the University's exemplary standing in languages.

Among the strengths of the French program are our multidisciplinary profiles and outreach-driven culture. Over the years, we have created and strengthened diverse cultural and diplomatic relations to expand and enrich student experience in and outside the classroom. For





## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR PROGRAMS THAT ENHANCE LEARNING

#### Statistical Support Network

#### Associate Professor Alice Richardson

Office of Research and Innovative Services, Research Initiatives and Infrastructure

**Synopsis:** The Statistical Support Network is a network of statisticians that provides expert statistical advice in study design, data collection and data analysis. Associate Professor Alice Richardson was instrumental in its development in early 2021. The network contributes to student learning through one-on-one consultations, a curated collection of resources on statistical techniques, and workshops tailored to the needs of specific cohorts.

Good statistical design, analysis and reporting are crucial elements of quantitative research projects. It is important to a research-intensive university such as the ANU to offer statistical support to student researchers and their supervisors at Honours, Masters and PhD level, to instil in them the importance of collaboration and seeking advice early on in a project, and, once data are collected, to analyse and interpret them appropriately. It is also important to support early career researchers with advice on cutting-edge statistical methodology and applications that are beyond their existing expertise.

Alice was instrumental in developing the Statistical Support Network (SSN), a novel initiative that grew out of organisational restructuring in early 2021. The budget emergency triggered by COVID led to a need to test a new way of providing statistical support, making creative use of a smaller pool of directly employed statisticians. The objective of the SSN is to be the most

significant source of statistical advice at ANU, valuing collaboration, competence, integrity and leadership.

Alice brings one more special value to the work of the SSN: kindness. This may be a surprising value for a team of quantitative researchers dealing in numbers, but the nature of statistical support is that it often contains a thread of counselling. Some research students who approach the SSN are at their wits' end, with a research question that seems unanswerable, and supervisors who have run out of ideas on how to approach the problem. The kindness of a statistician in these situations contributes to a high quality student experience.

In summary, Alice has taken leadership in the field of teaching excellence through statistical support at ANU, and has gone beyond merely making it work to making it worthwhile.

**“It was a joy to collaborate with SSN statisticians who had in-depth understanding of statistics and were able to present multiple alternatives/methods for data analysis and took on a consulting role. It was a pleasure to learn new concepts and how they could be adapted to the research project. The statisticians were friendly, resourceful and approachable.”**

Student comment





## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR PROGRAMS THAT ENHANCE LEARNING

#### Chemical Biology

#### Associate Professor Christoph Nitsche

ANU College of Science, Research School of Chemistry

**Synopsis:** The Chemical Biology program provides an engaging and interdisciplinary learning experience. Bridging chemistry and biology, it offers a unique opportunity for students to unravel complex biological problems through chemical insights and techniques. Over the past five years, Christoph has played a pivotal role in the program's success, excelling as convener, lecturer, lab coordinator and research project supervisor.

I strongly believe in the value of interdisciplinary teaching and learning to prepare students for the challenges ahead. Interdisciplinary education breaks down the barriers between different fields, nurturing creative problem-solving and innovative thinking.

The attraction of the Chemical Biology program lies in its departure from a traditional curriculum, aiming to dismantle disciplinary boundaries and recognising that solutions for real-world challenges and scientific breakthroughs often emerge from the synergy between multiple disciplines. The program is at the forefront of integrating contemporary content that resonates well with students. For example, I introduced bioorthogonal chemistry (Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2022), drug discovery against COVID-19 and other emerging viral infectious diseases, and peptides as next-generation therapeutics. I also enjoy incorporating examples from my ongoing research into the coursework.

This practice not only adds relevant context but also helps students establish meaningful connections and prepares them for potential research projects.

The program has consistently drawn a strong student intake from across the campus, including a substantial number of international students, thereby enriching the diversity within the student cohort. Recognising the evolving educational landscape during the pandemic, I introduced laboratory videos, restructured laboratory class formats, and streamlined the assessment process to foster a cohesive and equitable learning environment. My vision for the Chemical Biology program is that it continues to reinvent itself and empowers students to embrace a broader perspective, enabling them to tackle complex problems that demand insights from different scientific disciplines.

**“Christoph was obviously the master of his game and delivered information at a reasonable pace and clearly explained. I liked the way he incorporated examples from his recent COVID-19 work into our classes, showing a direct link between our learning and the real world.”**

Student comment, SELT, 2022





## RECIPIENT

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR PROGRAMS THAT ENHANCE LEARNING

#### Systems Engineering Core

**Dr Jeremy Smith, A/Prof Marnie Shaw, Mrs Jenny Simmons, A/Prof Kim Blackmore, Dr Chris Browne, Prof Robert Mahony, A/Prof Fiona Beck, Prof Jochen Trumppf, Dr Nicolò Malagutti, Dr Catherine Galvin**

ANU College of Engineering, Computing and Cybernetics, School of Engineering

**Synopsis:** In 2020, the School of Engineering commenced delivery of a redesigned systems engineering core embedded across the four-year undergraduate engineering degree. Team-based work on authentic projects is supported by flipped classrooms and active learning in innovative teaching spaces. The new program has had a 13% increase in overall SELT experience of learning and attracted \$520,000 of external funding.

The new systems engineering core in the ANU Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) and Research and Development (R&D) programs replicates current engineering practice with a focus on diverse teams working in the complex contexts of the 21st century. New courses utilise active and project-based learning and flipped classrooms delivered in fit-for-purpose refurbished learning spaces while authentic assessment built around reflection and feedback loops support learning.

A distinctive element of the new core is a suite of project hubs – groupings of real-world projects aligned with individual course outcomes which provide coherence over the program. Project hubs align with current systems engineering practice and include complex transdisciplinary contexts: healthcare, transportation, space, food security (agritechnology), resilience (humanitarian

engineering), and energy transitions (electrification).

Shared relationships with project partners enable projects to be supported over multiple courses and years as opportunities develop. ANU engineering graduates are encouraging their employers to propose projects, providing alumni the opportunity to scope projects and act as a point of reference for current students. This allows alumni to share their journeys since graduation and strengthen links with a range of industry partners.

Prizes from clients and philanthropy have been donated for different courses and project hubs with \$25,000 of funds available each year to recognise student innovation and impact. Critical to the success of the new core was staff cultural change to provide a program-level focus over all core courses supported by team-based teaching, and shared resources and coordination.

**“The main assessment task (project) was fun while still being challenging. It helped improve and develop my technical skills, creative thinking skills and also my ability to work productively in a team.”**

Student comment, SELT



## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN SUPERVISION

#### Associate Professor Bernard Baffour

ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences, School of Demography

**Synopsis:** My supervisory practice inspires students to break down barriers in statistical thinking and add methodological rigour into my PhD students' projects through developing innovative practices to promote excellence. My empathetic and approachable supervisory style allows me to take genuine interest in the academic and personal needs of students and assist them to successfully navigate their PhDs to completion.

**M**y primary goal as an educator is to highlight the importance of quantitative research skills and statistical literacy for candidates as they develop to become future leaders in academia, industry and government.

I use my expertise as a statistical demographer and my unique experience as a consulting statistician in academia, government and industry. I encourage this collaborative approach in my teaching to guide students in finding innovative solutions to 'real world' problems using statistics.

I strive to communicate statistical methods in an easy to understand manner. In doing so, my students develop useful critical skills in bringing powerful new quantitative approaches to guide their empirical research.

I have successfully implemented a number of research activities – reading groups, masterclasses, post-graduate symposia and workshops, and networking events – that enable students to flourish in their academic journey while navigating

personal pressures and difficulties.

As one of the few members of staff from the African sub-continent, my visibility to this community of students cultivates inclusion and provides a living example of diversity within ANU. I am an avenue for African students to seek guidance, support and mentorship.

**“Bernie’s extensive statistical knowledge assisted me in strengthening my thesis’ methodological and statistical aspects. He always encouraged me not to give up. His support helped me manage my stressful time and submit my thesis in time. His thoughtful approaches have tremendously enhanced me to become a data analyst specialist.”**

Student comment







## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN SUPERVISION

#### Dr AJ Mitchell SFHEA

ANU College of Science, Research School of Physics

**Synopsis:** AJ Mitchell is a dedicated educator with a sustained track record of integrating students from diverse backgrounds in his research. They collaborate on projects that use particle accelerators to test the structure and radioactive decay of atomic nuclei. Those students regularly contribute to ground-breaking discoveries in nuclear physics, and enter the workforce with a deep understanding of nuclear science and technology.

Student supervision allows me to combine my passions for research and education on a daily basis. My field of experimental nuclear physics is a highly collaborative one, underpinned by access to research infrastructure in particle-accelerator facilities at home and abroad. As a student in the UK, I had to travel overseas to collect data for my PhD project. At ANU, it is a privilege to offer our students direct access to the Heavy Ion Accelerator Facility for their research, an experience that is unique in Australia and rare in the world. From the get-go, I also encourage students to understand how their work fits into the global context, and they often get to meet and work with my international collaborators and learn about their research at overseas laboratories.

The diverse nature of my research portfolio allows me to carefully consider each student's individual skills, experiences and desired learning outcomes on a case-by-case basis. Experiential learning aspects of my projects – such as opportunities to build, touch, test, break (hopefully not too

often), diagnose and fix different kinds of radiation detectors – give students a deep, critical understanding of nuclear science and technology. I am also able to effectively construct projects that range in scope from those that support first-year undergraduates at the beginning of their journey to those that enable PhD students to build entirely new lines of research at our laboratory. This approach has often led to student participation and leadership in journal publications and awards, as well as invitations to students to present their work at conferences.

As well as guiding their research, I think that inspiring, mentoring and encouraging students to become well-rounded scientists trained to 'think like a physicist' is so important. By regularly questioning their observations, and those of others, they develop the capacity to think critically about a topic and the confidence to apply their knowledge in whichever pathway they are motivated to follow in the future.

**“AJ embeds students of all levels, abilities and diverse backgrounds into his world-leading research program, in many cases supporting them as they grow from undergraduate research projects through to honours and PhD research, and even into their future careers.”**

Colleague comment.



## RECIPIENT

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN SUPERVISION

#### Associate Professor Riccardo Natoli

ANU College of Health and Medicine, The School of Medicine and Psychology (SMP)  
and The John Curtin School of Medical Research

**Synopsis:** Associate Professor Riccardo Natoli is the Associate Director of Research Development at the School of Medicine and Psychology (SMP) and Head of Clear Vision Research at The John Curtin School of Medical Research (JCSMR). Over the last decade he has created an environment for scientific learning and exploration focused on one core principle: 'invest in people'.

This 'invest in people' principle emanates throughout all aspects my group's research endeavours in exploring the molecular basis for age-related macular degenerations, the number one cause of blindness in the western world.

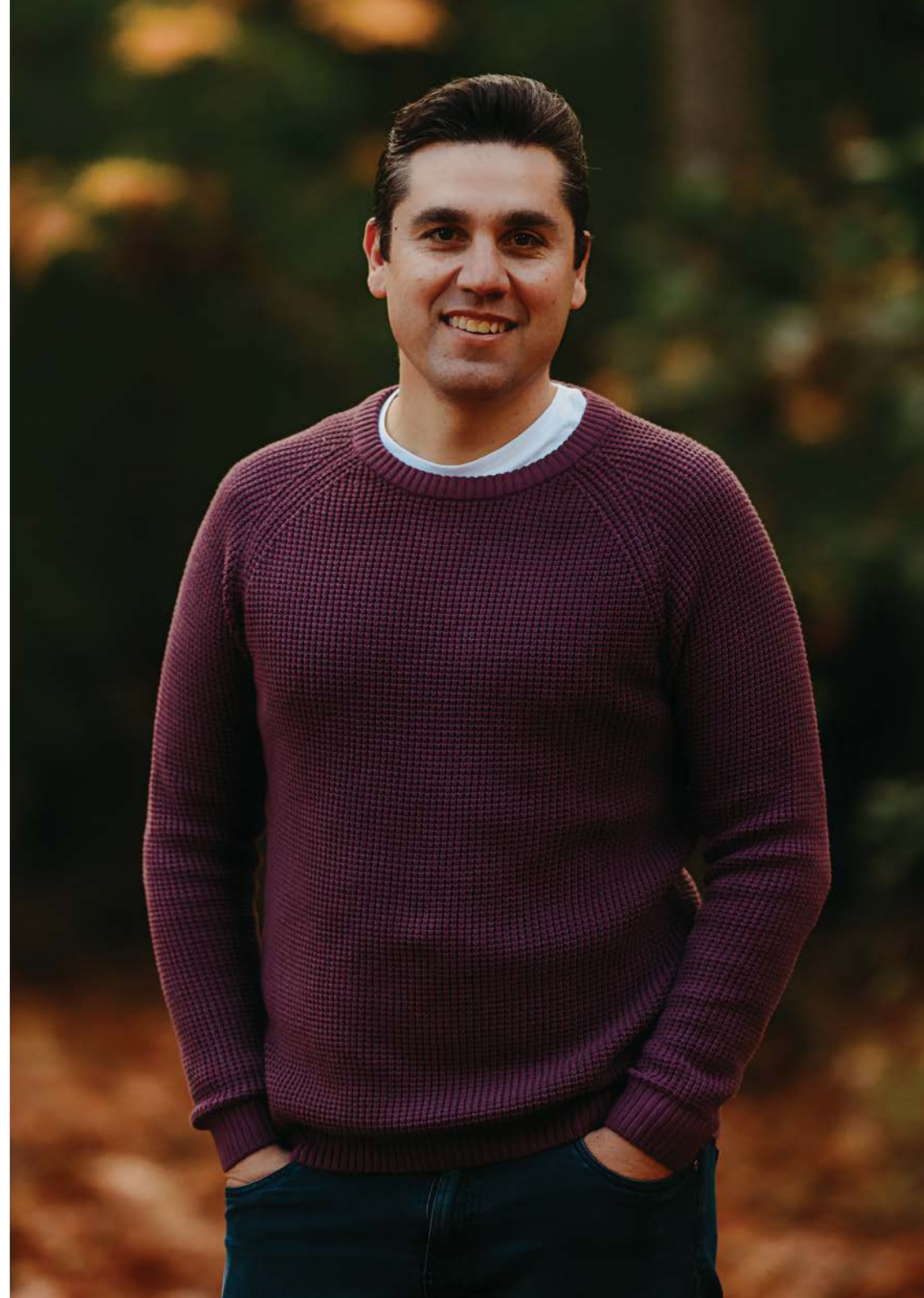
In establishing this core principle at Clear Vision Research we have developed a reputation of being one of the most productive, innovative and sought-after research groups for students and staff at the ANU. Through providing opportunities to work alongside industry, healthcare, academia and people living with retinal degenerations, implementing an innovative student selection process and integrating student co-designed research projects, I strive to tailor the learning experience of the students to their career ambitions. I have created an inclusive, team-focused environment which attempts to encourage diversity of thought and has enabled students and staff to come to the ANU from across the globe. By engaging with students daily as equals, I am able to provide tailored supervision, counsel and advice. My mission is to empower everyone in my team, and beyond, to

attain their career goals and maximise lifelong opportunities.

I am a consultative leader who utilises team building to create plans and make decisions. I embed this in my supervisory style and believe the number one rule of consultative/collaborative supervision is effective communication. This involves being proficient in a combination of active listening and empathetic responses. Not all students will react to the same information in the same way and being able to understand how a student will respond to constructive, critical and actionable feedback in a timely manner is imperative for all student supervision. I prioritise the wellbeing of the students and staff, and where needed I play a significant role in providing personal support, guidance and other resources to all members of my lab family.

“[Professor Natoli] has worked with me to shape my research path to align with my interests and aspirations, encouraging me to collaborate with not only academic research labs but also industry leaders, providing opportunities rare for most PhD students. I have always admired his ability to bring together people to create a close-knit lab family, where everyone feels heard and valued.”

PhD student testimonial, 2021







## RECIPIENT

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S CITATION FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO STUDENT LEARNING

#### Associate Professor Nick Cox

ANU College of Science, Research School of Chemistry

**Synopsis:** Nick has developed a chemical skills stream, which uses online and flipped classroom resources to promote self-directed learning. The aim is to provide training that is both discipline specific and translational, catering to all students regardless of their background or aspirations. The highly structured curriculum allows students to engage with the material at their own pace and encourages peer-to-peer learning.

I want all of my students to have fun while learning: to simultaneously feel that they have a high degree of agency and autonomy, while also feeling continuously supported. After some experimentation I found that a structured flipped classroom model works best for me in achieving these goals. I shifted and condensed all lecture content online, with contact hours now devoted to students working in small groups. This classroom model lets the student progress through the material at their own pace. I believe it promotes meaningful student-student and student-teacher partnerships, by allowing students to rapidly self-identify what they are having difficulty with, as opposed to whole topics or sections, making it easier for them to approach me or their peers with questions. It also frees up time for me to work individually with students, to better encourage and support their learning.

The switch to online resources and learning has, in my opinion, many benefits. Modelling is now a fundamental part of all chemical disciplines and hands-on training on how to use common

modelling software and interpret the results is essential for a 21st century chemical education. I've tried to build in these skills (simple coding, data analysis and simulation) into my courses and assessment.

As so much of chemistry is about what molecules look like, I've increasingly moved towards setting graphical assessment items, where students use software to visualise molecules in 3D and then use these visualisation tools to fill in diagrams. I found that these types of problems really help student engagement and peer-to-peer activity and they allow more advanced material to be covered – by providing a simple, self-evident framework in which the problem needs to be solved. I've also developed novel teaching aids e.g. spectrometer simulators, which serve the same purpose and link lecture content to hands-on training in the laboratory.

**“I really enjoyed the lectures as the content was really interesting. I massively appreciated being given the script for each video, because it meant I could focus on what was being said rather than on writing everything down. The shorter video length was good and I found the quizzes a super super helpful way to check I was understanding everything.”**

Student comment, SELT 2023



## HIGHLY COMMENDED

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S CITATION FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO STUDENT LEARNING

#### Dr Katrina Grant and Dr Terhi Nurmikko-Fuller

ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences, Research School of Humanities and the Arts, Centre for Digital Humanities Research

**Synopsis:** How do we get humanities students excited about coding and computer scientists using museums and archives? By encouraging diversity and creativity, and by allowing the freedom to take risks. Our aims align with ANU Graduate Attributes: we equip students of all academic backgrounds with the skills to critically engage with the digital world through real-world problem-solving in a cultural heritage context.

The aim of the Masters of Digital Humanities and Public Culture is to develop cohorts of students who have the skills to critically engage with the digital world regardless of their academic background. To show students the value of cross-disciplinary skills we created a program where they work directly with the cultural heritage sector to solve problems focused on public engagement, education and museum accessibility. They learn collaboration through group work and acquire transferable skills that prepare them for working life.

Partnerships with museums and archives allow students to understand the value of both humanities and digital expertise by applying it to problem solving in a real-world context. At the same time, a selection of student projects from our award-winning courses have become public facing projects via the National Museum of Australia and the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia; we have won an award for our teaching from the British Library (UK).

We have designed practical assessments based on building digital prototypes

(games, apps, websites), presentation skills and planning rather than essays and exams. We value research that is publicly engaged and have worked with a wide range of partners across the ANU campus, in various places in Australia and internationally.

We encourage students to value the different kinds of knowledge and expertise they and others bring to their teams. As advocates for a more diverse workforce in digital technology fields we go the extra mile to ensure gender, cultural and language diversity is supported in our student cohort and is visible in the resources that our students work with.

We seek to instil in our students a sense of confidence when encountering the digital, a sense of curiosity and respect for cultural heritage, and the skills to successfully navigate an increasingly computerised world.

**“[The] support of self-directed learning is unparalleled in quality and effort. The course has a unique structure. [...] It combines genuine academic efforts (not just rephrasing papers into essays) with the creation of a meaningful and useful piece of work, resulting in a feeling of genuine contribution to both the academic and cultural sphere which few courses ever manage.”**

Student comment, 2020







## HIGHLY COMMENDED

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S CITATION FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO STUDENT LEARNING

#### Professor Jolyon Ford

ANU College of Law

**Synopsis:** I worked with educational experts to design and scale-up more engaged, interactive learning activities in a large first-year compulsory law subject. I did so by introducing active and interactive pre-class, in-class and post-class learning and peer engagement opportunities into what were hitherto mostly content-heavy lectures and tutorials with limited scope for building cohort cohesion and belonging.

**M**y approach to teaching first-year law students is to enhance more active learning through greater scope for students to experience active pre-class and in-class engagement, as well as an early introduction to assessed group work. My intention is to promote—at the outset of their degree studies—students taking responsibility for their own learning, while also normalising interactivity in the classroom. My approach is also intended to reduce marginalisation and foster a greater sense of cohort cohesion and belonging.

I attempt to shift from mere intake, recall and replication towards 'higher-order' thinking skills (and make very overt to students my intention to help them to make this shift). This involves trying to privilege active student self-construction of 'threshold concepts' that they can use to navigate the often large volume of materials involved in law studies from mere recall and replication towards 'higher-order' thinking. I see this focus on key concepts as contrasting with the entrenched approach in law studies which can be content-heavy or revolve

unduly around mastering formulaic analytical tasks.

I select tech-based visual and other platforms to enable self-paced pre-class modules and formative interactive quizzes: not to replace core reading, but to help build conceptual understanding. In the large-group lectures I incorporate digitally mediated class discussions and participation using polling software (on students' own devices), in line with principles of inclusive pedagogy and universal design approaches. This allows students to discuss key concepts or cases with peers, facilitating interaction and collaboration. This was not simply 'bolting on' technology to traditional lecture styles: the aim was good pedagogy, not technology for its own sake. My aim is that the class becomes a community invested in co-creating knowledge.

**"... a far more exciting introduction to law than I expected (being initially apprehensive)."**

Student comment

**"... your commitment through COVID and genuine desire to see us learn, above and beyond focus on marks, was instrumental..."**

Student comment



## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S CITATION FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO STUDENT LEARNING

#### Ms Anne McNaughton

ANU College of Law

**Synopsis:** I am committed to teaching innovation to ensure that students not only achieve competence in the doctrinal fundamentals but understand how these are inevitably nuanced across practical contexts and how they interact with other disciplinary perspectives. My approach is to embed these fundamentals in a series of contextual readings to stimulate students' consideration of the potential complexities of such law in practice.

Even before Covid, students' preference was for in-person learning rather than online course delivery as evidenced by research by two of our own ANU doctoral students (for secondary students, Lai 2019; for tertiary students, Redpath 2011). Typically research into students' perceptions of online learning find that the positives tend to be towards the practicalities of convenience, accessibility and economy, while the negatives pertain to both learning process problems and psychosocial barriers to learning exemplified by misunderstandings, isolation, decreased motivation, a lack of challenge, disengagement, a lack of feedback and apathy (Curelaru, Curelaru & Cristea 2022).

In facing the challenge of a dual level cohort for an elective in 2022 delivered completely online with different entry and learning outcome thresholds, the issues implicit in the research needed to be confronted and strategies put in place to ameliorate the negative aspects. Reflecting on this informed my approach to teaching and supporting my students' learning in ways that influenced,

motivated and inspired students to learn. My students recognised and appreciated my approach, engaging critically and actively with new and different perspectives on the law they were studying. I was also able to draw upon the ethnic diversity of the group to further enhance potential ways of thinking and acting in relation to these perspectives.

The seminar program followed an incremental series of diverse critical readings providing divergent perspectives on the intersection of law and gender in the commercial space. These critical readings framed assessable discussions and reflection, extrapolation and critical analysis for all students. The seminar program was designed to create an open assessment process for students as opposed to a closed one where essays are produced by individuals and read by a lecturer. Students engaged with each other in the seminars offering constructive evaluative comment.

**“Just wanted to say thank you for the course this semester! I was slightly dubious of the feminist lens through which the course was run when we started, but as the course progressed, I [found] it was useful and did make me take a more critical perspective of certain aspects of the law. Overall, I think it was a very useful course in helping to develop my academic rigor and a good way of rounding out the final semester of university.”**

Student comment, 2020







## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S CITATION FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO STUDENT LEARNING

#### Associate Professor Christopher Roberts

ANU Medical School, School of Medicine and Psychology

**Synopsis:** My involvement with the ANU School of Medicine began 18 years ago at the commencement of the Medical School. Identifying a gap in the orthopaedic teaching of the ANU Medical students, in 2021 I worked to create a series of lectures and background material that would improve students' training and readiness to work after graduation. The lecture content and material focused on common and practical orthopaedic conditions which students would encounter in their intern years and in general practice.

My joy in teaching derives from seeing the students understand a topic better as a result of my teaching methods. Nothing provides more satisfaction than when interns and residents tell me years later that they finally understood something and remembered how I had explained it to them.

**W**hen ANU decided to establish the ANU Medical School I was determined to become involved to support this important addition to the University and the training of doctors in Australia. I joined the syllabus development committee developing the Musculoskeletal program that was to be delivered in the 2nd year.

I have been delivering these lectures and tutorials continuously since 2006. Rather than trying to describe all of the anatomical landmarks, my lectures and tutorials focus on those areas that are relevant to clinical practice.

To engage and stimulate the students, I have introduced orthopaedic registrars as demonstrators at anatomy tutorials,

to act as a teaching and vocational stimulus aimed at inspiring and motivating students. The students interact with the registrars, many of whom have now graduated through the ANU Medical School. Students not only benefit from the clinical knowledge registrars provide, but also from the introduction to a pathway to future careers in surgery.

In 2020, my colleagues and I created anatomy videos in the Anatomy Lab with cadaver specimens and combined these with Powerpoint tutorials. These resources have become a valuable part of the students' online knowledge base. In order to address a gap in the orthopaedic teaching of 4th year students, I developed a six-week syllabus in orthopaedics. The aim was to round off students' accumulated knowledge over the previous three years and give them the skills to deal with the common orthopaedic conditions they would encounter in emergency and in general practice. The development of the 4th year orthopaedic module has dramatically enhanced the level of orthopaedic knowledge students have on graduation, which I truly believe translates into more confidence and skill of our new doctors.

**"Dr Roberts has always gone above and beyond for his students. He is extremely enthusiastic and always welcomes his new students. I have not met a more passionate doctor. He is one of the main reasons I have decided to pursue a career in Orthopaedics. He is an excellent role model for me, other students and the profession as a whole."**

Student comment



## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S CITATION FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO STUDENT LEARNING

#### Honorary Professor Mr Richard Rowe PSM

ANU College of Law

**Synopsis:** As an Honorary Professor in the College of Law, following a long career with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, I have a strong commitment to “giving back”: through engaging with students, as a teacher and mentor, to develop their practical international legal skills and to give them guidance and encouragement as they move forward in their studies and professional careers. I draw upon my extensive diplomatic and negotiation experience to combine theory with practice: to teach “the tradecraft” of international law and the importance of interpersonal relations.

**M**y approach to learning and teaching can be described as: substantive; knowledge and skills-based development; encouragement; mentorship and empathetic.

I aim to ensure, in every course I teach, that students have a sound understanding of the relevant legal principles and rules in relation to a particular subject area and to then engage in the practical application of that learning, particularly through negotiation exercises of different kinds, to develop their confidence and stimulate their interest in applying that knowledge and experience in “real life”, whatever the context.

In the Dispute Resolution courses, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, with their focus on the mechanisms in the United Nations Charter, I aim to inject a strong dose of reality, pragmatism and “tradecraft” through describing my own experiences and by arranging for guest presenters to talk about their own. The guest presenters are experts and

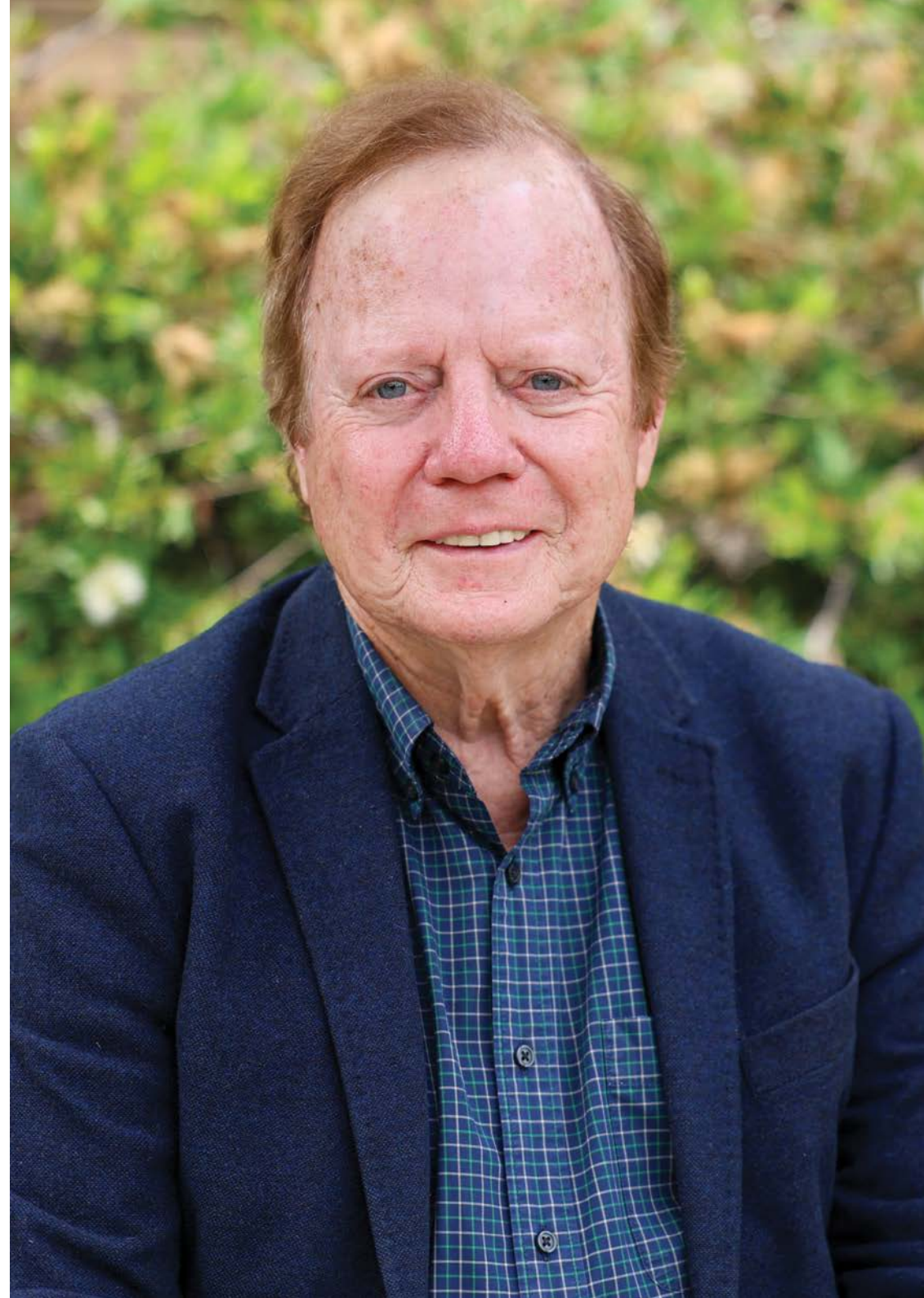
practitioners in International Dispute Resolution (IDR) from the government and private sectors who also provide career guidance. The students seem to really enjoy hearing from people who have actually engaged with these dispute resolution mechanisms.

Equally, the students participate enthusiastically in role playing in the workshop simulations, which have an emphasis on developing negotiation skills through students playing different roles in real-life international dispute scenarios. Some students, while initially wary about this part of the course, have indicated in their feedback that they actually enjoyed putting into practice the negotiation “tips” and advice which they had been taught in class; had gained confidence; had enhanced their oral skills; and, had enjoyed working in small teams with other students.

My hope is that this approach of combining theory and practice, together with the lessons learned from experienced practitioners, will equip students with the skills and confidence to apply them, effectively, in whatever career path they might chose.

**“Professor Rowe has been nothing less than inspiring as a teacher. His ability to engage with his students on an individual level elevated this course from a subject with interesting content to an experience which gripped me and made me excited to attend his classes.”**

Student comment, 2023







## RECIPIENT

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S CITATION FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO STUDENT LEARNING

#### Professor Bruce Scates and Ms Alexandra McCosker

ANU Research School of Social Sciences, School of History

**Synopsis:** Despite the pandemic, Bruce Scates and Alex McCosker delivered a series of teaching tours, carefully calibrating travel to ensure student safety. Local, global and regional in their reach, these tours took students to the places where history happened, grounding their learning in commemorative landscapes and museums, allowing them to build partnerships with key cultural institutions, while fostering collaborative, experiential learning.

‘Historians’, an ANU Emeritus once remarked, ‘must learn the art of time travel’. We see history as an immersive practice. To better understand the past, we must walk the ground where history happened, engage with the keepers and markers of memory, and situate ourselves in a world at once real and imagined.

The purpose of such teaching is not simply to convey a ‘set’ body of knowledge. Rather, it is to spark intellectual curiosity and foster a lively and supportive community of learning.

The tours we developed (and daily adapted) affirmed the value of face-to-face teaching and learning at a time when the student experience is increasingly atomised and isolated, nurtured ‘learning in place’ and strengthened ANU’s engagement with cultural institutions in Australia and abroad.

Believing history is far too important to be bound by a classroom, we promote critical interaction with memorial sites, museums, archives and civic landscapes;

we offer students the opportunity to learn from an international network of scholars and foster a sense of global citizenship. Affirmative education should be empowering, engaging and inclusive, and time travellers, like effective teachers, must cross new frontiers of knowledge. So we invite our students to take control of the Tardis and chart their own journey across a challenging and ever-changing universe. We encourage them to work together, affirming (as this team application does) that genuinely transformative education is a collaborative enterprise.

These tours – informed by a raft of ANU audio-visual resources – are in keeping with our University’s mission to deliver research-informed learning across both physical and digital spaces. They helped (re)connect students to the world and each other in a time of chaos and crisis.

“Scates and McCosker, working with partner museums and archives, carefully tailor their teaching to individual students, including those with special needs. This is an outstanding team who add great value to the teaching and learning in history at the ANU.”

Colleague comment

“All the knowledge and passion you have has inspired me every step of the way.”

Student comment



## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TUTORING OR DEMONSTRATING

#### Dr Joshua Black

College of Arts and Social Sciences, School of History

**Synopsis:** Joshua Black's teaching has been at the interface between Humanities, Social Sciences and Economics since 2019. His mission is to empower students not only with historical knowledge, but also with broad analytic and communicative skills that will serve them well as professionals, leaders and citizens. His rigorous, compassionate and civic-minded teaching was recognised with a 2021 CASS Teaching Award for Excellence in Tutoring.

My teaching is about challenging, empowering and supporting students as they become professionals and leaders. I relish the opportunity to help individuals step out of their disciplinary comfort zones and develop new ways of meeting and shaping their world. This means posing big, ambitious historical questions to commerce students ('Where does Australian history start?'), and it means introducing tables and data sets into humanities tutorials ('What can this data tell us about life in the Soviet Union?'). I do this in service of students' own goals and aspirations, which they articulate to me and one another in peer-to-peer exercises in the first week of semester.

I empower students by designing immersive, collaborative learning exercises that simulate real-world problems. My students in Australian economic history courses have re-enacted the Global Financial Crisis (2008-09), emulating policymakers and navigating a path through the scenario.

In third-year economic history courses, I help reconstruct historic debates about protectionism and free trade whose consequences shaped the world we live in. In this way, students become decision-makers and leaders as well as experts.

Challenging and empowering count for little without the right support. My tutorials are safe, welcoming spaces for discussion and the cross-fertilisation of knowledge. During the pandemic, my zoom tutorials were leavened with break-out tutorials that were purposeful, and online consultation hours that were well-attended.

To help students through what Vygotsky called the 'zone of proximal development', I discuss their ideas, their evidence and their approaches to written communication ahead of assessment tasks. In written assessment feedback, I offer comments that support students' course-specific learning, but which can also enhance their transferable analytic and argumentative skills. I use mid-semester surveys to gauge student experiences and adapt my pedagogical approaches accordingly.

**"Josh was excellent, kind, his tutes were so much fun, very interactive and engaging. Feedback for assessments was incredible."**

Student comment, SELT, 2022







## RECIPIENT

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TUTORING OR DEMONSTRATING

#### Mr James Edgar Lim

Research School of Social Sciences, School of Philosophy

**Synopsis:** James' pedagogical approach emphasises student engagement, motivation and comfort. With these goals in mind, he integrates novel practices and activities into classes – ranging from check-ins, songs to role-play. These practices encourage active student participation, which in turn helps students develop the skills vital in philosophy: critical thinking, clear communication, respectful debate, intellectual modesty and curiosity.

Philosophy tutorials typically have a tried-and-true format, which involves discussion questions, and classroom discussions on those questions. I depart from this format, opting for novel, interactive and engaging activities in each tutorial, often differing from week to week. These novel and interactive activities stimulate student interest, and encourage self-directed and participative learning.

For example, in a class on ethical theories, I presented students with curated real-life cases taken from the Reddit page “Am I the Asshole?”, where anonymous Internet users post stories of moral dilemmas they faced in their day-to-day lives. I then divided the class into groups, asking each group to take on the persona of a philosopher representing a moral theory. This requires students to recall and rehearse the components of ethical theories. I then invited the groups to discuss and then present how they would reply to the Reddit post, which in turn gives the students opportunities to synthesise and apply their knowledge to new cases.

To facilitate student comfort, I devote the first tutorial of every semester to a discussion on classroom norms. I invite students to discuss what they want out of the class, and to propose rules, norms or formats that we can adopt during the semester. This has led to a noticeable impact on the classroom culture, with fewer interruptions, and students from minority backgrounds participating more actively than in classes I taught earlier in my career. In addition, I devote the first five minutes of every tutorial to check-ins and warm-up activities. I invite my students, if they wish, to check-in with each other, using prompts like “Share a story of something nice that someone did for you in the last week”. This practice functions as an ice-breaker which makes the students more comfortable with each other.

Together, these measures encourage students to engage in class discussions, which helps them become better thinkers and interlocutors.

**“It's so clear that James gives everything he has to each class. He is so focused and incredibly thoughtful. He cares about what we think and redirects discussions in a sensitive, skilful way. He is generous in his interpretation of our ideas but also encourages us to refine, reflect and improve our arguments [...]”**

Student comment 2023



## HIGHLY COMMENDED

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TUTORING OR DEMONSTRATING

#### Penny Grewal-Sidhu

ANU College of Business and Economics, Research School of Management

**Synopsis:** A senior marketing professional with over a decade of industry experience, Penny offers students a unique insight into the real-world application of marketing. She teaches marketing courses at the Research School of Management (RSM) and aims to influence the next generation of marketers towards sustainable business practices. She is an Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (AFHEA) and received the ANU College of Business and Economics (CBE) 2022 Commendation for Outstanding Tutoring.

Marketing is constantly evolving, and concepts are brought to life through examples, case-studies and critical discussion. For me, entering the teaching profession was a deliberate attempt to bridge the industry-academia gap. My industry experience allows me to extend the course content beyond the textbooks and the classroom, exemplifying real-life challenges faced by marketing managers and leaders when trying to implement sustainable strategies that counteract the profit-driven goals of other stakeholders. Additionally, my PhD research helps enlighten students of the latest and ongoing research that most textbooks fail to incorporate.

My tutorials pivot towards experiential learning providing a scaffolding for students to revise concepts through deliberate and practical debates with each other, rather than a repetition of lecture content. I try to make my tutorials intellectually stimulating yet

fun (e.g. role-playing as future marketing managers), where students become involved and active partners in their learning journeys.

My passion for equity influences my teaching to a large extent. I use inclusive tools and techniques to address any accessibility issues, respect student preferences and reduce learning barriers using technology, which is an expression of my teaching philosophy. I was successful in adapting tutorial resources and course content to respect and facilitate individualised learning experiences of a diverse cohort, such as instead of using only Australian brands in case studies, multinational companies with worldwide recognition were selected to cater to the international students attending remotely.

Regular feedback from students and peers allows me to evaluate and improve my teaching practice and refine my teaching philosophy further. My aim is to support all my students in developing their knowledge and skills to become confident, well-informed and socially responsible global citizens and to enhance their employability through my marketing courses.

**“Penny exemplifies the qualities of an outstanding educator in preparing our students not only for their academic success but also their future professional careers.”**

Student comment, 2020







## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TUTORING OR DEMONSTRATING

#### Dr Edmund Handby

ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences, School of Politics and International Relations

**Synopsis:** Edmund tutors in political theory and politics, philosophy and economics. His approach to tutoring revolves around ensuring that students are motivated, engaged and comfortable sharing their own ideas. He believes that enjoying the learning process facilitates learning outcomes effectively and is inspired by principles of active learning. He has received consistently positive feedback from students on this approach and has contributed to active learning scholarship.

**M**y approach to teaching and learning prioritises enjoyment of the learning process. A common barrier students face when introduced to political theory courses is that the material can seem dense, dry and abstract. This challenges students' ability to be motivated to engage with the course and develop a clear understanding of the material.

In order to prioritise student motivation and enjoyment, I draw extensively on the active learning approach. Active learning has proven to be a method that inspires students, and is beneficial for student engagement and learning outcomes, especially in political theory. In political theory, the active learning approach encompasses a number of techniques and activities including games, simulations and role-playing. These activities are designed to facilitate engagement but also show how different conceptual ideas can translate to real-world scenarios, and ensure students feel class materials are relevant to them.

Active learning is not focused solely on enjoyment but prioritises enjoyment as a way of achieving learning outcomes and objectives.

A key benefit of the active learning approach is that it lends itself to games and activities that encourage or require either group work or whole-of-class activities. In each of the various active learning games I have designed, I have ensured that there is a group work component to benefit the students. From my own experience as an undergraduate student, I recall various times when many of the class activities or lessons were conducted individually. Not only did I not learn as well from these activities, but I found them less enjoyable than activities with my classmates. At the same time, students who are not as comfortable speaking in class are not forced to do so. In this way, the active learning approach is able to suit different approaches to learning.

**“Edmund is a passionate and highly effective teacher who uses extremely innovative classroom techniques to make political philosophy enjoyable, interesting, relevant and timely for students.”**

Colleague comment, 2023



## HIGHLY COMMENDED

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TUTORING OR DEMONSTRATING

#### Mr Leo Huang

ANU College of Business and Economics, Research School of Finance, Actuarial Studies and Statistics

**Synopsis:** Leo Huang has been tutoring actuarial and statistics courses at undergraduate, honours and postgraduate levels since 2019. With a deep understanding of the course content and a passion for tutoring, he uses cutting-edge technology to deliver complex actuarial concepts without losing the human element. Leo was awarded the ANU College of Business and Economics Teaching Commendation for Outstanding Tutoring in 2022.

Guided by a learner-centered philosophy rooted in Constructivist Learning Theory and reflective teaching, I tailor my tutoring methods to diverse student needs. In actuarial courses like Risk Modelling 2 (RM2), recognising learning challenges faced by students in grasping interconnected concepts, I harnessed the power of mind maps and connection maps to reinforce learning. These tools were chosen based on their empirically validated ability to clarify and highlight relationships among disparate ideas using colours and graphics. By emphasising these connections, the maps cater to visual learners and those struggling to see the 'bigger picture' of complex actuarial topics. Introducing these maps during tutorials served a dual purpose: they offered a novel teaching method tailored to these specific challenges and provided a structured study guide. As a result, students were better equipped to understand and reinforce pivotal theories and concepts from the course. By illuminating critical concept relationships, students deepened

their understanding and more effectively applied actuarial theories to real-world situations.

In line with the University's vision for 2025, I have utilised AI assistance to digitally enhance the delivery of my Actuarial Data Analysis (ADA) tutorials. I have leveraged AI technology to restructure R code and generate comprehensive comments and summaries, thereby transforming complex coding materials into a more digestible format. The purpose of this innovative approach is to facilitate a more comfortable and effective learning experience for students navigating the intricate landscape of R coding in ADA. The adoption of this AI-driven teaching aid reflects a forward-thinking approach to curricula design, embracing the digital evolution of learning and teaching in the field of actuarial science and statistics.

**“With Leo's incorporation of AI technology in actuarial data science tutorials, learning R code has become less intimidating and much more engaging.”**

Student Comment, 2023

**“Through actively seeking student feedback and engaging in professional development, Leo ensures his tutoring sessions are dynamic, responsive, and effective, greatly enhancing the student learning experience.”**

Peer tutor comment, 2023







## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TUTORING OR DEMONSTRATING

#### Ms Wageesha Nilmini Manamperi

ANU College of Engineering, Computing and Cybernetics, School of Engineering

**Synopsis:** Wageesha Manamperi adapts Socrates' approach in teaching to engage and stimulate students. She guides them with a sequence of questions and encourages student responses for active learning in the classroom. Wageesha motivates students to self-reflect and uplifts their learning by connecting the theories to the real world. She ensured students felt supported during COVID-19 with online delivery. She shows an excellent work ethic.

Critical thinking and scientific enquiry support an excellent learning experience for PhD students. I believe these skills are essential for all students, and help them to gain a broader perspective of the course content. Therefore, it is necessary to make a good connection between the theories and concepts that students learn with real-life applications and problems. For example, I delivered a guest lecture to deepen students' understanding of the learning outcomes of the course.

I believe the students learn better with Socratic questioning. I use this approach to answer the students' questions in my tutorials and laboratory classes. I break down complex theories and concepts and present them in a manner that sustains their attention to resolving the given questions and problems. I guide the students with a sequence of questions and encourage student responses. I provide more information if the answer is vague or incomplete. I make sure the students feel safe and comfortable

during this process. I also encourage peer learning and facilitate group discussions and teamwork. This ensures an inclusive, vibrant and enjoyable learning environment for everyone in the classroom.

I think that excellent communication in education and a willingness to put in extra effort will inspire a wide range of students. I identify the special needs of students in my classroom and provide additional support. Considerations such as this were required especially during COVID-19 as the students may have lacked support from their families and community. I actively listen to the student's issues and convey the required information clearly to them, both verbally and in written resources using different learning styles.

I accept self-reflection is central to learning that combines subject knowledge and deeper learning. I provide individual feedback to students who show inadequate understanding in their submissions. I have created my own answer scripts with the necessary working steps to get to the final solution and mark allocation. These course materials and the specific student feedback help students to self-reflect on their learning during the course.

**"She is very patient and always guides us during drop-in sessions."**

Student comment, SELT, 2021



## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TUTORING OR DEMONSTRATING

#### Mr Nguyen Viet Ngo (Paul)

ANU College of Business and Economics, Research School of Management

**Synopsis:** Nguyen Viet Ngo (Paul) is an Associate Lecturer at the Research School of Management (RSM), ANU College of Business and Economics (CBE). He has tutored and lectured 10 courses at postgraduate and undergraduate levels since 2018 in International Business, Management, Marketing, Information Systems, Economics and Political Economy. Paul was awarded the 2022 CBE Commendation for Outstanding Tutoring.

I have had an unconventional academic and professional career, with unexpected twists and turns, triumphs and setbacks, and I have channelled all of this into my teaching. Throughout my teaching career, I have drawn on my professional and personal experience as a source of inspiration to educate students. As an educator, this has required me to lower my guard and become vulnerable to students. Being vulnerable has transformed me from a “reservoir of knowledge” into a guide, a mentor and a facilitator who is aware that my knowledge is limited and can be better informed by students’ lived experience.

The disciplines that I teach – management, marketing, international business, information systems, economics and political economy – concern people and have an impact on how people interact with their surroundings and with each other. As such, I take the view that students are their own best teachers, and that our role, as educators, is to guide

students in how to best make sense of the world around them – by equipping them with the relevant tools and skills to support them in their lifelong academic, professional and personal journey. My teaching approach is affirmed by the words of a professional mentor who reminded me that “everyone has a story”.

Given the multidisciplinary nature of my courses, and the diverse backgrounds of students, academically, professionally and personally, I encourage students to take a holistic, multidisciplinary approach to learning. This links back to my “lived experience” approach, which helps students to build their critical thinking and system thinking skills, both of which are crucial for supporting students’ future careers. To do so, my tutorials are designed to create a safe space for students to engage and share their experiences, and to help them link their lived experiences to in-class concepts.

**“Mr Ngo is a great tutor who puts effort into simplifying difficult concepts and allows open conversation between all students. Open conversation in a class filled with international [student]s was such an eye-opener for me to actually hear different perspectives and ideas.”**

Student comment







## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TUTORING OR DEMONSTRATING

#### Mr Bilal Reda

ANU College of Health and Medicine, School of Medicine and Psychology

**Synopsis:** Bilal Reda makes the complex ideas of psychology – from psychometrics to psychopathology – come alive in the classroom. He takes a relational, playful approach to support students' growth into empathic and thoughtful practitioners. Bilal's commitment to experience-near learning has seen him revamp courses and develop simulated live therapy sessions, showing how psychologists can integrate theory into their practice.

Students of psychology are, in effect, studying themselves. By fostering an environment of collective exploration, play and introspection, I aim to inoculate students from reductionist and disembodied views of the behavioural sciences. Instead, I inspire them to recognise themselves, and each other, in all that they learn.

Teaching my first class in 2016, I was struck by how students spoke of retinal ganglion cells in the abstract, as though they didn't have eyes themselves. To counteract this, I began lessons with an optical illusion and asked: What do you see? Through dialogue, we transformed complex theory into shared experience. Years later, I remain faithful to the lesson I learned in that first week: meet students where they're at perceptually, psychologically and pedagogically – and bring that awareness into the "here and now". This relational and experience-near approach is the bedrock of my educational philosophy.

As a psychologist, I work in one of the most sequestered of spaces: the

therapy room. While essential for patient confidentiality, its boundaries obscure the therapeutic process for students of psychology. With two psychologists, I redesigned the Honours capstone course introducing experimental lectures and live therapy simulations in seminars, giving students a rare window into the practice of clinical psychology.

I recall with deep gratitude my teachers who elucidated the unspoken assumptions and soft knowledge needed to navigate the academy. As a first-in-family student I know the transformative power of such guidance and endeavour to pass it on to all my students at the Tjabal Centre and School of Medicine and Psychology.

My students inspire and challenge me. Motivated by one especially dedicated cohort, I curated several psychology reading groups that met over 64 evenings, delving into challenging texts beyond the conventional psychology curriculum. It has been a gift to continue learning alongside my students; witnessing their enthusiasm ripple into the wider community remains my greatest reward for teaching.

**"Bilal demonstrates a passion for education and a compassion for students that I have not witnessed in any other course, inviting students to embody and embrace education."**

Student comment



## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TUTORING OR DEMONSTRATING

#### Dr Yingnan Shi

ANU College of Business and Economics, Research School of Management

**Synopsis:** Yingnan Shi, a distinguished tutor at ANU, blends expertise in information systems, computer science and management, enriching courses with practical insights. His engaging and interdisciplinary approach maintains high attendance and fosters innovation, empowering students to excel across disciplines. Yingnan's commitment to academic excellence and innovative teaching makes him a standout nominee for the Vice-Chancellor's Awards, epitomising 'Recognising Excellence'

Yingnan Shi exemplifies innovative multidisciplinary teaching at the ANU, harmonising various disciplines to create transformative learning spaces. His teachings, deeply ingrained in the philosophy of knowledge as a community-focused, negotiated process, align with the University's commitment to world-class, research-driven education.

In courses like Organisational Behaviour, Yingnan integrates diverse disciplines using role-play-based mini-cases, igniting student curiosity, and fostering robust engagement and dialectical inquiry. This approach facilitates vibrant, interactive learning, enabling students to explore multifaceted knowledge dimensions.

His curriculum amalgamates academic rigour with practical relevance, incorporating advancements in natural language processing, machine learning and AI, pushing students to innovate and perceive Organisational Behaviour

from varied perspectives, emphasising multifaceted learning's importance.

Yingnan's advanced assessment and feedback strategies employ AI technologies to promote autonomous and critical learning, offering real-time, personalised insights. His meticulous refinement of teaching methodologies and commitment to multidisciplinary teaching, inclusive of cutting-edge digital technologies, reinforces his role as a collaborator in transformative learning experiences, focusing on stimulating imagination, creativity and problem-solving.

Yingnan's steadfast dedication to multidisciplinary teaching elevates academic standards, making him a distinguished figure within ANU, poised to prepare students for the modern world's multifaceted demands, and a pivotal contributor to the University's educational landscape, championing integrative, comprehensive education approaches.

**"His pedagogic practices do not just churn out employable graduates; they produce thinkers, poised and prepared to engage with the complex ontological and ethical tapestry of life itself."**

Course convener comment







## HIGHLY COMMENDED

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TUTORING OR DEMONSTRATING

#### Dr Dixin Wu

ANU College of Business and Economics, Research School of Accounting

**Synopsis:** Dr Dixin Wu is an associate lecturer at the ANU Research School of Accounting. His freshman friendly delivery style and practice-oriented approach has helped over 1,000 students to grasp the essence of various business subjects over the past seven years and his sustained excellence in teaching has been recognised with several college- and university-wide teaching commendations and awards.

**M**y teaching is inspired by a proverb that “give someone a fish, they eat for a day. Teach them to fish, they will never go hungry.” My tutorial classes, therefore, aim not only to help students better understand accounting information (the narrow goal), but also to equip them with a technique to efficiently collect, process, and analyse the information they may encounter in other courses (the broad goal), as well as in their future careers (the ultimate goal).

To achieve these teaching goals, I have developed my distinctive teaching style with three major characteristics:

(i) Students enjoy delicious “fish dishes” cooked by me. The core value of my class is to help students, especially those with little or no accounting background, discover the best and simplest way to understand accounting jargon (making “fish dishes”), rather than simply regurgitating textbook or lecture contents (feeding on “raw fishes”).

Students truly enjoy the Feynman technique that I adopted and my usage of emerging technologies to explain

abstract accounting concepts. For example, students’ attention was drawn to the interactive in-class dialogues between ChatGPT and me when explaining the accounting concepts of “relevance” and “faithful representation”. They gained a deeper understanding of these two concepts with the “route planning” example returned from ChatGPT.

(ii) Students chew, digest, and convert “fish” into “energy”. Through a heuristic approach, I always start a topic by asking questions instead of providing answers or conclusions. In this way, students will explore what they want to know and gain a deeper understanding of accounting concepts, instead of merely memorising them.

(iii) Students learn how to “fish”. After several weeks of training, guest tutors (students) are invited to lead the class discussion or share their novel problem-solving methods with the remaining class members. By doing so, students’ learning capacity is upgraded from “mere input” to “output”.

**“It has been such a pleasure to be in the same teaching team as Dixin. Having a responsible member like Dixin in the team gives me the peace in mind that students are well looked after, and everything is on the right track.”**

Course convener comment



## CANDIDATE

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TUTORING OR DEMONSTRATING

#### Mr Wenqi Zhang

ANU College of Science, Mathematical Sciences Institute

**Synopsis:** Over the past six years Wenqi has been involved with demonstrating mathematics courses ranging from introductory first-year courses to advanced honours-level courses. He has supported a broad cohort of students throughout their studies and is commended for his clarity and kindness. It was for these qualities that Wenqi received a College of Science Commendation for Excellence in Demonstrating in 2022.

When an idea feels natural, it becomes approachable. Unfortunately, mathematical ideas require layers of technical jargon. While experts use this language freely, technical jargon can be prohibitive to newcomers. I strive to support students to overcome such barriers by explaining abstract ideas clearly, intuitively and concretely. In this way, I can show students how course objectives are valuable learning outcomes and thereby support them in their development as mathematicians.

True mastery of mathematical ideas requires patience and perseverance, which I know can be daunting. I simplify this process by scaffolding student development and like to start with intuitive explanations. I draw on my experiences to replace abstraction with concrete examples so that students can imagine where an idea comes from. As they progress, I want to encourage them to look deeper by asking probing questions. By this stage, students are ready for me to step back and allow them

to drive their own learning.

I think teaching should always be complemented by effective feedback, which I view as critical in helping students to realise their progression. For example, during workshops, I provide formative feedback to students in real time to foster their independent learning with a focus on their own ideas and understanding. I take this time as an opportunity to lay out clear expectations for their summative work, and to highlight interesting precursors to research.

When it comes to providing summative feedback, I ensure to link a student's learning to the course outcomes and to provide actionable suggestions to address the needs of each student as an individual. In this way, students can track their learning progress and have clear goals to aim for.

I hope that my students have had rewarding growth experiences in my classroom, and I aspire to have the same impact on them as my mentors had on me. I want to thank all those involved, especially my closest mentors, Associate Professors Linda Stals, Pierre Portal and Po-Lam Yung.

**"I still remember a list of [Wenqi's] feedback on my assignment which helped me to improve my writing style a lot when I was taking another course."**

Student comment, SELT, 2021





## CREDITS

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