

## Editorial introduction Supporting Postgraduates

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This edition of *Studies in Learning, Evaluation, Innovation and Development* features a combination of themed and un-themed articles. Two contributions connect with the theme of Supporting Postgraduates. Two recent editions of *SLEID* (Vol. 7, No. 1; Vol 7, No. 2) have dealt with the theme of Supporting Beginning Learners; Supporting Postgraduates picks up on similar issues as they apply to the often complex challenges of conducting research higher degrees. Mark Tyler and Patrick Danaher from the University of Southern Queensland draw on circus metaphors relating to soaring through the rings, ringing changes and sawing through unproductive student emotions as they explore the importance of support networks in underpinning a rewarding postgraduate experience. Similarly, Wendy Davis from CQUniversity Australia, in a reflective, non-refereed article, ponders the challenges of her own experience as a postgraduate student in a relatively marginal, regional university campus.

The un-themed articles in this edition of *SLEID* offer insights on a range of significant current topics: the important role of learning management systems, the contribution of reflection to inquiry-based learning experiences, promoting writing skills for teachers as well as students, and the desirable attributes of an English as Second Language (ESL) teacher. Henry Ho from Swinburne University of Technology and Helen Madden-Hallett of Victoria University use survey results to explore the benefits of the Blackboard learning management system in assisting student performance at a polytechnic in Singapore. Jane Fry, Carol Klages and Amy Barnhill from the University of Houston-Victoria consider the importance of reflection in critically examining and refining learning and teaching practice, encompassing as it does personal, pedagogical, societal and ethical issues. Maureen Scane and Dan Doerger from Indiana University East discuss the value of argumentative theory in facilitating the development of writing skills among beginning teachers. And Lois Spitzer from The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, following up on her article in Volume 6 Number 3 of *SLEID*, compares the perspectives of new and more experienced ESL teachers in relation to the interplay of personal attributes and pedagogical training.

We trust that you will find much of interest and value in this issue of *SLEID*.

*Geoff Danaher Phillipa Sturgess*

*Editors*