Chapter Four:
Teaching Generic Skills: Promoting an Innovative Pedagogy

Daryl Alcock and Robyn Alcock

Abstract

The challenge that confronts the university lecturer is how to instil generic skills effectively. The traditional approach is either to "teach" such skills or merely to assess them. Often this assessment takes place with little tuition or guidance. The unfortunate fact is that in most cases very little "teaching" of generic skills actually occurs but considerable assessing takes place.

This chapter describes a longitudinal study of an innovative approach taken with postgraduate classes which proved to be effective. In this instance, a teaching team adopted an interactive approach to learning through "modelling" rather than "teaching" the skills. The modelling approach taken has its foundations in social learning theory (Kreitner & Luthans, 1984), using a revised organisational behaviour modification model. The team membership incorporated diversity in terms of culture, gender, age and academic discipline.

The outcome of the "modelling" approach was that students believed that they had achieved skills at levels that they had not achieved in other courses. This belief was consistent with their final assessment results. The students' personal success has lent support to the effectiveness of using a "modelling" approach. It also provides substantive evidence as to its generalisability, as the majority of the students were international students representing at least 15 countries in each class.

While the team-teaching approach can be resource intensive and expensive, the demands and expectations of industry suggest that team teaching and "modelling" could be the answer to a number of issues associated with student expectations. These can range from a heavy emphasis on accommodating the student "client" to the lecturer's desired outcomes, to

the university's graduate attributes, to the employer's expectation of the skills with which students will graduate.

Introduction

The Australian higher education market now has a diverse student clientele, derived from both the national and international marketplace, which is a motivating force for universities who compete for student "clients" and funding dollars. Sustaining market share in international education is imperative as changes in government funding policy for universities have begun to take effect (Nelson 2003, 2004). The more that universities can tailor their programs for students, the more attractive they will become. In addition to student expectations, universities must also remain cognisant of the expectations of industry. Creative, innovative and disciplined thinking is needed in organisations today (Burton-Taylor, 1998), and one of the key expectations of industry is that educational institutions will deliver students with those skills.

Universities must anticipate the needs of industry in terms of content, build in those recognised generic skills that will enhance graduate employability and at the same time design courses that are pedagogically sound. The need to accommodate competing demands of delivering both a service and a product is made more complex by the requirement to recognise factors such as international and cultural differences in the design of flexible teaching pedagogies. Such forces of change are compelling universities to review their existing teaching programs. They can do so by reviewing, reengineering and reinventing their existing pedagogic profiles to gain a competitive advantage in the education market. The following discussion focuses on the need for generic skills, their nature, and how they can be effectively taught and assessed by exploiting creativity and innovation.

Generic Skills

Management today competes for the hearts and minds of talented and capable people, as business models such as the learning organisation (Senge, 1990) and high performance work systems (Farias & Varma, 1990) emerge in a turbulent industrial landscape. Their currency is knowledge management and the intermediary is human. Knowledge management is becoming more and more the way of life in successful organisations (Drucker; cited in Wood et al., 2004). Over the last decade, the forces of globalisation and competition have made company structures flatter, less hierarchical, more fluid and more virtual (Andrews, 2004). Organisations have responded to the requirement to upgrade skills and human resources with in-house training

programs and, in other circumstances, have encouraged postgraduate education for management staff. However, there is an industrial groundswell of opinion that incoming employees should bring a range of prerequisite generic skills to the job. Recognition of this need is not new.

In 1985, the Karmel Committee had recommended that ' students....be prepared for both education and employment through attaining skills such as assessing information, communication and working in groups' (cited in National Centre for Vocational Education Research, 2003, p. 3). Other committees and groups such as the Finn Review (1991), the Mayer Committee (1992) and the Australian Industry Group (1999) have continued to identify and enumerate the skill shortages (cited in National Centre for Vocational Education Research, 2003). While the Karpin Report (1995) recommended that what was badly needed in the workplace was people (soft) skills in leadership, Koch (1997) proposed a competence-based paradigm to assist in defining gaps in the skills, capabilities and competencies of staff in global operations. Stasz, et al., (1993) have identified the skills index and the curriculum and instructional design needed to achieve these goals. While there is no clearly defined list of generic skills, there are two categories that would incorporate most of the requisite attributes.

Hard skills, or *employability* skills, could be considered as those skills that an individual has inherently or may have developed through training and/or experience. This category includes technical skills required to carry out a range of specific tasks. Literacy and numeracy skills would also be expected to have relevance to the workplace, workforce and culture. Conversely, the soft skills, *personal or behavioural* skills, are more related to verbal communication, empathy and leadership—those innate, intangible attributes such as the ability to work in teams, honesty and integrity. These skills have gained credence as they are considered to be more transferable between employers and occupations. Blake (1997) pointed out that employers like to have generalists; one can train anyone to do the basics but one can't train just anyone to be a good oral communicator and writer. Flexibility, aptitude and an ability to think and deal with problems as well as with ambiguity in the workplace are also attributes sought by employers. Furthermore, employees now need to be infused with cross-cultural awareness and its attendant requisite competencies.

Student Diversity

Students today are far removed from the stereotypical college student glamorised in fiction. Forces of change, such as technology, globalisation and society, have brought about significant changes in the demographic profiles of students. Changing employee work patterns, employees

endeavouring to improve their promotional opportunities and mature age students now shape the student profile. Affirmative action programs, early school leavers now seeking further education, and members of single parent families have also added to the diversity. The Australian student profile in higher education is no longer "Anglo-Celtic" but is multicultural, and teaching such a population becomes problematic when it is enlarged by an offshore international student cohort. To manage diversity in education, there is first the need to understand the nature and meaning of diversity—to be empathetic, avoid ethnocentrism, avoid stereotyping and develop effective communication (Davidson & Griffin, 2000). This is more easily said than done.

The issues of language barriers and cultural values within an international education context challenge effective design of learning environments for students with a non-English speaking background. "It is already apparent that two sets of issues of daily importance dominate much of the data—financial preoccupations and problems with English, especially coursework" (Marginson; cited in Perry, 2004). Evidence from interviews with student focus groups supports these findings.

Generally speaking, teaching institutions have identified generic skills such as oral and written communication, problem-solving, analysis, critical thinking, reasoned argument, information literacy, teamwork and time management. However, the effectiveness of the teaching of such skills remains questionable. Teaching at its best means not only transmitting knowledge but transforming it as well (Boyer, 1990) and, while it has been acknowledged that the skills should be taught and embedded in the programs, evidence suggests that:

- there is little consistency in objectives found across programs
- embedding the attributes consists of unsupported and *ad hoc* tasking as opposed to the actual development of such skills
- assessment frequently fails to focus on the primary objectives of the course.

Therein lies a paradox.

Teaching pedagogies are framed for an ethnic culture drawn from that culture's character and profile, whereas the intended recipient of learning is a heterogeneous market that includes a combination of national and international students who have often had limited exposure to the teaching pedagogy. The teaching and learning paradigm used traditionally will no longer suffice, and the successful implant of generic skills merged with course content necessitates a reconstruction of the teaching paradigm.

The diversity now found in classrooms provides strong evidence for a review of university pedagogy. Table 4–1 provides a glimpse of the diversity of international students in Australia today:

Table 4–1: Top 15 source markets for international students Semester 1 (2003 vs. 2004), full onshore degree students only

(IDP, 2004: International students in Australian universities, Semester 1 2004)

Source country	2003 Semester 1	2004 Semester 1	Growth %
China	15,364	21,654	41
Malaysia	12,336	12,687	3
India	7,460	10.967	47
Hong Kong	9,339	10,285	10
Indonesia	9,256	8,721	–6
Singapore	9,118	8,549	–6
Thailand	4,268	4,262	0
South Korea	3,015	3,259	8
Taiwan	2,895	2,952	2
Norway	3,137	2,810	–10
Japan	2,327	2,482	7
Bangladesh	1,752	2,232	27
Vietnam	1,970	2,063	5
Canada	1,508	1,828	21
USA	1,761	1,734	–2
Total	106,129	118,040	11

Overcoming Cultural Impediments to Learning

In a model proposed by the authors of this chapter (Alcock & Alcock, 1997), we suggested that moderators of cross-cultural learning could be defined as supportive and/or restrictive forces. The forces to be focused on were identified as prior learning, language, culture and learning methods. We proposed that attention should be given to these moderators when designing and developing an international learning program. The model proposed that:

- Students themselves are a resource that can be used in the teaching–learning process.

- Content of a course should be prepared with an awareness of the cultural diversity that exists across the student spectrum.

- Workshops and seminars should be designed to encourage the cultural integration and participation of students.

- Student assessment should include components that will allow students to apply theoretical concepts in a multicultural context.

- Recognition of the value of prior learning and knowledge is a contributor to ongoing learning.

- Curriculum design should be a geocentric model that recognises equivalent competencies in a cross-cultural learning environment.

The following teaching approach is based on these fundamentals.

Teaching Approach: Setting the Scene

Student cohort

A postgraduate course was taught, across a number of Australian and international campuses of Central Queensland University, with an international cohort of students. While the topics covered in the course encompassed business disciplines, the course was taught holistically on the concept of value adding. Not only were the students taught how to "value add" through learning, but the course was taught using a "value adding" teaching approach which included the modelling or mirroring of generic skills.

Over the years the student composition in this course has moved from coming predominantly from China, Thailand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, India, Malaysia, Indonesia and Botswana with a very small proportion from Australia (1999) to a more global group. In 2004 there were a number of students from both eastern and western European countries and North and South American countries in addition to the Asian countries.

Class presentation

The course was allocated three hours face-to-face teaching time each week. The first two hours of each session were run as a workshop and all team members attended this workshop session. The last hour was a formal lecture and these sessions were taken by relevant lecturing staff with competence to teach the specific discipline being addressed.

This course was taught using a team approach. The team generally comprised around five people, with a managing group of three. The team

members were selected to provide a mix of gender, discipline and nationality (see Table 4–2). It was felt that, if modelling was to be effective, the teaching team had to be representative of the cohort of students being taught.

Table 4–2: Teaching team

Gender	Two females and one male
Disciplines	Accounting/information technology, Economics and Human resources/management
Nationalities	Two Australians and one Indian

During the term, two additional lecturers from the marketing and procurement areas joined the teaching team. These lecturers were both male, with one from the United Kingdom and one from Australia.

Teaching approach: Facilitated workshops using experiential learning

Although the traditional objective in teaching this course was the creation of a shared knowledge-base, as mentioned earlier there was also a focus on generic skills: cultural awareness, team building, presentation skills, communication and analytical thinking. The teaching approach to the course was developed to facilitate all objectives. The format used included the following:

Establishing and developing a safe and comfortable learning environment

The first session of the term was an "icebreaker" session. The teaching team provided information on their personal and professional background and students also gave a brief history of their work experience, their cultural experiences and their reasons for studying at the postgraduate level.

(This information was provided both orally and in writing.) As part of their cultural experiences, students were asked to describe both a positive and negative cultural experience that they had encountered during their time in Australia. These experiences were then used to initiate the first round of class discussions. The teaching team members also discussed cultural issues they had encountered during times when they were out of their country.

The first workshop session was completely devoted to setting the scene and developing a productive working environment for the remainder of the term. As well as raising the issue of cultural awareness, time was spent describing in detail how the class would operate, explaining the course profile and ensuring that all students understood the assessment requirements. The first session concluded with a discussion of ethics, culminating in why there is such an emphasis on the need for correct referencing in order to avoid any suggestions of plagiarism.

At all subsequent sessions, and prior to the commencement of the class, the teaching team members made concentrated efforts to speak personally with each student. This approach not only addressed any isolation issues that students might have been encountering but also paved the way for a better rapport between staff and students. Within a couple of weeks, all students were very relaxed with one another and with staff and comfortable within the class environment.

Workshops

Weekly facilitated workshops were a blend of case studies and in-class activities. Each week following the lecture, students were given case studies to prepare for the following weeks workshop.

Cases and activities were completed in groups. Group composition was deliberately varied each week. Groups were based on culture, size, work experience and gender. Groups were chosen to maximise the learning experience for each specific activity. This meant that there were times when it was more appropriate to establish groups according to culture or gender than to establish multicultural groups. Apart from maximising learning and diversity, all students had an opportunity to work with one another at least once throughout the term.

While students worked in groups during the workshop, the teaching team members spent their time rotating among the various groups to provide input into the discussions. This way students benefited from the multiple views provided by the teaching team.

Tasks and activities were generally chosen to prepare students for formal assessment where possible. No assessment item was submitted without the students having undertaken a small class activity mirroring the assessment requirements. Students completed activities involving:

- Essay writing
- The approach to completing a case study
- Formal and informal presentations
- Preparation of aids for a presentation
- Referencing.

Assessment: Design and purpose

Some students prefer to "swot" for an examination while others prefer continuous assessment without a final examination. These attitudes are formed from either prior learning (e.g., countries that have inherited the English education method) or the fact that students may be working part-time. In this course the decision was taken to introduce continuous

assessment without a formal examination. It was felt that students would benefit more from drawing upon prior learning and previous work experience as well as exposure to new learning styles and experiences. Peer assessment was also included. The objective was to satisfy the competing goals and aspirations of a diverse cultural group. Table 4–3 outlines the summative assessment for the course.

Research and writing skills: An individual project

The first piece of assessment was a mini literature review in essay format. It embodied the learning objectives of research methodology, critical analysis of literature and the development of writing skills. Feedback was included as part of the formative assessment. Students were asked to research a number of theories and critically compare, contrast and draw conclusions as to the more effective theory.

While all students at this level, regardless of their prior learning, are expected to *know* how to research and write, experience and feedback have indicated that with assessment of this nature students have three main problems:

- They do not necessarily know what an "essay" is.

- They are often unaware of the importance placed on referencing.

- They are often unsure of what "critical analysis" is.

Table 4–3: Course summative assessment

Item No.	Type of assessment	Mode	Objectives	Weighting
1	Essay	Individual	Research methodology, critical analysis of literature and the development of writing skills	20%
2	Case study	Group of 3	Critical analysis, integration of theory and practice, exploration of cultural differences, teamwork and group dynamics	20%
3	Oral presentation	Pairs	Critical analysis; application of theory to the "real world"; teamwork and oral presentation	30%
4	Participation	Individual	Problem-solving; critical analysis; cultural awareness and the process of voicing opinions and ideas in an informal environment	30%

At the second workshop, time was spent looking at what an essay is, how to approach an essay to ensure that it flows smoothly and how to reference correctly. This workshop offered students opportunities to develop the skills needed to complete the first assignment. Surprisingly enough, while many of these students were in the final term of their program, most had never had it explained to them how an essay differs from other written assignments. Students also worked as groups undertaking activities involving critical analysis. Initially they were encouraged to work as a group with people they felt comfortable with.

Case study: A group project

In this project, learning objectives were critical analysis, integration of theory and practice and exploration of critical issues such as recognition of cultural differences, teamwork and group dynamics. It also included student-centred learning.

Students were placed in groups of three to complete this project. The groups were a deliberate mix of nationalities, gender and work experience. For the first time in the class, some students felt that they had been taken out of their comfort zone and were most unhappy with being allocated to a specific group despite the fact that there had been lengthy class discussions about why this approach was being taken. While all students acknowledged that the diverse input could result in a better outcome, they were still not entirely comfortable with working with "strangers". The allocation of groups took place in week two.

In the weeks leading up to the submission of the assignment both formal (short surveys) and informal feedback was obtained from the students with regard to how the teams were progressing. As issues were raised, the class as a whole addressed the issues and both staff and students provided feedback on how those issues could be resolved.

A series of workshop activities was also run addressing how to approach case studies, how to work in teams, time management and conflict resolution. The teaching team felt that once again the students were provided with the appropriate tools to undertake this assessment successfully. Despite early misgivings by some students, in the more than seven years that this course was taught, no group felt that they could not complete the assignment owing to unresolved group issues.

Class presentation: Dyadic presentation

The third piece of assessment was a class presentation. Learning objectives were critical analysis, application of theory to the "real world", teamwork and oral presentations.

This assignment was completed in pairs. Students chose their own partners. At this stage it had now become evident that the learning approach and environment were effective, as many students paired with each other based on their teaming up in class activities. They were now prepared to look beyond members of their own culture or group for partners.

Each pair gave a 40-minute presentation to the teaching team, their peers and invited guests. Each pair chose an organisation with which at least one of the pair was familiar, and applied Porter's (1985) value chain to highlight non-value adding activities and to provide recommendations for improvement to the organisation. To ensure that all students had a receptive audience, a "presentation" day was held at the end of semester. All presentations were given on the same day. The presentation day was the last Saturday of the term and to guarantee an audience part of the participation marks were allocated to participation on the presentation day. Grading of this piece of assessment was done by all members of the teaching team.

To ensure that students were not overworked, there was no class held in week 12. This allowed students to put the final touch to their presentations.

Participation: An individual activity

The final piece of assessment involved individual student participation. Learning objectives were problem-solving, critical analysis, cultural awareness and the process of voicing opinions and ideas in an informal environment.

Each week the teaching team assessed students on the contributions that they made to the activities carried out in class. Students were also required to submit a written evaluation of each presentation on presentation day to complete the participation requirement.

The requirements of this piece of assessment were made very clear at the beginning of the term. It was essential that the class understood that it was not sufficient merely to attend class. Participation had to be evident and voluntary both during class discussions and while working in groups during the workshop.

Throughout the term, students were provided with feedback about how they were progressing. These progressive grades were discussed and suggestions were given as to how improvements could be made.

Survey Results

In the taught course previously described, student results improved. While there was no major change to the upper end of the scale, the lower end

showed a reduced failure rate, when compared with the previous traditional face-to-face teaching method (see Figure 4–1).
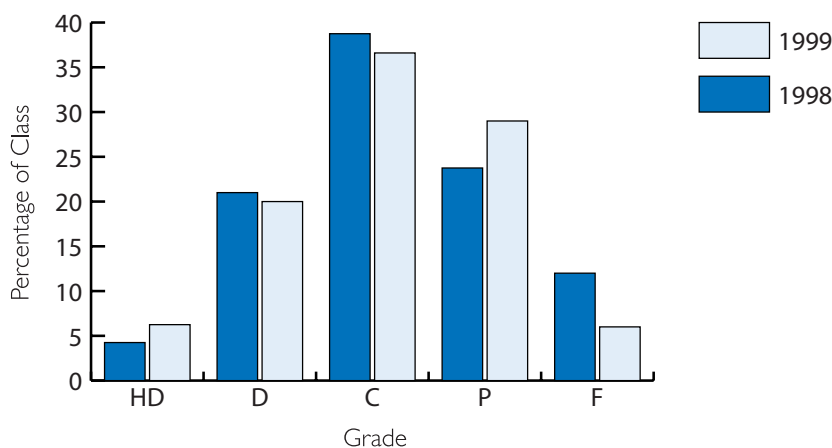
HD = High Distinction, D = Distinction, C = Credit, P = Pass, F = Fail

Figure 4–1: Student results over the initial two years of the course

In Figure 4–2 the students' performance is much better when compared with a similar course that used traditional teaching methods (and had the same student population). The team-taught course consistently recorded higher grades at the High Distinction, Distinction and Credit levels, while the levels of Pass and Fail were diminished.
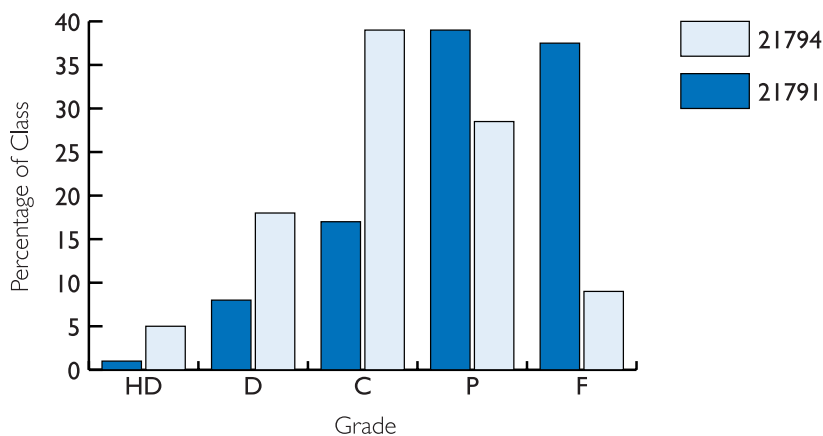
Course No. 21791: Managing in a Dynamic Environment.
Course No. 21794: Integrating Organisational Processes.

Figure 4–2: Student results over two courses

While the results indicated that the innovations described in this chapter promoted achievement of course objectives, an end-of-semester survey provided a more accurate picture of how the students viewed the approach taken to teaching the course. In all areas surveyed, the majority of students were positive about the achievements of the course. Appendix A outlines the results of the survey, while Appendix B lists some of the student comments from the evaluations.

A survey in 2003 of a heterogeneous cohort at a Singaporean campus found the same high level of satisfaction with the structure of the course. Results can be found in Appendix C.

In Term 1 2005 a multinational group of students, who had not been exposed to this teaching model, formed a focus group for discussion, the topic being preferred teaching practices. The positive results from this feedback survey (see Appendix D) were consistent with the earlier surveys taken from the participating students.

Reflections on and Evaluation of the Process

Smith, Scholten, Russel and McCormack (1997) have highlighted a number of exemplary assessment factors that should be considered when designing assessment practices. They are *clarity* of what is required of a student, the *weighting* applied to assessment, its *formative role,* the relevance to course content (*coherence*) and *integration* between theory and practice throughout a course. A final factor to be considered was the students' perception of *fairness* when the linkage between performance and success is reflected in their mark. It could be said that the positive results of the survey may be attributed to the students' perceptions of the attention given to those details, noted by Smith et al. (1997), throughout the course. In keeping with the original plan, processes will be put in place to value add continually in this course.

As the process currently exists, the only real disadvantage that may be raised is the fact that the teaching model is labour intensive. It may be argued that having two or three teachers attend a workshop each week is costly. Full assessment of this teaching approach needs to move beyond the staffing costs for that time period and consider both the long-term financial savings and the student benefits of this teaching approach. The benefits far outweigh what is an insignificant cost.

Student benefits of the teaching model

- Multidisciplinary viewpoints passed on to students result in a broader appreciation of the content focus.

- Course content is more inclusive owing to the multidisciplinary input.
- Generic skills are embedded through practical support and facilitation of all team members.
- All objectives of learning can be taught effectively and assessed objectively.
- Students appreciate the special attention that they collectively and singularly receive (the Hawthorne effect).
- The course runs throughout the term without any disruption to students.
- Student satisfaction with the course remains high.

Administration benefits of the teaching model

- Team teaching is more effective as all members are in-house at the seminar/workshop simultaneously.
- The stress level of lecturing staff is reduced as the pressure of teaching a diverse cohort is reduced over the time period of the workshop.

Cost assessment

While this approach may appear costly in terms of human resources, the overall benefits from such an approach far outweigh the costs. As areas of the University currently move towards a "buddy" approach to presenting courses, the active team-teaching described here already incorporates "buddies". As with all courses, there was only one course coordinator. However, the establishment of the teaching team enabled the workload of the course coordinator to be reduced. This occurred by:

- having a roster system for responding to the discussion board which also provided students with a variety of both personal and disciplinary views
- having all class presentations covered in the event of illness, etc.
- having no interruptions to the weekly classes when the course coordinator had to attend other campuses to present workshops
- sharing the marking load of most of the assessment.

Active team-teaching can also provide a solution to the issue of increasing numbers of staff suffering from stress owing to the loads associated with coordinating and teaching. Not only does the team-assist in reducing normal staff stress levels but the collegial bond formed within the teaching team provides a supportive group for all members involved.

Team-teaching also provides a "consistency" within a course and this very consistency could well be a contributing factor to reducing attrition in an environment when new students often feel unsure and isolated.

Challenges

The challenges that currently exist with this teaching approach are:

- Replication of the model with distance education students: this can be achieved by the use of online facilities (discussion lists, chatrooms and e-workgroups)

- A consistent teaching approach across all campuses: this aspect is yet to be fully explored. However, anecdotal feedback from teaching staff at all campuses recognises the benefits that can accrue to both staff and students using such an approach.

In general, a major challenge for educators seeking to innovate is to be able to evaluate an innovative approach and assess whether or not such an approach would be effective in their course. While this approach is transferable into all disciplines, there can be exceptions, for example, courses requiring independent laboratory research work may not benefit from such an approach. The challenge at a commercial level is to highlight the long-term benefits of effective teaching to an institution's commercial partners.

Conclusion

Technology has seen the world shrink rapidly. Few students, if any, in this current century would expect to remain in one position for life, work with one firm for life or spend all of their working life within one country, given that many demographic barriers to entry into the workplace that have been removed. Consequently, applicants for a job must be able to provide evidence of those competencies and generic skills, such as communication, leadership and problem-solving, if they are to gain positions in industry and progress in the global workplace.

If students are to develop their generic skills, and to learn in what could be perceived as an intimidating environment, the barriers to learning created by tradition, culture and language differences must be overcome. This will occur when students *and* educators are aware that cultural difference is an experience shared by all and, when combined with a growing understanding of the value of participation, the competencies of all participants in the education process will be enhanced.

For teaching institutions to remain competitive, educators must be encouraged to review continually and develop the teaching "tools" that facilitate effective teaching. It must be acknowledged and accepted that there

is an always changing cohort of students. Just as teachers should expect students to become effective in promoting innovation when they enter the workplace, educators themselves should develop an innovative and integrative teaching framework that acknowledges contributions of each student's culture and prior learning and the importance of effective preparation for assessment. In addition, the tenets of continuous improvement need to be applied to cross-cultural teaching pedagogies that will facilitate multinational education. The CQU motto, *Doctrina Perpetua*, is an invitation to teachers and students to appreciate the value of cultural diversity and to commit to seek always to learn from differences. Most importantly, educators need really to "know" their student cohort, never to make assumptions about their prior learning and not to be afraid to be a "model" for their audience. Such is the path to sustainable advantage for institutions in higher education.

References

Alcock, D., & Alcock, R. (1997). Ignorance is bliss: A rigid tertiary environment will stifle cross-cultural capabilities. In D. Killick & M. Parry (Eds.), *Developing cross-cultural capability: Proceedings of the conference at Leeds Metropolitan University, December 1996*. Leeds, UK: Leeds Metropolitan University.

Andrews, N. (2004, Winter). Global business capabilities. *Business Strategy Review*, pp. 6–10.

Blake, S. (1997, February 2). *Weekend Australian*, p. 38.

Boyer, E. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Burton-Taylor, J. (1998, March 28). The global workforce. *Weekend Australian*, p. 35.

Davidson, P., & Griffin, R. W. (2000). *Management: Australia in a global context*. Brisbane, Qld: John Wiley.

Farias, G. F., & Varma, A. (1998). High performance work systems: What we know and what we need to know. *Human Resource Planning, 21*(2), 50–54.

IDP. (2004). *Report on international students in Australian universities*, Semester 1, 2004. Canberra, ACT: Author.

Karpin, D. (1995). *Enterprising nation: Executive summary*. Canberra, ACT: Australian Government Publishing Service.

Koch, A. J. (1997). Definition and evaluation of competence, capability and skill gaps in international business. *Journal of Marketing Practice: Applied Marketing Science, 3*(2), 119–151.

Kreitner, R., & Luthans, F. (1984, Autumn). A social learning approach to behavioral management: Radical behaviourists 'mellowing out'. *Organizational Dynamics, 13*(2), 47–65.

Mayo, E. (1933). *The human problems of an industrial civilization*. New York: Macmillan.

National Centre for Vocational Education Research. (2003). *Fostering generic skills in VET programs and workplaces: At a glance*. Adelaide, SA: Author.

Nelson, B. (2003). *Our universities: Backing Australia's future*. Canberra, ACT: Department of Education, Science and Training.

Nelson, B. (2004). *Higher education report for the 2004–2006 triennium*. Canberra, ACT: Department of Education, Science and Training.

Perry, L. (2004, December 1). Higher education supplement. *The Australian*.

Porter, M. E. (1985). *Competitive advantage: Creating and sustaining superior performance*. New York: Free Press.

Senge, P. (1990). *The fifth discipline*. New York: Doubleday.

Smith, B., Scholten, I., Russel, A., & McCormack, P. (1997). Integrating student assessment practices: The significance of collaborative partnerships for curriculum development in a university department. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 16(1), 69–85.

Stasz, C., Ramsey, K., Eden, R., DaVanzo, J., Farris, H., & Lewis, M. W. (1993). *Classrooms that work: Teaching generic skills in academic and vocational settings*. Berkeley, CA: National Center for Research in Vocational Education, University of California.

Wood, J., Chapman, J., Fromholz, M., Morrison, V., Wallace, J., Zeffane, R., Schermerhorn, J. R., Hunt, J. G., & Osborne, R. N. (2004). *Organisational behaviour: A global perspectiv*e (3rd ed.). Brisbane, Qld: John Wiley & Sons.

Appendix A

Table 4–4: Results of Student Evaluations

SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Survey statement	1. SD (%)	2. D (%)	3. N (%)	4. A (%)	5. SA (%)
General delivery of course					
1a Workshops assisted learning style			6	33	61
1b Students' concerns addressed immediately			6	27	67
Workshops					
2a Workshops heightened multicultural awareness	6		6	44	44
2b Workshops exposed us to other cultures		6		44	50
2c Workshops assisted with assessment		6		44	50
Assessment					
3a Assessment allowed me to use prior experience			11	44	45
3b Assessment integrated different concepts			6	55	39
3c Assessment allowed teamwork			6	33	61
3d Assessment improved cultural awareness		6	11	50	33
3e Assessment improved my presentation skills			11	28	61

Objectives						
4a	Environment in this course suits different learning styles			6	55	39
4b	Approach to this course is student-centred				44	56
4c	Course combined content and real life skills			6	27	67
4d	Promoted multicultural integration		6	6	49	39
4e	Recognised prior learning		6	17	38	39
4f	Recognised integrated students with no work experience			11	33	56
Overall						
5	Comparison with other Master of Business Administration courses			6	27	67

Appendix B

Table 4–5: Students Comments

- The subject uses innovative teaching style. (Thai)

- The most interesting and co-ordinated course I have enrolled in to date. (Papua New Guinea)

- Team teaching should be encouraged in this university. (Papua New Guinea)

- It was fun being part of this course. (Indian)

- Because of its integrative learning approach this course has given me a lot of knowledge and skills. (Fijian)

- I have to rank it as the best. (Chinese)

- Enjoyed the more practical nature of teaching. (Australian)

- Each topic we learn is applicable and that encourages me to think how to apply to my company. (Indonesian)

- The arrangements of this course is value adding. (Botswanan)

- All the courses must be designed like IOP. (Indian)

- Style of learning/teaching very commendable. (Chinese)

- At an MBA level this is the approach to take. We are here for processes[,] not content. (Papua New Guinea)

- My communication improved with learning a few other phrases in different languages because of the interaction and team activities.

- A greater understanding of cultural differences.

Appendix C

Table 4–6: Results of Student Evaluations: General Delivery of Course Workshop (Singapore, 2003)

SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Survey statement	1. SD (%)	2. D (%)	3. N (%)	4. A (%)	5. SA (%)
Assessment as a learning tool					
1a Allowed me to apply concepts to my own organisation			15	50	35
1b Allowed me to integrate management concepts		0.5	12.5	52	35
1c Gave me the opportunity to work in teams		7.5	15	55.5	22
1d Workshops heightened multicultural awareness		5	28	53	14
1e Gave the opportunity to improve presentation skills		7.5	30	37.5	25
Teaching and learning objectives					
2a Response to student issues sooner rather than later		5	23	50	22
2b Created an improved learning environment	0.025	5	27.025	47.5	20
2c Course combined content and real life		5	18	55	22
2d Promoted multicultural integration		8	30	45	17
2e Recognised prior learning		5	25	53	17
2f Combined students with and without work experience		5	30	45	20

Appendix D

Table 4–7: Teaching and Learning: Focus Group Reflective Feedback (April 2005)

SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Survey statement	1. SD (%)	2. D (%)	3. N (%)	4. A (%)	5. SA (%)
1. Appropriate workload volumes		10	10	50	30
2. Courses that help to develop work study plans		10	20	60	10
3. Receive timely feedback				70	30
4. Have access to learning resources that meet needs			30	30	40
5. Have the opportunity to voice opinions				50	50
6. Lecturer available for consultation				50	50
7. Teaching staff motivate me in my work effort				60	40
8. Tutorial sessions raise the level of cultural awareness			20	20	60
9. Working with other cultures to provide valuable learning outcomes		10	10	40	40
10. Comfortable with the workshop/lecture format		10	20	50	20
11. The learning process encourages critical thinking	10		30	60	
12. Participation by all students is encouraged				20	80

Focus group profile:

Australian (4–3 females, 1 male)	Indian (2–male and female)
Colombian (1–male)	Korean (1–female)
English (1–female)	Polish (1–female)