

Practical idealism: Social enterprise as work-integrated learning across the humanities

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The Bachelor of Arts has traditionally provided a liberal education, emphasising the development of critical and other transportable skills in a range of humanities disciplines. One challenge for humanities educators in the twenty-first century is to find ways to bridge this tradition with the demand that graduates be prepared for the workplace. The School of Humanities at Griffith University has developed a suite of courses² in its BA into which a work-integrated learning experience in social enterprise is embedded. The rationale for choosing social enterprises for WIL is the many opportunities they provide to articulate with the wide range of disciplines taught in a BA, and their capacity to resonate with the broad idealism of BA students. This paper offers an overview of the program since its inception in 2008, presents a reflection on the theoretical and pedagogical issues involved, and examines the impact of this innovation on the students. (*Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education*, 2012, 13(4), 195-206)

Keywords: Arts, social enterprise, idealism, workplace, third sector, community

Re-positioning the Bachelor of Arts as a program of choice is an issue of emerging and ongoing importance across the tertiary sector in Australia. In 2007, the Griffith University BA was significantly revised as the first step in addressing recruitment and retention challenges facing the program. The revision, implemented in 2008, incorporated several new features. These included a suite of six courses (a quarter of the degree) dedicated to work-integrated learning (WIL). The decision was made during the revision process to build the program's WIL around social enterprises. In this paper we discuss the issues surrounding the implementation of the WIL experience in social enterprise in our BA degree, the structure and teaching/learning approach we have adopted in developing and presenting it, and briefly reflect upon some of the student responses to that experience.

CONTEXT: BACKGROUND OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE IN THE BACHELOR OF ARTS AT GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY FROM 2008

In its Academic Plan 3 (2008-2010), Griffith University outlined a policy in which all degree programs across the university were required to provide students with the opportunity to have completed a WIL experience prior to graduation. This broad directive was based on evidence regarding the changing characteristics and motivations of students entering university in a period of mass education. For Griffith, where approximately 70 per cent of its undergraduate intake is first-in-family at university, the evidence clearly pointed to the importance they placed on vocational outcomes when choosing their degree program. More specific evidence regarding the BA reinforced this general perspective. The national Course

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² At Griffith, undergraduate degrees are called programs, and individual subjects or units are called courses. There are typically 24 courses in a three-year bachelor's degree.

Experience Questionnaire (which targets graduating students from across disciplines and across universities in Australia), Starting@Griffith data (which targets first year students approximately six weeks after commencement), focus group discussions with current BA students and secondary school students and teachers, all indicated that the traditional value of the BA and its virtues of flexibility and transportable skills do not resonate in the current market, even though employers value just these attributes in Arts graduates.

Further research on the value of the BA undertaken by Macleod in 2008-9 refined these perspectives, but confirmed the need in BA students for some connection between their generalist studies and definite career outcomes. Focus group data reveal a number of key themes addressing what the students wanted from the degree: knowledge, increased personal confidence, the development of social networks and a sense of community, being able to deal with change, and finally being seen as serious with a strong sense of purpose in life. The attributes they most identified with themselves were creativity and open-mindedness, while those they described as most needed for themselves were motivation and organisation. Developing a suitable WIL suite of courses that enabled students to realise their creativity and open-mindedness, while at the same time building motivation and organisation skills, was thus a key consideration.

Although the BA already had internships for its journalism and public relations students, there were several challenges in developing a WIL experience for the program as a whole. Firstly, it would have to do justice to the wide array of disciplines covered (ranging from history, literature and creative writing, film and communication studies, through to sociology) and the kinds of skill-sets traditionally emphasised in BA graduates: the capacity for clear and logical thought, analysis, literate and artistic expression, and sustained enquiry (Jacobs, 2009; Brown, 2007). Secondly, it would have to resonate with the kinds of values BA students typically manifest, including careers that “make a difference” and “require creative solutions to problems” (Macleod, 2009). Finally, it would have to be validated in the eyes of many humanities staff who themselves entered university at a time and from families where the value of tertiary education for its own sake was something of a given, and who believed that incorporating a WIL dimension into a BA would de-value its traditional role as a carrier of humane values and intellectual enquiry.

In short, the challenge was how to create an opportunity for students to find ways to develop the kinds of teamwork, information literacy and workplace preparation skills that are requirements of WIL (Bates, 2008; Brown, 2007; Orrell, 2004) which would sit appropriately with the need to achieve deep and resonant scholarly knowledge in diverse disciplines, while at the same time expanding their capacities to be creative and make a difference in themselves, their local communities and the world. This also meant that it was imperative to build in a teaching approach that would make this achievable.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE WITHIN THE BACHELOR OF ARTS

The University decision to incorporate WIL across all disciplines provided the context within which the decision was made to build the BA WIL experience around social enterprise. At a Faculty level, the motivation to develop richer community engagement which reflected the ideals and aspirations of Arts students, combined with the desire to produce graduates who were ready to take up places in the workforce, led to a decision to focus upon the Third sector as the site for placements. We took a very broad approach here, considering the Third sector to be the range of community, voluntary and not-for-profit organisations that fall

between business and government, serving social purposes. While they may be partly government-funded, these organisations usually operate along business lines in order to sustain themselves and their beneficiaries. This is a large and growing component of the workforce, and while the alignment with the Third Sector admirably fits with the University's mission statement as a social justice institution, it is also a means of entry for graduates into an expanding sector of the economy (c.f. Kneale, 1999). Of particular interest in developing the curriculum was the exciting and innovative area of social enterprise, as it combined the traditional human and community service aspirations of many students with the burgeoning sense of capacity as potential entrepreneurs (c.f. Smith, 2008).

Social enterprises can be classified into three broad categories: co-operatives or mutual owner organisations; subsidiaries of non-profit organisations that are created to raise funds; and for-profit businesses with social benefits (Schlee, Curren & Harich, 2009, p. 7). The terminology varies from the emphasis on philanthropy in the USA to social enterprise in the United Kingdom, social venture in Europe and community economic development in Canada (Mirabella, Gemelli, Machin & Berger, 2007; Thompson & Doherty, 2006). Mirabella et al.'s (2007) review of the field of social enterprise as it is invested in university curricula reveals that in the USA there has been a substantial increase (approximately 50% from 284 to 426) in the number of universities offering programs in the non-profit and philanthropy studies sector in the period from 1996-2006. Of these, 117 offer undergraduate courses of some kind, while the remainder are providing postgraduate courses. What is germane to the Griffith initiative is that in the report (2007, p. 155) only 26 out of 105 of the graduate programs are offered in schools of arts and sciences, and usually within a school of public affairs or administration. The data collected in the report also showed that of the 189 universities in the rest of the world offering related programs, none of these is identified as being located within an Arts degree (2007, p. 1145).

Developing a core stream in social enterprise in the BA faced an unusual challenge: the term itself was largely unknown in Australia although it had been gaining currency in the UK and Europe over the last decade. Only two universities offer social enterprise studies as a core part of the BA: University of East London, and Griffith University. In every other instance, this is an area usually taught within Business or Management Faculties, with the emphasis being laid upon corporate social responsibility or not-for-profit organisations. While there was in the USA and Europe a flourishing, if relatively new, discourse concerning philanthropy and not-for profit organisations, Griffith in effect had to develop its own version that was appropriate to a generalist BA.

On the face of it, given its location in non-Arts programs elsewhere, it seems that choosing social enterprise as the WIL experience within a BA program is an odd choice. However, there were several reasons that lay behind the decision. Firstly, the students themselves identified that they wanted to "make a difference" in their careers; secondly, the term is one which encompasses the breadth of the Third Sector and offers opportunities for careers within a broad range of government, non-government and community organisations, as well as within the corporate sector; thirdly, this range of opportunities allows easy articulation with the many kinds of disciplines covered in a traditional BA; fourthly, it encourages students to become "enterprising," active in pursuing their own goals within a framework of social responsibility; and finally, as the term is only now coming into currency in Australia, there were no pre-determined loaded meanings to overcome.

Basing the Humanities WIL experience in social enterprise was conceived, not simply as just another work experience opportunity, but as a significant component of the BA that articulated with the other disciplinary components of the degree in exploring the world we live in and what we can do to make a difference. The aim was to provide an overview of issues, theories and practical knowledge that enable students to understand the world of the twenty-first century and to be equipped to participate as active citizens. More broadly, as Kelly Smith (2008, p. 714) observes, “acquisition of entrepreneurial skills whilst at university was positively related to the intentions of the participants to become entrepreneurs in the future” and “where students do not become entrepreneurs, it is hoped that they will develop a ‘can do’ confidence, a creative questioning and a willingness to take risks” (2008, p. 716).

In terms of practical pedagogy, this meant that attention needed to be paid to foundational ideas and the location of the stream within existing discourses and disciplines. These include social justice, human rights, ethical behaviour, understanding social policy development, cultural awareness, world community and environmental issues, and Third Sector studies. At a fundamental level, the curriculum had to be interdisciplinary. This sits well with Richard Turner’s argument that there is a need for the development of a recognition of what he calls an “ur-discipline” of Philanthropic Studies which incorporates a multi-disciplinary approach and embraces principles which are fundamental to “humanistic enterprise” (2007, pp. 163-168S). Schlee, Curren and Harich note that:

social entrepreneurship has ‘no clear academic home in most universities’ (citing Bloom 2006, p. 272). Social entrepreneurship programs within universities tend to be quite diverse, often involving faculty from the humanities, social and behavioural sciences, and public policy as well as business faculty. (2009, p. 6)

In effect, the School of Humanities was attempting to generate these broad interdisciplinary conditions for our students undertaking their WIL experience, while at the same time ensuring students did not encounter a sense of its separation from the primary disciplines they were studying in their degree.

STRUCTURE OF THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE CORE STREAM

The WIL model developed by the School of Humanities is that of a BA comprising a core suite of six courses in social enterprise (10 credit points each, which is the normal weighting for courses in the degree) out of a total of 24 courses in the degree. For a nominal full time student, that means taking one social enterprise course in each of the six semesters it takes to complete the Bachelor of Arts. The social enterprise suite of courses is combined with one or more majors offered in the school. The suite includes two broad courses (*Academic Writing* in first year and *Thinking Ethically* in second year) which provide foundational skills and understandings. Two further courses (*Introduction to Social Enterprise* in first year and *Culture, Community and Enterprise* in second year) provide training in the theory and application of fundamental ideas of social justice, human rights and Third Sector studies. *Introduction to Social Enterprise* covers such diverse areas as social justice, human rights, social policy and governmentality, careers and vocations, business and Third Sector organisations; *Culture, Community and Enterprise* explores the theoretical analysis of both culture and community, while also introducing students to concepts of organisational realities. In the final year, two courses complete the suite (*Social Enterprise Placement* and *Social Enterprise Project*). Here, students undertake a placement in the Third Sector and then put into action the experience gained through that placement in the creation, management and presentation of a showcase

event. Practice opportunities are offered to develop skills for the workplace, such as writing grant applications, submissions, ministerial briefing minutes, project outlines and networking. The placement takes the understanding of the Third Sector from the theoretical and into the realm of practicality.

The social enterprise courses are structured as a cumulative preparation for WIL from the first year. This preparation begins in *Introduction to Social Enterprise*, where the arena of the Third Sector is introduced as both an area of study and a potential placement destination. The process of preparation forms the largest part of the second year course *Culture Community and Enterprise*. The third year is directly concerned with WIL (*Social Enterprise Placement*) and the capstone subject (*Social Enterprise Project*), reflects on the core stream and the entire degree, enabling students to demonstrate the learning outcomes of the entire process. Figure 1. shows the typical pattern for the BA, which needs to be a total of 240 credit points; each of the social enterprise units is valued at 10 credit points.

FIGURE 1. Griffith University Bachelor of Arts structure

BA Structure	Social Enterprise Signature Experience	Major	Electives	Total
1 st year	Academic Writing Introduction to Social Enterprise	20- 40 cp*	20-40 cp	80 cp
2 nd Year	Thinking Ethically Culture Community and Enterprise	40 cp	(20 cp)	80cp
3 rd Year	Social Enterprise Placement Social Enterprise Project	40 cp	(20 cp)	80 cp
Total	60 cp	100 cp	80 cp	240cp

*Credit points

INTERDISCIPLINARITY AND WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING

The experience is designed to create and develop within the students a deep sense of social conscience, and hopefully, a sense of capability (Nussbaum, 2000). As the course material has to cover such diverse areas as social justice, human rights, social policy and governmentality, careers and vocations, business and Third Sector organisations, it is necessarily trans-disciplinary (Brewer, 1999; Dall’Alba, 2009; Gaff & Wilson, 1971; Gunn, 2003; Hall & Weaver, 2001; Petrie, 1992; Silver, Howard & Clouse, 1999; Woods, 2007). In the context of the BA, students undertaking the WIL placement will have undertaken their major studies in one of the many disciplines offered in the program, so the placement course has to provide a means of articulating the content knowledge of their specific discipline with the broader trans-disciplinary studies of the Social Enterprise core stream. One of the aims of teaching students from across this wide range of interests is to find ways to incorporate, or at least invoke, their existing interests, so appeals to these disciplines needed to be embedded in the teaching of social enterprise. One of our History majors, for example, undertook a placement with the Queensland Police museum, in which he catalogued and researched the original photographs and files on arrested and convicted criminals from the nineteenth century.

Other students have been involved in Oral History projects, for the University of the Third Age, in which they interviewed senior citizens about the Brisbane they remember over seven or eight decades of life.

One of the key issues for the social enterprise suite of courses is responding to the interdisciplinary nature of studies in social enterprise. The literature on interdisciplinarity (for example: Brewer, 1999; Dall'Alba, 2009; Gunn, 2003; Gaff & Wilson, 1971; Hall & Weaver, 2001; Petrie 1992; Silver, Howard & Clouse, 1999; Woods, 2007) emphasises that this approach is in itself an innovation, moving away from the narrow disciplinary boundaries and approaches. Dall'Alba offers a particularly useful insight when she talks about professional education as a process of becoming in which integration of knowledge and skill is embodied rather than remaining purely intellectual. The very complexity of the practice and theory sets of knowledge which are offered by the social enterprise stream (including placement) demands a stance which recognizes that becoming professionals is the aim of the program. In addition, the courses provide several interesting interdisciplinary aspects of the learning environment: a) the entire cohort mixes in these classes where they may not meet otherwise, leading to some sense of cohesion by third year; b) the opportunity is offered for those studying quite different disciplines to learn about other areas and to discuss the social enterprise topics from the basis of their disciplinary studies; and c) the challenge is laid down for teachers in social enterprise to be themselves interdisciplinary in their approaches.

In this context, there are several implicit learning outcomes (Biggs, 2003) that are embedded in the social enterprise stream. These include the production of professionals with specific and demonstrated skills, the development of socially aware and active global citizens, and the foundation of an interest in lifelong learning. In practice, these aims and objectives are circumscribed by Griffith University's policy that disciplines and students are engaged, that a capstone course brings together the learning provided across the degree, that sufficient research is undertaken, and that the community becomes connected, particularly through the interactions offered in student placements.

In the spirit of developing life-long learning, the curriculum for the social enterprise suite of courses has been framed around the use of core questions on which each course is built: *Academic Writing* asks "How can I best communicate?" *Introduction to Social Enterprise* asks "Why should I care?" and "What could I do?" *Thinking Ethically* asks "How should I act?" *Culture Community and Enterprise* asks "What is community?" and "How can I participate in communities, local and global?" The final year courses ask "How can I be an effective professional in the community?"

It is also intended that students will have a sound foundation on which to base creative and innovative solutions and practices, often in areas in which resources may be limited. The ability to work autonomously and in collaboration is a further extension of both learning objectives and teaching activities undertaken within the courses in the core stream. However, the difference is that the outcome will be seen in the workplace as well as in the classroom. The educational key here is the notion of transferable skills (Fallows & Steven, 2000; Soleau, 1997) which are engaged throughout the courses via problem-based or experiential learning practices (Bowden & Marton, 1998; Savin-Baden, 2000; Savery & Duffy, 2001). Apart from learning how to write in clear and concise academic language, during the second year students explore issues such as how to create a social business venture by writing Mission and Vision statements, developing business plans and putting together grant applications or submissions for funding.

The idea of self-directed learning is a reflection of the real world practice which graduates face. Often one of the most difficult skills to develop is that of working autonomously or determining what task or knowledge is needed at a particular time. The “engagement” identified by Ramsden (2003) as essential is the foundation of autonomous learning (c.f. Betts & Kercher, 1999) in which students take charge of their own learning. Exploring the idea of self-directed learning with undergraduates brings forward capacities usually found in postgraduate study or in the workplace. One of the great strengths of building the BA WIL around social enterprise is that within the Third Sector it is often the case that resources are limited, so ingenuity and self-reliance have necessarily to be enhanced.

Basing the WIL experience in social enterprise is also designed to fit what are usually considered to be the most significant components of successful WIL practice. There are six aspects of WIL that are usually cited as being significant: authenticity, pedagogical input, assessment, reflection, insight and administrative support (Abeysekera, 2006; Barrell, 2007; Bates 2008; Brown, 2007; Orrell, 2004, Patrick et al., 2008; Smith & Simbag, 2010). While the university’s policy emphasises authenticity, each of these aspects is essential and, in fact, inextricable from the other. The authentic experience without reflection and insight gained by the student is of no particular use, either academically or practically, so these two elements have to be in balance with each other. And the pedagogical input and assessment are not add-ons but must be integrated as providing the opportunities for the reflection and insight on the authentic experience, so there is a requirement that the pedagogical mode and assessment items need to be tailored to provoke and elicit insight and reflection.

In establishing the Social Enterprise core stream of courses, care has been taken to develop a pedagogical approach which integrates both theoretical and practical learning processes. Students are presented with problems to solve, from the development of presentation materials which explore and examine existing social ventures, to the creation of imagined social enterprises, through the pragmatics of professional placement to the final semester in which they design, project manage, produce and evaluate a public event which allows them to demonstrate the skills and knowledge they have acquired during the degree. The approach is one which favours deep over surface learning, process and transferable skills over narrow content, and problem-based learning in the form of experiential class work over reiteration of texts. The form and structure of the teaching lends itself to drawing attention to concepts and practices which can be integrated at a deep level (Biggs, 1996, 2003; Fry, Ketteridge & Marshall 2003; Jackson, 1995; Ramsden, 2003). While there is a need for the provision of specific materials and case studies to make the issues relevant and comprehensible, the greater demand is for the development of a critical ability and a deep appreciation of a worldview that privileges those who have none. In practice, achieving the aim of problem-based learning has been tackled through the creation of workbooks which outline class activities that hone critical abilities, team exploration and articulation.

STUDENT RESPONSES

Since 2008, over 1400 students have undertaken at least the first year subjects, with the first cohort having completed the entire suite of courses graduating in December 2010. The student evaluations reported here are based on the thematic analysis of qualitative data collected from the reflective journals presented at first and third year and the published Student Yearbooks of the 2010 and 2011 graduating cohorts. The Student Yearbooks are documents that were prepared and published by the graduating cohort in each of these two

years. The yearbooks are collections of statements made by each student about their own experiences while undertaking the BA, with special emphasis on the social enterprise WIL elements. They also included photographs, commentaries on placements and final reflections before graduation. In addition, some parts of the public discussion blogs that students submitted during their placements have helped to develop the theme.

Reflective Journals were submitted by the two cohorts during 2008 and 2009, during their first year of the course of which 60 approximately have been analysed for this paper. Students were asked to reflect according to a precise format which emphasised six specific processes: Acknowledgement, Analysis, Assessment, Application, Action and Articulation. (This format is subject to ongoing research by the authors.) Ethical approval for the collection and analysis of the data was gained as part of Macleod's (2008) Realising the Value of the BA' project.

Of these two graduating cohorts of 2010 and 2011, about 20 per cent undertook their professional placements with a community-based education provider, with the result that many have indicated an intention to undertake postgraduate qualifications in teaching. Of the balance, approximately 80 per cent of those whose placements were in organisations that reflected their majors (such as historians who were located in museums or galleries) have reported considerable satisfaction with their personal experience of the WIL process (Issaden & Portman, (Eds), Student Yearbook 2010; Ashbolt & Campbell, (Eds) Student Yearbook, 2011). We are currently developing a further research project which will explore the post-graduation outcomes for alumni of the social enterprise WIL core BA.

A particularly valuable source of evidence has been the Reflective Practice Journals which have been part of the *Introduction to Social Enterprise* assessment profile, as well as the materials provided directly by students through their own publications (Yearbooks were produced in 2010 and 2011 by the graduating classes) and ongoing informal discussions and feedback.

There are distinct patterns that emerge from analysing these materials from the three years of teaching the current programme. Firstly, resistance and ambivalence were common responses during the first weeks of study. This was due in large part to students' unfamiliarity with the term 'social enterprise.' Not knowing what to expect was also a common source of anxiety for students, especially school-leavers. However, in most cases, the initial apprehension and uncertainty expressed by the students during the first weeks gradually began to recede. By weeks two and three, many students reported being happily surprised by the content of the course, and expressed an eager anticipation of the next week's topic. The level of enjoyment and engagement reported by students seems to grow in direct proportion to their level of understanding and relevance to their own lives, and in particular their career aspirations. This was particularly obvious in the first year journals; however, by the third year all students were familiar with not only the terms used, but had also gained a strong appreciation for the experience provided.

Secondly, the real life components of the course were highly valued by students. These range from case studies and tutorial activities that bring abstract concepts to life, readings which focus upon personal accounts, through to guest lecturers from the Third Sector. Hearing first hand from those who know and who had obtained a considerable amount of experience in their field seems to hold particular sway for students. The *in situ* learning that takes place on occasions such as those offered by the placement, helps reinforce students' prior learning,

adding a deeper level of awareness and comprehension to what they already understand about social enterprises and their social justice outcomes. In fact, one of the key comments that appears in both the Student Yearbooks, and has recurred in conversation with students over the past five years, has been that the knowledge that social justice can be achieved in many more ways than becoming an activist has both been surprising and inspiring. One of our graduates, now working in China, has recently emailed to say how much she valued the experience that she had and how she “hopes to promote Corporate social responsibility and social enterprise one day” in her home country.

Thirdly, there were numerous examples throughout the reflective practice journals of students commenting upon the emotional impact that a text (lecture, reading, film, podcast) had on them. The predominant emotions that students report being aroused by the readings and the lectures are feelings of pity, anger, outrage, sadness and compassion. While some students admitted to feelings of sadness and helplessness when presented with concrete examples of social injustice, the vast majority of students reported feeling more motivated to learn, to empower themselves with understanding, and to equip themselves with the skills necessary to make a difference. This theme continued throughout the degree, with an intriguing outcome. Each year the graduating class prepares a showcase of their BA, and each year we have had outstanding small films made by students about their own experiences, some aspects of social enterprise or as reflection on the suite of courses. Many of these are themselves inspirational.

Fourthly, the impact of the course was understandably different for each individual. Some students attained only a shallow interest in the course, remaining all the while unresponsive to the main themes. A common response among the less engaged students was that they had had their eyes opened by the course. It would seem that individuals for whom a specific career or good job was the main focus of coming to university, experienced less enjoyment of the course and remained less engaged than those who had a broad interest in learning, knowing and understanding. This suggests that the link between the signature experience and employment outcomes needs to be articulated more effectively in future years. Nevertheless, these students registered a whole range of benefits/impacts from the course: feelings of becoming more deeply imbedded in their society – how it works, its history its future - and being part of a community of minds was clearly gratifying, as was cultivating a greater understanding of the interconnectedness of life on earth. For many students, the experience of the course was been rich and profound, and in some cases, life-changing. Students recognised the value of the course in providing them with what they had come to university to acquire: learning, knowledge and wisdom. In effect, *Introduction to Social Enterprise*, for all its emphasis as an introductory course in a WIL stream, has been able to function as a typical humanities course.

Indeed, a fifth aspect of the WIL experience in social enterprise has been that students feel they have a better understanding of the purpose of the BA and feel reassured by the career pathways available to them once they acquire their degree. Both the presentations at the final year capstone showcases and the inclusions in the graduating classes’ Student Yearbooks have highlighted this as a specific response. This knowledge is important given the broader community perception of the BA which has developed over the last two decades. During that time, as university participation has increased significantly and an earlier conception of the value of generalist degrees has been replaced by an emphasis on the degree as a pathway to a career, proponents of the BA have struggled to articulate reasons for studying the degree

that resonate in the current climate. This is despite evidence that shows that BA graduates, while not necessarily finding their career paths as quickly as graduates from other more narrow or professional degrees nor necessarily gaining the immediate salaries of graduates from other programs, nevertheless achieve important career positions because of the generalist and flexible value-adding provided by the degree program. By addressing these issues early on in the course and providing students with a large amount of evidence to the contrary, *Introduction to Social Enterprise* and its clear relation to a WIL dimension in the BA has been instrumental in allowing students to make up their own minds as to the benefits (or otherwise) of undertaking the program. Indeed, the speed of the turnaround in students' thinking once they embarked on the course has been extraordinary.

Finally, one of the strongest findings to emerge from the journals is the role that *Introduction to Social Enterprise* had played in helping students realise they could pursue a career at the same time as they could honour their desire to work for greater social justice. Finding a vocation that would balance their creative, intellectual and social needs with their desire to do good for the community was a crucial aspect for many students in setting a career goal. For these students, work was not just something done to earn a living, but an expression of who one is and how one conducts oneself in the community. One of the comments often made was that the jobs undertaken form part of the ethical obligations of a person, and that work, ethics and a person's identity were inextricably connected.

These are just some of the main themes to emerge from the analysis of the first year reflection journals, but they are replicated in the reflection journals attached to the third year course *Social Enterprise Placement*. What is clear is that, while the social enterprise stream of courses has had a limited purchase on some students in the BA program, it has had a profound and positive impact in a number of ways on the bulk of students undertaking it. A follow-up research project on the career destinations of BA graduates who have undertaken the social enterprise WIL experience compared to those who have not, will be able to tell us more about the wider and more long-lasting impact of the program and its perceived value to students.

CONCLUSION

There are multiple levels of complexity involved in establishing an effective and authentic WIL program that serves generalist degrees such as the BA. One is the attempt to reconcile the traditional stance of scholarship in the humanities with the contemporary demands of preparation for the workplace. Our approach to bridge the two is to locate social enterprise placements in such a way that students' disciplinary studies are able to be utilised by the particular social enterprise in which they are placed, whether these studies are in history, sociology, film, journalism or the other majors offered in the School of Humanities.

In a number of cases, placements have been found in social enterprises for several students from different disciplinary backgrounds, and those students have combined their different knowledge and skills for the benefit of the social enterprise. Secondly, by embedding the WIL component within a core suite of courses, almost the equivalent of a major within the BA, we have been able to position the experience of the professional placement in such a way that it becomes an authentic element of the degree. That is, the placement and project courses are not add-ons, but are the culmination of an integrated series of steps from introduction through preparation to placement and post-placement reflection. Moreover, while there was some initial confusion about introducing social enterprise into the Humanities – as distinct from its more usual home with Business or Management Faculties –

as the terminology has become more widespread and the program has been more accepted, the term has come to be recognised as one which enables humanities students to recognise in themselves the potential for becoming enterprising. At another level, it has been exciting to create a problem and inquiry based learning approach which engages and involves students from diverse disciplines in becoming self-directed learners, and in doing so, creates a foundation for life-long learning. The final, and probably the most significant, level of complexity is that of meeting students' expectations. From their own reports, the social enterprise location of their WIL experience has offered opportunities to be creative, to develop social skills and to expose them to ways in which they can make a difference to themselves, their communities and the wider world. As the WIL experience in social enterprise is further refined in the coming years, we expect to encounter other valuable ways in which the BA will even better articulate with the world of work while retaining its significance as a generalist degree.

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The Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education publishes peer-reviewed original research, topical issues, and best practice articles from throughout the world dealing with Cooperative Education (Co-op) and Work Integrated Learning/Education (WIL).

In this Journal, Co-op/WIL is defined as an educational approach that uses relevant work-based projects that form an integrated and assessed part of an academic program of study (e.g., work placements, internships, practicum). These programs should have clear linkages with, or add to, the knowledge and skill base of the academic program. These programs can be described by a variety of names, such as work-based learning, workplace learning, professional training, industry-based learning, engaged industry learning, career and technical education, internships, experiential education, experiential learning, vocational education and training, fieldwork education, and service learning.

The Journal's main aim is to allow specialists working in these areas to disseminate their findings and share their knowledge for the benefit of institutions, co-op/WIL practitioners, and researchers. The Journal desires to encourage quality research and explorative critical discussion that will lead to the advancement of effective practices, development of further understanding of co-op/WIL, and promote further research.

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