

## **Editorial**

Welcome to the 8th edition of *Practice and Evidence of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* (PESTLHE). The overlapping themes in this edition of the journal are the role of group work in supporting students' learning, the use of online learning in problem-based learning, learning and teaching programmes for graduate teaching assistants and positioning social justice as part of engineering education curricula.

Akister, Williams and Maynard explore social work students' experiences of individual and group supervision with respect to their final year dissertations. The authors describe the measures they adopted to ensure positive outcomes for all the students (whether individually or group supervised) and conclude that group supervision may address some of the commonly reported challenges of the undergraduate dissertation process. Duncan describes students first-time experience of online PBL (problem-based learning) within a Sport and Exercise Science course. Students report feeling more ownership of their learning but Duncan highlights the need for appropriate support to enable student to work in this way, both in terms of supporting them in online learning as well as with a PBL course. McCulloch provides an account of the approach a large research-led university has taken to the continuing professional development of its Graduate Teaching Assistants and urges us to continue to explore ways that the university may support a larger number of GTAs in addition to other staff on hourly paid contracts.

In our final two papers we see a focus on how social justice can be considered within two higher education programmes. Kabo, Day and Baillie describe a course developed to bring engineering and social science students together to help them develop critical thinking in relation to reconsidering aspects of engineering and its relation with society and consider the students learning in relation to the Threshold Concepts framework. In the final paper, Riley describes how the learning experiences of a cohort of students from the United States and Nicaragua were impacted by participating in a condensed, innovation and product development course taught in Nicaragua. The course, which the authors describe as a "more socially just approach to education for global development" adopted collaborative, active learning and cross-cultural approaches to learning and teaching of the course. The paper outlines the successes, the challenges and the surprises that this form of education provides.

Finally, the editors would like to thank Sarah Mann for her valuable contribution as a member of the editorial board since PESTLHE's inception in 2006. We wish her luck in all her future endeavours.

The next edition of PESTLHE will appear in April 2010 and the deadline for articles to be considered for this issue is January 15<sup>th</sup> 2009.

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