

2019 First and Further Year Experience (FFYE) grants: Embedding transition pedagogies in the curriculum

Application form

Project applications (expressions of interest) must be submitted on this form.
Applications must be submitted by **10am Monday December 10th, 2018**.

Applications are to be submitted by email to Kathy Egea, UTS FYE coordinator at Kathy.Egea@uts.edu.au.

Project applicant/team leader:

Name: Samantha Donnelly Position: Scholarly Teaching Fellow
Contact email: samantha.donnelly@uts.edu.au Contact phone no: 0425 386134
Faculty: Design, Architecture and Building (DAB)
School/Department (if applicable): Architecture

Other applicants if team application:

Name: Emily Edwards Position: Lecturer, IML

Title of project:

Supporting Architecture sessional staff in first year assessment reviews:
Empowering the learning experience of design "crits" through feedback modes

Subject/s involved:

Architecture: Design Studio 1

Endorsement by Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) or Head of School

I ...Gavin Perin... endorse this project application and confirm that embedding of the project outcomes in the subject will be supported by the Faculty.

Signed (or via email approval)

Date: 11 December 2018

Have you received one or more FYE Grants previously?

Yes – Reports from earlier grants will be taken into account.

No

A brief description of the aims and rationale for the project

This project builds on a previous FYE grant on design “crits” (oral presentation reviews) in Architecture (Donnelly & Jackson 2018 - see Appendix), which identified feedback from tutors as a key pressure point from students’ perspectives. Constructive feedback that aligns with assessment criteria and learning goals is an essential part of the learning process, (Assessment Reform Group 2002; Boud et al 2010), and casual academics also need to receive training and support around assessment and feedback practices (Baik 2018; Boud et al 2010). The aim of this project is threefold. The first aim is to conduct a series of interviews of sessional staff with experience in design studio teaching in the undergraduate degree, in order to accurately document current pressure points within the feedback mode of a design review. The second aim is to integrate and test a series of feedback-focused learning exercises which will address issues highlighted in the previous stage, and provide workshops for tutors to train them in using the exercises and providing feedback as part of the Assessment for Learning approach (Boud et al, 2010). Lastly, the project will produce a document which discusses methods and outcomes for future sessional staff as a part of an induction package. This document will particular focus on scaffolding knowledge in design review as learning experiences.

The rationale for this project is to further develop and research feedback practices in the Architecture studio so that sessional staff can more accurately focus on identifying key skills and attributes. Commonly in design studio curriculum, focus on the final project outcome is privileged over the potential of feedback to provide important moments of learning. This project explores how targeted support in feedback practice can provide a module of learning additional to the design curriculum content and enables a more complex design thinking practice which benefits both sessional staff and students. This will particularly aid students from LSES or non-English speaking backgrounds who may not be confident in presenting or discussing their work, and encourages them to integrate academic literacy practice into their presentations from an early stage (Devlin et al., 2012). This project also addresses all subjects in which feedback is a mechanism for assessment. Resources for this project would include: the design and delivery of 3 support sessions for all sessional staff before and during the teaching period; lesson plans and activities to be used during studio sessions; a sessional staff guide which focuses on the Architecture design review; training of teaching assistants in order to sustain the teaching model over a series of subject deliveries.

Curriculum Principles for Transition Pedagogy addressed by the project

Assessment

The project addresses the need for students to understand the expectations of delivering assessment tasks orally for formative and summative feedback in an academic setting. This requires an ability to develop academic and assessment literacy, both in understanding and summarizing the required reading components of a course, but also to verbally describe the project to a group of judges.

Engagement

The project addresses the engagement of all students by supporting sessional staff in creating dynamic, investigative and well-structured lesson plans in studios as a staff development activity. This also addresses the need to support staff in peer to peer engagement in order to create a team approach to teaching and therefore demonstrate to students that working in teams is an acquired skill and a benefit to the project. It also develops an understanding of academic belonging and peer to peer learning by setting up “roads into” the subject learning objectives early on in the delivery.

Design

The project addresses the assessment and feedback literacy of sessional tutors, and in turn the assessment and feedback literacy of students to evidence their learning as a scaffolded entity which includes reading, writing, designing and making responses to the assessment task. The assessment of these skills rather than the simple outcome will provide a better understanding for both the student and the teacher.

Other University/Faculty/Course/Subject priorities addressed (optional)

Academic literacy, assessment literacy, scaffolded learning, graduate attribute integration. The refined focus on feedback aligns with both the UTS Model of Learning and Learning Futures, in that it specifies a focus on student-centred learning. It also addresses school's graduate attributes which call for the capacity to "undertake a critically directed, self-aware mode of disciplinary thinking"

Key project activities and timeline, including appropriate activities that engage the overall teaching team (if applicable)
Activity 1: Sessional staff interviews (During Autumn session 2019)

- 10-12 interviews of sessional Architecture staff about their experience in studio teaching and ability to address academic literacy, feedback, criteria and scaffolded learning. This will provide the focus for Activities 2 and 3.

Activity 2: Targeted learning exercises (May - July 2019)

- Development of specific lesson plans to be integrated into studio learning exercises in a well-structured time frame (designed with IML/ALL support).
- Sessional staff support sessions will be delivered (with IML/ALL support) at three stages during the Spring 2019 teaching session. These will include lesson planning, management of student issues, academic literacy training and peer to peer support discussions.

Activity 3: Student focus groups (evaluation) (Oct 2019)

- Focus groups for student feedback on feedback quality.

Activity 4: Teaching and Learning Guides for sessional staff (Nov 2019)

- Development of a concise guide (with IML/ALL support) which outlines best practice in studio teaching, gives lesson planning examples and provides information on how to achieve better integration of reading, writing, presenting and conceptual translation of ideas.

Project Budget and budget justification

Activity	Item	Pay scale	Hours	Amount
1	Interviews (12)	Professional role (UTS)	9	0
	Collation of data from interviews	Casual academic, other - student assistant \$47.07 + 16% on-costs	10	546
	Vouchers (12)	\$50 for each interview		600
2	UTS IML/ALL support	Professional role (UTS)	12	0
	Support sessions for sessional staff – development and delivery	Professional role (UTS)	12	0
	Sessional staff to attend support workshops	Casual academic, other \$47.07 + 16% on-costs	3x12=36	1965
	Catering for staff			300
3	Vouchers for student focus group	\$25 for each student		375
4	Guide layout (graphics)	Casual academic, other \$47.07 + 16% on-costs	3	164
TOTAL			84	3950

Evaluation strategy

Evidence of success will be measured by:

- Tracking the development of presentation skills according to specific marking criteria for verbal discussion of the project.
- Focus groups with students (for their perspective on the feedback given)
- Surveys for sessional staff to complete (to assess how useful they find the support workshops and lesson plans)

Reference List

Assessment Reform Group. 2002, *Assessment for Learning: 10 principles – Research-based principles to guide classroom practice*, Assessment Reform Group, London.

Baik, C., Naylor, R. & Corrin, L. 2018, 'Developing a framework for university-wide improvement in the training and support of 'casual' academics', *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, vol. 40, no. 4, pp.375-389. DOI: 10.1080/1360080X.2018.1479948

Boud, D. & Associates. 2010, *Assessment 2020: Seven propositions for assessment reform in higher education*, Australian Learning and Teaching Council, Sydney
https://www.uts.edu.au/sites/default/files/Assessment-2020_propositions_final.pdf

Dannels, D. P. 2005, 'Performing Tribal Rituals: A Genre Analysis of "Crits" in Design Studios', *Communication Education*, vol. 54, no. 2, pp. 136-160, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03634520500213165>

Devlin, M., Kift, S., Nelson, K., Smith, L., & McKay, J. 2012, *Effective teaching and support of students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds: Practical advice for teaching staff*, Office for Learning and Teaching, Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education, Sydney.

Appendix (previous grant proposal or report)

2018 First Year Experience (FYE) grants Embedding transition pedagogies in the curriculum

Application form

Project applications (expressions of interest) must be submitted on this form. Applications must be submitted by **10am Friday February 16th, 2018**. Applications are to be submitted by email to Kathy Egea, UTS FYE coordinator at Kathy.Egea@uts.edu.au.

<p>Project applicant/team leader:</p> <p>Name: Samantha Donnelly Position: STF, FYE coordinator Contact email: samantha.donnelly@uts.edu.au Contact phone no: 9514 8958 Faculty: Design, Architecture and Building (DAB) School/Department (if applicable): Architecture</p>
<p>Other applicants if team application:</p> <p>Name: Brooke Jackson Position: STF, Course coordinator</p>
<p>Title of project:</p> <p>Reviewing student experiences of “the Crit” – finding common ground between Assessment technique and Constructive feedback</p> <p>Transition subject involved: 11209: Architectural Design: Making</p>
<p>Endorsement by Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning)</p> <p>I endorse this project application and confirm that embedding of the project outcomes in the subject will be supported by the Faculty.</p> <p>Signed Date:</p>

<p>Have you received one or more FYE Grants previously?</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes – Reports from earlier grants will be taken into account. <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
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Project outline (max 1-2 pages) (See guidelines for detail)

<p>Assessment of tasks in studio-based subjects is usually the presentation of work by the student to a panel or jury for comments and feedback. This provides the student</p>
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with an understanding of the success of their work. The presentation involves the student giving a verbal account of their design project, with presentation drawings and physical models. The verbal explanation includes the process and subsequent development of their concept to a more refined outcome. The jury is usually comprised of the studio leader plus one or two visiting academics or practitioners. The studio leader relies on the visiting panel for comments during this session, acting more as a convener than a commentator. However, the student's work is ultimately judged by the studio leader for grades.

This moment of presentation presents several issues, particularly for the first-year students. Many of the students have not had the experience with public speaking or defending their work in front of a jury. The methods of drawing and making are very new to many students used to following a prescribed task description. Although the design and communication skills may be transferred as part of their weekly education, verbal presentation and an ability to respond to and, in some cases, argue for their ideas in front of their peers is not a skill which is openly addressed. Issues to do with the jury include an inability for the reviewers to fully understand the work due to a lack of exposure to the project, difficulty in being able to address the level of the students' development, and often the lack of experience in studio-based learning which requires different skills and attributes to that of the design office or construction site.

This type of assessment by review panel assessment begins in the first design studio and continues through every subsequent studio and further into the career of the graduate architect. It is a vital attribute, and yet, students are not formally equipped with adequate skills to develop and improve this communication skill. This stage of the student's experience often presents a breaking point for them in terms of negative impact and loss of confidence. Therefore, managing the review panel is a skill which directly affects the lifelong learning of the architecture student.

This project aims to examine the framework of the design review experience for the first-year students through a critical analysis of the review process and the characters with the assistance of a mental health expert. This analysis aims to provide:

- Psychological types of students presenting in design studio
- Cultural or sociological aspects which affect the design review assessment
- The stages of a review panel session in terms of student experience
- Roles played by the jury or review panel
- Common pressure points for the students caused by the assessment – timing, delivery of feedback and ability to present publicly

To support this investigation, we will liaise with a UTS counsellor in order to broaden our understanding of the psychology of public presentation through the eyes of a mental health expert. Although we understand the broad scope of assessment pressure as teaching staff, we often lack the experience or strategies for managing different types of student needs. E.g. students presenting with high anxiety who are expected to perform like everyone else within the review. Or those presenting with cultural systems in which critique is shameful to receive in public. This liaison is already being negotiated within the School, with a meeting between counselling staff and teaching academics arranged for 27 February, 2018. This grant moves one step further to develop a response in terms of the student experience.

From this analysis, shifts in curriculum delivery, particularly to do with presenting and championing one's own work can be a focused point of change. This approach has not been attempted before. The rationale for this project includes:

- A need to reduce the numbers of first-year architecture students experiencing mental health issues by shifting the assessment focus to be a learning experience.
- Creating a community of learning rather than fostering a culture of pressure to perform in line with peers
- Analysis of existing assessment practice by a UTS counsellor will address strategies for student support and assessment management more laterally than has previously been attempted
- To enable students with less confidence in public speaking, particularly acute for those coming from low SES areas, to succeed through focused support
- To provide current and future studio staff with resources outlining strategies to support diverse issues encountered during this assessment review stage
- To build clear assessment presentation skills at first-year stage into the curriculum to address the criteria which specifically address this graduate attribute
- To help first year students understand the role of self-critique as an important part of the assessment review and to help develop a strong advocacy for their own work.
- This grant can provide clear findings and test outcomes within an academic year, since research can be conducted during the Autumn session assessments and selected strategies tested in the Spring session.

First Year Curriculum Principles for Transition Pedagogy (TP) addressed by the project

- Transition
- Diversity
- Engagement
- Assessment
- Design (broader focus)
- Evaluation and Monitoring (broader focus)

Assessment practice in studio-based subjects has not changed radically despite the introduction of low stakes formative feedback and updated assessment criteria to enable students to understand their progression. This project will employ a multidisciplinary approach by connecting UTS Counselling, Academic Language and Learning and Architecture teaching staff to develop more successful assessment models for studio.

Other University/Faculty/Course/Subject priorities addressed (optional)

This project addresses a general need in the school to update its assessment procedures to provide a more focused delivery of feedback which is consistent, high quality and provides the students with clear objectives in their work. This project is aimed at first-year students, but will be ultimately beneficial in all studio-based assessments in the undergraduate degree. The refined focus on feedback aligns with both the UTS Model of Learning and Learning.Futures, in that it specifies a focus on student-centred learning. It also addresses school's graduate attributes

which call for the capacity to “undertake a critically directed, self-aware mode of disciplinary thinking.”

Key project activities and timeline

Activity 1: Focus group surveys (x 2) (April 2018)

- Survey second and third year students about their experiences as **first-year students** in design review panels to assess stress levels and positive experiences
- Survey studio-based curriculum staff regarding experience in conducting review panels in the last 3-5 years

Activity 2: Psychologist experience (June 2018)

- Attendance at design review panels in action with Counselling staff / Academic Literacy staff (3 days of review panels for Autumn Design Studios)

Activity 3: Embed design review strategies (August 2018)

- Subject - 11209: Architectural Design: Making (Spring) can provide a testing ground for new strategies of assessing students during design review panels with scaffolded learning experience for presentations in the studio in liaison with IML and ALL staff
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Activity 4: Report on Findings for Staff

- Report on findings for staff providing studio-based subjects in 2019.
- A resource developed for existing and future sessional studio staff, jury members and staff developing new curriculum.

Project Budget

Activity	Item	Pay scale	Hours	Amount
1	Focus group survey – students on FY experiences	Casual academic, other - student assistant (May 2018) \$46.14 + 16% on-costs	10	535.22
	Focus group survey- staff on review panels	Casual academic, other - student assistant (May 2018) \$46.14 + 16% on-costs	10	535.22
	Lunch for focus groups	-	-	400
	Vouchers for students (20)	-	-	400
2	UTS Counselling support	Professional role (UTS)	12	
	UTS IML / ALL support	Professional role (UTS)	12	
	Feedback and report		8	
3	Embed new strategies	Academic role (Nov 2018)	4	
4	Report for future staff	Casual academic, other - student assistant (Jan 2019) \$46.14 + 16% on-costs	30	1641.60
TOTAL			60	3512.04

References

Utaberta, Nangkula & Hassanpour, Badiosadat & Che-Ani, A & Zaharim, Azami & Goh, Nurakmal. (2012). Criteria-Based Assessment and Grading in Architecture Design Studio. . 10.1007/978-3-642-25908-1_30.

Carless, D. Exploring learning-oriented assessment processes, Journal of Higher Education (2015) 69: 963. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-014-9816-z>

Utaberta, N., Hassanpour, B. and Usman, I., 2010. Redefining critique methods as an assessment tools in architecture design studio. Selected Topics in Energy, Environment, Sustainable Development and Landscaping. Politehnica University of Timisoara, Romania.

Parnell, R., Sara, R., Doidge, C. and Parsons, M.L., 2007. The crit: An architecture student's handbook. Routledge.

Ochsner, J.K., 2000. Behind the mask: a psychoanalytic perspective on interaction in the design studio. *Journal of Architectural Education*, 53(4), pp.194-206.