RISING TO THE CHALLENGE
Securing water for the world’s most vulnerable

JUST CAUSE FOR RECOGNITION
Engaging students with the law in action

INTERNSHIPS THAT WORK
Why unpaid shouldn’t mean unrewarded
ATTILA BRUNGS

BUILDING EXCELLENCE

It’s a great pleasure and privilege to be writing my first U: magazine column as Vice-Chancellor. In the three months I’ve been in the position, I have found it both interesting and incredibly rewarding. Of course, it hasn’t been without its challenges.

Before taking up this position, I spent time reflecting on what makes UTS so distinct – we are vibrant, creative, collegiate and dynamic. We are a university deeply committed to social justice, diversity and equity – these are core values that underpin all that we do as a university community.

Our 25th anniversary marked the mid-point of our 10-year strategic vision to become a world-leading university of technology. Our distinctiveness and commitment to excellence and the commitment and hard work of our staff, have enabled us to make great strides towards delivering on this vision.

I am committed to building on the work of the last 25 years supporting our drive towards excellence and, in particular, focusing on our efforts in three key areas:

First, we have developed a tremendous reputation for teaching excellence. We need to keep innovating in this area, continuing to develop distinctive and relevant courses that also harness the possibilities of the new campus spaces. So building on the UTS model of learning, the initiatives of Learning2014 and Learning Futures are critical to the organisation in order to offer students a unique experience blending face-to-face and online learning.

The nature of our research. Ensuring the next step-change in our research performance is crucial to our continued success. The leadership team across UTS have worked closely to identify and develop initiatives within these three key strategic areas. This incorporates a range of pan-university projects including Managing for Performance and starting to prepare for potential deregulation, should it be imposed on us. This is alongside specific faculty-led programs to further embed Learning2014, support research performance, boost external engagement and progress or indigenous strategies.

I am confident we are well positioned to meet the challenges of the coming years as we work together to build excellence the UTS way, right across the university.

Professor Attila Brungs
Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President

To that end, ensuring graduate workplace success and delivering work-ready graduates is a priority for UTS.

Secondly, we have always been an outward-looking university, striving to engage and have a real impact on the world around us – be that through our students, our research or our alumni. Continuing to connect and engage is core to our ongoing success. As our new campus continues to unfold, we have a great opportunity to use our sense of place, revitalising the southern gateway of Sydney to develop holistic partnerships with industry that encompass teaching, research and more.

Finally, we need to continue to enhance our research performance. We have made great progress very quickly, improving the quality while increasing the quantity and collaborative nature of our research. Ensuring the next step-change in our research performance is crucial to our continued success.

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Sustaining momentum and remaining competitive are crucial aspects of being a researcher. So what happens if an academic has significant carer responsibilities?

In response to this report, E&DU, supported and championed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, has developed a range of programs and activities under the Research Equity Initiative (REI) to better support researchers to maintain their personal and professional passions.

The latest offering in the REI is a Research Equity Fellowship open to men and women whose research careers have been significantly hindered due to carer responsibilities.

Awarded for the first time in September to Postdoctoral Research Fellow Nerida Cole, the merit-based fellowship will provide $50 000 to further her cutting-edge research in the Faculty of Science at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS).

“This will make a really big difference for Nerida and her research as well as her responsibilities as a carer,” says Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research Professor Glenn Wightwick.

“We want to attract and retain the best and brightest to the university, and increasingly, young men and women want more of a balanced life between family and career,” says Vice-Chancellor Research Professor Glenn Wightwick.

The fellowship recognises the significance of carer responsibilities and support staff with carer responsibilities.

“Carer responsibilities bite into time available for research, and the negative impact of leave or working part-time – even for a period can become cumulative,” says Equity and Diversity Officer Joanna Leonard.

“That’s why it’s important to support people in these situations.

“For example, if an academic has a family role at UTS is that of ‘people counting’,

An important but relatively unknown role at UTS is that of ‘people counting’, performed by a team of experts around engagement with research at UTS, and the Equity and Diversity Unit (E&DU) identified carer responsibilities as a major contributing factor.

In fact, a one-room trial earlier this year resulted in an energy saving of around 50 per cent in that room alone.

Software for this application is still in development, but with the roll-out of the people counter technology across teaching spaces in existing buildings due to commence in 2015, the potential benefits to the university – and the environment – are not far off.

Colin Britton
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer (main image): Joanne Saad
Inset: Bryce Hutchinson (centre) with Steven Ivanovski and Amelia Anderberg from the FMO space team
Comment on this article at UTS:NEWSROOM

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An important but relatively unknown role at UTS is that of ‘people counting’, performed by a team of experts who come onto campus for a one-week period during the year to conduct space utilisation surveys in teaching and informal areas.

Ever noticed someone walk into a room mid-class, do a quick head count and leave, only to repeat the process an hour later? That’s them.

With space at a premium at UTS, the results of the survey provide an insight into how it can be used more effectively – now, and as the university grows.

“Carer responsibilities” bite into time available for research, and the negative impact of leave or working part-time – even for a period can become cumulative,” says Equity and Diversity Officer Joanna Leonard.

“That’s why it’s important to support people in these situations.

“For example, if an academic has a family role at UTS, a fantastic post-doc, then has kids, they’re then competing for academic positions – at the time when research really takes off – with one hand tied behind their back.”

A Women in Research report released in 2012 documented gender differences around engagement with research at UTS, and the Equity and Diversity Unit (E&DU) identified carer responsibilities as a major contributing factor.

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From helping to stop illegal dumping outside charity bins, to collaborating with councils looking into illegal felling of mangroves, criminology and law students at UTS can expect to get their hands a little dirty under the supervision of Senior Lecturer Penny Crofts.

Through practical fieldwork and community-based assessment, Crofts is instilling a sense of morality and collective consciousness in her students. “The community-based projects my students undertake are an innovative way to encourage them to think outside the square about how all aspects of the law combine,” says Crofts. Her students agree.

“The community-based projects my students undertake are an innovative way to encourage them to think outside the square about how all aspects of the law combine,” says Crofts. Her students agree.

"There is a wonderful alchemy that occurs when students gain experience as well as knowledge," says one student from Crofts’ 2013 class, “and that is what happens in Wickedness and Vice.”

The approach has earned Crofts a national Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning. Senior Lecturer in Law Penny Crofts was among the six UTS staff to receive a citation in the Australian Government’s 2014 Awards for University Teaching in September. UTS received a total of four citations – two for joint nominees – across four faculties, the Institute for Interactive Media and Learning (IML) and community partnership program UTS Shopfront. All were in honour of professionally focused and ‘real-world’ approaches.

Crofts’ citation was in recognition of her achievements in ‘developing authentic, sustained and transformative experiences of law in action’ that inspire students with a passion for justice and integrity.”

“The projects challenge pre-conceived ideas and stereotypes, opening up a world students are often sheltered from,” says one of Crofts’ Juris Doctor students. “They allowed us to question, evaluate and weigh up the strengths and weaknesses of our particular worldviews in light of new evidence and information – which is arguably the whole point of university.”

In applying for the citation, Crofts was surprised to find she exceeded the eligibility requirements for the ‘sustained practice’ criterion, which requires at least three years’ work in a particular field. “I thought ‘Oh my god, I’ve been doing this for 19 years!’” she exclaims.

“Penny was probably overdue in her application for an award like this,” says IML Lecturer Nicola Parker. “She had more than enough material to complete her application for a citation.”

As a faculty specialist for law, part of Parker’s role is to help applicants from the faculty to prepare their citation applications for submission. “Applications often find it difficult to write in the style required for the citation application,” says Lecturer Katrina Waite who works alongside Parker in IML, and also assisted Crofts in completing her application for the national citation.

As with all UTS’s national citation recipients this year, Crofts was first successful in the annual UTS Learning and Teaching Awards last year.

“I worked closely with Nicola and Katrina from IML, who are both experts in the area,” says Crofts. “The support they gave me, and the amount of time they spent helping me prepare my application was phenomenal.”

Parker says, “People might not necessarily be ready to apply for the award, but Penny definitely was.”

At the time of her application, Crofts already had a lot of supporting evidence to choose from through student feedback surveys, peer reviews and student testimonials, which Parker and Waite were able to assist her in selecting.

“The application needs to be a strong narrative about the work the applicants have done, and the evidence needs to support the picture of what they’re actually claiming. “Penny understood straight away the kind of evidence needed, and she had a drawer full!” Parker laughs.

Crofts was able to demonstrate that her students had published work on their community-based assessments in refereed journals; that she had written and contributed to textbooks that are used across Australia in legal education; and that her teaching and learning approaches had been cited nationally and internationally in research papers.

Crofts’ passion for social justice encompasses a deep interest in the concept of wickedness. “Society has a tendency to overuse the language and rhetoric of wickedness, without knowing what it really means” she says.

Her PhD thesis, completed at Griffith University, was entitled Wickedness and Crime: Laws of Homicide and Malice. Published as a book in 2013, it addresses material by fellow law researchers. It also garnered a review in The Cambridge Law Journal; an honour for Crofts who is a former master’s student of the university.

Crofts is now focusing her research interest on the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Abuse in Australia. “I have a lot of projects, and this one is quite a heavy topic,” she says.

“Without giving away too much, I am also starting my research for a project based on law and horror, which is a fun and accessible way of analysing how law and horror films represent culpability and wickedness,” she says.

It is Crofts’ ability to bring this curiosity and passion for all aspects of the law to life for her students that earned her the national citation.

As Parker so aptly summarises, “She provides a transformative learning experience for her students, and you can’t ask for much more than that.”

Avalon Dennis
Bachelor of Arts in Communications (Writing and Cultural Studies) / Bachelor of International Studies
Photographer: Shane Lo
Bachelor of Science in Information Technology

Comment on this article at
UTS NEWSROOM
Internships have been in the media spotlight recently, raising questions about exploitation. Yet from the standpoint of universities, internships have a valuable role to play in developing students’ capabilities.

So how do we ensure internships benefit students as well as employers, particularly if the role is unpaid?

Internships have been in the news for all the wrong reasons after a sharp rise in complaints to the Fair Work Ombudsman about “unpaid work”. But universities have a great story to tell about internships, and it would be unfortunate if our much more structured programs were unfairly tarred with the same brush as the cases receiving media scrutiny.

Internships have tremendous benefits for students, employers and universities. They link theory to practice for students, helping them gain experience and get work experience. Far from being paid to work often with no connection to their education institutions.

Employers who have a good experience with an intern may proceed to offer them ongoing employment. But the internships that have come in for recent criticism are quite different to those offered under the sorts of programs supported by UTS and other higher education institutions.

Media reports refer to ‘interns’ doing unpaid work often with no connection to their skills or experience. Far from being paid to work, sometimes these ‘interns’ are paying the services that find them placements. This has prompted Fair Work Australia to look into unpaid work, and unions have called for an internships code of practice.

In contrast, university internship programs only approve opportunities that are relevant and will benefit students’ professional development. For example, in the UTS Business School, Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology, and UTS communication program, internships are developed as structured programs with clear goals, and employers and placements are carefully vetted. Similarly for work placements in health and education.

Students can complete an internship as part of a compulsory course requirement, elective subject or independently. There are excellent opportunities, ranging from larger organisations with structured programs through to smaller or start-up organisations where students can really immerse themselves in a business.

For a student who is not required to complete an internship as part of their course, the choice to take one on can deliver a host of benefits. Students gain a better understanding of what they learn in the classroom by applying it in the workplace. As interns, they strengthen their soft skills such as teamwork, problem-solving and communication. And having relevant experience is a distinct advantage when it comes to graduate employment.

Yes, some internships are unpaid. But the absence of a financial benefit is more than offset by the experience and contacts the students gain during their placements, and potentially by the offer of a permanent role. The internships we are involved with – paid or unpaid – are vetted at the outset and evaluated on completion.

So what are the red flags to look for when vetting an internship – especially an unpaid one?

The ultimate aim of an unpaid internship should be for the student and the organisation to be partners in a learning experience. So a key question that should be asked is whether the unpaid internship is for the benefit of the young person, or the employer? The balance should definitely fall in the unpaid intern’s favour.

Legally, under the Fair Work Act 2009, an internship can be unpaid as long as the person is not in an employment relationship. So a key question that should be asked is whether the unpaid internship is for the benefit of the young person, or the employer? The balance should definitely fall in the unpaid intern’s favour.

Internships can be a fantastic opportunity for students to gain experience, learning, networks and potentially subject credits, as well as a chance for employers to help shape education.

The structured framework and rigorous processes provided by university internship programs set a benchmark. Private providers and regulators could look to elements of these programs in ensuring ‘interns’ really are interns – not free labour.

The longer someone interns for a business without pay, the more likely it could be argued they are in an employment relationship. So what might be considered a reasonable timeframe? For the internship subjects that are part of UTS Business School courses, 210 hours – the equivalent of 30 days full-time – spread over a period as long as 12 months can be approved initially. If more hours are proposed, the question will be asked what other learning will take place to warrant this.

Students who take part in an internship as part of a formal subject in the UTS Business School are required to produce a proposal that demonstrates the internship is a genuine opportunity. They must have an application, and health and safety forms signed off before commencing.

Agreed learning objectives are required, along with an assigned supervisor to provide support within the host organisation. Even students arranging their own internships – independently of any subject requirement or UTS program – are encouraged to approach their faculty to get the internship approved, as a safeguard. Among other things, we have an unpaid internships checklist to help students assess the merit of the proposed placement.

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Amy Bishop
Internship and Career Support Manager,
UTS Business School
Photographer: Joanne Saad

“The ultimate aim of an internship should be for the student and the organisation to be partners in a learning experience.”

Comment on this article at UTSNEWSROOM
newsonline.uts.edu.au/news/2016/115 Internships-that-work
Last month, Professor of Environmental Science Derek Eamus was awarded a grant of $250,000 in the Google Impact Challenge for an innovative and simple device that could provide food and water security to the poorest 40% of the world’s population.

“The problem I’m addressing is how to minimise the impacts of over-extraction of groundwater in arid and semi-arid regions where almost half the world’s population relies on groundwater for their wealth and health,” Eamus explained in a video viewed thousands of times by voters in the Google Impact Challenge Australia.

The challenge invited not-for-profit organisations Australia-wide to show how they would use technology to make a better world, with the potential to change the lives of the world’s most vulnerable. Eamus’ research embodies ‘practical innovation’. His success in Google’s recent national impact challenge engaged the UTS community and opened new possibilities to make global water security a reality.

Eamus’ work in developing an early warning system for communities who may be at risk of over-using the local groundwater table saw him placed in the top 10 projects from over 350 submitted to the inaugural competition run by Google Australia. Google awarded four grants of $500,000 to the top four projects; three decided by a panel of judges, and the fourth determined by popular vote.

The judging panel awarded a further six grants of $250,000 to the remaining finalists – including Eamus – based on the outstanding quality of their projects. Google also assigned a relationship manager to Eamus’ project to work with UTS and give support in accessing services and platforms that will enable Eamus to develop and maintain strong links with the company and, more importantly, showcase the results of the project internationally.

“Groundwater is really important in so many places globally,” says Eamus. “People use it for irrigation and for drinking, but many people don’t realise groundwater feeds a lot of rivers and keeps terrestrial ecosystems healthy. As the population of the world expands, we’re seeing increased demand for groundwater. This means that groundwater – a major global resource – is being over-extracted at an unsustainable rate, threatening ecosystems and water security across the world.”

To address this problem, Eamus has developed a device that measures the rate of extraction of groundwater. “It’s a simple sensor using old technology in a new way to let communities know when they’re using too much groundwater.”

Using existing technology in an innovative way means Eamus’ project is scalable and could improve the lives and food security of almost half the world’s population who live in arid and semi-arid regions, including areas of Australia.

Eamus’ project may offer a simple solution but the science behind it is complex, relying on unique insights Eamus has derived from decades of research.

Communicating this scientific research in understandable terms has been the key to inspiring people to engage with the project. Details of the project and its potential impact had to be immediately clear to project short-listers, the initial interview panel and, later, to a panel of judges from non-scientific backgrounds. With one award being subject to a public vote, communication about the project also had to inspire the wider community.

Deputy Director of Development and External Engagement Jim O’Brien explains, “We knew Google was going to get a lot of applications, so the most important part of the initial application was getting the real impact points out in the first couple of pages.”

Ensuring Eamus stood out to Google meant explaining how his work could improve lives, leverage existing technology and be ready to implement immediately – all in the first page. “Originally, the application Derek drafted derived from decades of research. I’d normally get it reviewed by my colleagues in the scientific community whereas this was something that had to go out to everyone.”

“The structure is totally different; you start with the bang then present the evidence. It’s very different but it’s been a good skill to learn.”

Once UTS received the good news that Eamus’ project had made it to the top 10, competition intensified. McWilliams and O’Brien, along with staff from the Research and Innovation Office, Marketing and Communication Unit and External Engagement began the task of promoting Eamus’ work to UTS and the wider community, including UTS Alumni, UTS Childcare, the Students’ Association and ActivateUTS, in the hope of winning the people’s choice vote.

O’Brien says support from staff in creating posters, images and articles to “mobilise the troops” brought the university together.

“We definitely appreciated everyone’s willingness to chip in,” he says. “It’s one of the good things about UTS. When something like this comes along, everyone gets behind it – even the Vice-Chancellor promoted it at his all-staff forum in October.”

The promotion of the Eamus’ proposed project – on campus, through social media and word-of-mouth throughout Sydney – has pushed Eamus and the UTS professional staff involved into the spotlight.

Says Eamus, “I’ve been really impressed with the amount of support and enthusiasm UTS has put behind me and this project. I didn’t realise there was that level of support across media and communications. “I find a lot of academics are reluctant to change the way they communicate, but it’s been brilliant to just turn the whole thing around, and I think that’s what made this application successful.”

Eamus’ achievement in the Google Impact Challenge means he will have funding to continue a trial of his innovative device in remote areas of Australia. His project has also been seen by thousands of people who now realise that simple technology can make a huge difference.

“It really reflects well on the university,” says O’Brien. “It’s the kind of project that I think is uniquely UTS, it’s about bettering the world, it’s practical, it’s good.”

Hannah Jenkins
Marketing and Communication Unit
Images: (D Eamus, point dendrometer); supplied by Derek Eamus
Photographer (J McWilliams and J O’Brien): Kevin Cheung

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UTS NEWSROOM

UTS:NEWSROOM
It’s no coincidence that international students have been some of the most engaged and successful graduates of the program. Sogotubu draws on her own experiences as an international student to relate to the cultural barriers they face. Originally from Fiji, Sogotubu studied Law at the University of Tasmania in the early 90s, a time when there wasn’t a great deal of cultural diversity on campus.

“I had people asking me how I got to Australia and I just wanted to say, ’I was in my grass skirt, paddling over in a boat’; you know what I mean?” she laughs.

Working at the Careers Service, I’ve come across students who really want to go and do more but are held back by those cultural differences. With Univative, it’s great to see international students gain a better understanding of the cultural barriers they face.

“Choose a job you love, and you’ll never have to work a day in your life.” It’s a motto Esita Sogotubu has taken to heart as the Employability Coordinator (International) for UTS Careers, a role in which she’s mentored more than 80 students over the past two years through the Univative program.

The annual inter-university competition sees students placed into groups to work on a real-life project with limited time and resources. Over the course of three weeks, each team must develop a solution to a problem from a nominated host organisation. Each project host then selects a winning team based on a final presentation and report.

This year, the UTS teams working with Ericsson and ClickView were selected as winners after coming up with solutions to a wide range of issues, including the development of a marketing plan to promote the organisation to potential graduates.

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Esita Sogotubu

Laura Earl’s distinctive laugh and let’s-get-stuff-done attitude make her one of UTS’s most recognisable personalities.

In her four years as Social Clubs and Programs Manager with ActivateUTS, Earl has built an expansive network of collaborative relationships and programs that have energised the campus culture.

“I love the creative aspect of my job. We work really closely with our students to get their feedback and ideas. Then we run with it and try to create the best possible atmosphere or event for them.”

In addition to organising the student events calendar, Earl manages the 100-plus social clubs – which in turn run their own events, covering everything from movie nights and sporting competitions to language classes.

Earl’s connection to UTS stems back to her international studies year took her to France where she studied and taught English in Caen, Normandy. She says it was one of the best years of her life.

“I sort of hoped it might lead me to work with some hot sports people if I’m honest.”

Earl spent the first three years of her degree at Kuring-gai, and still feels strong ties to the campus.

“In those days, Kuring-gai was absolutely heaving. The people there were so close. It was really relaxed and we used to have massive parties in the cafeteria.”

When the site closing at the end of next year, Earl is in the process of conceiving a ‘Bye-bye Kuring-gai’ event. “I’ve spoken to a few alumni who went to Kuring-gai and they’re like, ‘Ye-eah. We’ll definitely come.’ Because everyone has really fond memories.”

Earl’s international studies year took her to France where she studied and taught English in Caen, Normandy. She says it was one of the best years of her life.

“I’m still very good friends with all the alumni who went to Kuring-gai and they’re like, ‘Ye-eah. We’ll definitely come.’ Because everyone has really fond memories.”

Laura Earl

Laura Earl’s distinctive laugh and let’s-get-stuff-done attitude make her one of UTS’s most recognisable personalities.

In her four years as Social Clubs and Programs Manager with ActivateUTS, Earl has built an expansive network of collaborative relationships and programs that have energised the campus culture.

“I love the creative aspect of my job. We work really closely with our students to get their feedback and ideas. Then we run with it and try to create the best possible atmosphere or event for them.”

In addition to organising the student events calendar, Earl manages the 100-plus social clubs – which in turn run their own events, covering everything from movie nights and sporting competitions to language classes.

Earl’s connection to UTS stems back to her undergraduate days when she combined events and leisure management with international studies.

“I was always a pretty social kind of person and as a high school student, the events side of it sounded awesome. It never occurred to me that the majority of the degree would be business, but there you go.”

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The Power of Three

Since childhood, the Perez brothers have shared a curiosity about how things work. This interest led all three to study engineering at UTS. Twenty-four-year-old Eduardo is majoring in information and communication technology, 22-year-old Rafael is a third-year mechatronics engineer, while 18-year-old Oscar studies electrical engineering. Having completed high school in Mexico, Eduardo began his studies at TAFE and is now in his first year at university alongside youngest brother, Oscar.

Eduardo: So I basically got into programming and then I saw my brother playing with electronics and I said to myself, ‘Why not?’ So I also got into electronics. I decided computer systems was the best mix between software and hardware. It runs in the family to fix things –

Oscar: – and to break things.

Eduardo: And like my brother said, I don’t see myself doing anything else.

Rafael: My grandfather was always showing us electronic things and interesting stuff like space.

Eduardo: He is a thinker.

Rafael: So we got an interest because we grew up being exposed to all these things. People used to bring us broken computers and we would open them and see what was inside. ‘What’s inside? Oh, what’s this?’

Oscar: In Year 9 and 10, I was a really good student. I was getting really good marks, but in Year 11 I decided I wanted to do computer engineering. I started to study it a lot and I got a really good ATAR in year 12. So I made it here, and I’m really enjoying it.

Eduardo: I chose UTS because I liked the practical and internship part. And it’s close to Central Station. We also had a guy come to our school to talk to us about engineering. I guess not many people have brothers who have the same interests. You could say they copied me.

Rafael: I didn’t decide to come to UTS because Rafael was here – I had already decided I wanted to come here.

Eduardo: We never see each other on campus because, you know, when Eduardo is free, I’m busy or when I’m free, Oscar is busy.

Rafael: Eduardo and I did our Introduction to Electrical Engineering class together, though.

Eduardo: I also did that subject when I was in first year. We all share and we trade knowledge.

Rafael: He is very good at the practical side. He does all the circuits and all that, but he struggled a bit with the maths. Because you need complex numbers – a bit of advanced maths with the subject – so I gave him a hand. But he’s really doing well by himself. I kind of just gave him the heads up of what’s to come and he got ready for it. And he’s very smart, so he can improvise anything.

Oscar: We share and we trade knowledge.

Rafael: When they need help with programming, I help them. And if someone needs help with electronics, then Oscar helps out. And Rafael helps with maths.

Rafael: Yeah, we rotate. ‘What do you have for me?’ And, ‘What do you have for me?’ We help each other out.

Rafael: Between us we have the perfect team to build a robot. Eduardo can program it, Rafael can make the things that move, and I can make the electronic parts. We haven’t made any projects together so far, but we were thinking we have to make something, because it’s the perfect team.

Eduardo: At the moment I’m not sure what I’ll do at the end of my degree. I will definitely try to land a job at IBM or wherever I can. If I can’t, I’m probably going to look overseas. I think I would like to work for an international company, where I have more options.

Rafael: For me, I guess I’ll look at energy companies or mining. At SAACKE, where I work now, we use the control systems from Siemens, so I know their products and the company and a few people from that company.

Oscar: I think I want to join the navy or the airforce – to work on aircraft or submarines as an electrical engineer.

Rafael: When I was in second year, one of our lecturers told us that we should be very proud to be engineers. I really felt that. I thought, ‘Now I need to graduate and become an engineer’. Engineers do a lot of good things for people. They make electricity and try to improve things and make them safe or more reliable or efficient.

Oscar: Cheaper, more accessible for people.

Rafael: Engineers are an important part of society.

Eduardo: I guess we’re doing our part for society. I feel proud to be an engineering student. It’s a rewarding experience. I can tell people I’m an engineer and they’re like, ‘Oh, great.’ It’s a very good achievement.

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Making a difference

by one of her first semester lecturers.

International Student Liaison Committee student representative position on UTS’s

Wastberg was recommended for a

as an international student from Sweden,

practise their conversational English skills

and Presentation Support).

Wastberg is now an active member of BUiLD

so many things, it’s insane. It’s just such a

All the people I met there were involved in

many different things you can do at UTS.

interest in other extracurricular programs.

It was this experience that stimulated her

find their way at UTS during Orientation.

She’s also involved in a raft of programs on

in disability support, interns with

the City of Sydney and fits in some

in Social Inquiry) student works part-time

the Bachelor of Arts in Communication

pace. In addition to her full-time studies,

Linnea Wastberg leads life at a dizzying

INTERNATIONAL

by the Careers Service – she is already on

Despite the demands on her time, Wastberg

comfortable and safe? How do we help them

enjoy their time in Sydney?”

“One of the problems for international

students is the lack of internships or work

opportunities. Quite often the internships

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Australian citizens or permanent residents.”

The City of Sydney international student

internship program is providing much-

needed professional opportunities as part of

its broader strategy to engage and support

international students.

In her role with the council, Wastberg has

contributed to their international education

action plan, which addresses questions such as:

“How do we attract more international

students? How do we make them feel

comfortable and safe? How do we help

enjoy their time in Sydney?”

She’d also like to see more of the world and

is keen to pursue an internship with Amnesty International.

“I went to Vietnam with BUILD earlier in

the year, and some of the organisations we met there do such an amazing job

for disadvantaged youth and children.

That’s another area that I would really

like to get into.”

Despite the demands on her time, Wastberg

radiates calmness and composure. Having

just completed the UTS Accomplish Award – a year-long skills development program run

by the Careers Service – she is already on

the lookout for new ways to contribute.

“As I’ve been in contact with the International Student Collective, in the Students’

Association. Now that I have a bit more time, I’m hoping to be more engaged

with that.

“I think while you’re studying, it’s such a
great opportunity to get involved in things.”

Wastberg is now in the final year of her

studies, and has no immediate plans to

return to Sweden.

“When I finish my degree, I can get a two

year post-study work visa in Australia, so

I’ll probably pick up on that. It would be a

waste if I don’t take it – it’s an opportunity

I’m never going to be given again.”

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“At my workplace, the council has

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When the UTS Sustainability team organized public tours of the new Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology Building as part of World Green Building Week in September, the sessions proved so popular they decided to offer tours on an ongoing monthly basis.

Promoted through the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) as part of a weeklong nationwide program of green building visits, the initial tours of Building 11 attracted a primarily industry audience.

“Originally we thought we’d get maybe 10 to 15 people per time slot and we ended up getting double,” says Sustainability Manager Danielle McCartney. “That’s the off-gassing from new furniture and flooring — similar to that new car smell, which is actually really bad for you.”

Since the materials, paints and flooring selected for the building have low or no VOCs, McCartney says the sensors shouldn’t be picking up much in that respect. “But they also control the airflow through the building. So if the system detects high carbon dioxide levels, it will automatically flush more fresh air through.”

In addition to the sustainability features of the building, the tours provide a chance to explore the new collaborative classrooms and a space McCartney says is “one of the best on campus” — the Dean’s Winter Garden on level 12.

The indoor garden serves as a meeting room, and includes an L-shaped green wall and rows of potted plants almost two metres tall.

“It’s beautiful. It looks down through the binary screen, through the glazing, straight down to Alumni Green. And all of that greenery is watered by recycled water from the rainwater tanks on the roof.”

McCartney says targeting Green Star certification makes sure the buildings deliver on their original sustainability objectives.

“When major building projects like this, when money gets tight the sustainability features are usually the first things to go. The Green Star scheme makes sure they’re kept in to achieve the certification. So that’s a really good outcome for UTS.”

When the Thomas Street and Dr Chau Chak Wing buildings open, the team plan to offer monthly tours in those locations too.

“After working consistently on the buildings for over three years through planning, design and construction to make sure our sustainability initiatives are followed through, it’s really nice to be able to take people around and point them out and have that positive feedback,” says McCartney.

“It’s like the icing on the cake at the end of the project.”

The next free one-hour tour of Building 11 will take place on midday on Tuesday 18 November. To book, email Seb.Crawford@uts.edu.au

Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2014/11/showcasing-sustainability

For free guided tours showcasing sustainability features.

Fore more than 25 years, Australian artist Robyn Stacey has worked consistently on the edge of photographic and digital media, bringing into focus the relationships between photography, documentation, analysis and meaning.

We are fortunate to have several of Stacey’s works on campus from different stages of her career, including for 1999, in 2SER. These early works by Stacey are marked by an edgy film noir quality, delving into popular culture through her skilful use of digitally manipulated photography.

Increasingly however, her subject matter has turned to the more formal arrangements like those of still life paintings, often reinterpreting scientific collections as aesthetic objects, and investigating the processes of collection and categorisation.

Tulp 1998 is one of a series of botanical studies that signalled this shift. In 2003, Stacey was artist-in-residence at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney. From journals, on display on the lower floor of the Bilbie Library on the City campus, is part of a series of photographic works produced during this project.

Two extraordinary publications — Herbarium and Museum — feature Stacey’s photographic arrangements of objects from the collections of the Royal Botanical Society and the Macleay Museum at the University of Sydney. More recently House featured items from the Historic Houses Trust.

For more news and highlights from the UTS Art Collection, visit art.uts.edu.au

Janet Ollevou

UTS Art Collection

Robyn Stacey, Tulp 1998, Type C photograph
DISORDERED PERCEPTIONS

This photo is part of a series examining mental health disorders. Arcifa uses photographic elements to give insight into the psychological and behavioural aspects of these conditions. This piece provides a small, personal window into Post-traumatic Stress Disorder.

“I’m proud of this series as it speaks for a good cause; to help raise awareness of and support for mental health in rural areas where they are critically lacking.

“I find the composition of this piece both striking and confronting, with the juxtaposition of child-like innocence and darkness, which may lead to some revelation within the viewer.”

Photographer: Caleb Arcifa
Bachelor of Design in Integrated Product Design / Bachelor of Creative Intelligence and Innovation