GRADUATES WITH ATTRIBUTES
How your studies can prepare you for work

SNAKES AND LADDERS
Ups and downs of student life

LEARNING HAND IN HAND IN HAND
High-tech simulations priming students for practice
Welcome to the second annual U: magazine Teaching and Learning Special Issue. The focus of this edition is the practical ways in which students are developing graduate attributes as part of their learning.

So, what are graduate attributes? They are the qualities UTS students are expected to have developed by the time they graduate. As you might expect at a university with a strong reputation for practice-oriented learning, these attributes are closely aligned to the expectations employers have of graduates.

The UTS Graduate Profile Framework ensures UTS graduates are equipped with the skills required to meet the significant challenges of the 21st century. This includes the need to solve ill-defined problems, the ability to cope with significant and rapid change and the changing nature of work environments.

If you look at the framework, you’ll see a UTS graduate is ‘equipped for ongoing learning in the pursuit of personal development and excellence in professional practice’. This means students are required to develop critical analysis and thinking skills, as well as the ability to communicate and work collaboratively with others. An excellent example is discussed on page 5, which shows the ways students in the subject Integrating Business Perspectives work collaboratively to solve a ‘wicked’ problem (one that is complex and often ill-defined), drawing upon different disciplinary perspectives.

Students in the Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery and Health learn to ‘operate effectively with the body of knowledge that underpins professional practice’, the second aspect of the framework. They do this through the use of patient simulators (see page 16), and applying the theories and content of their course to the practicalities of working with patients in context. Use of the mannequins and simulators means students are able to practice their skills before facing the real situations.

The third aspect of the framework is that UTS graduates are ‘committed to the actions and responsibilities required of a professional and a citizen’. Setting an inspiring example are our first-year engineering students undertaking the subject Engineering Communication.

They demonstrate their capacity for community engagement through their participation in the Engineers Without Borders Challenge as featured on page 13. For this challenge, UTS students had to work collaboratively, building on their cross-cultural communication skills, and show enormous creativity to design and construct a mechanism to filter water for people in Vietnam’s Mekong Delta.

Complementing these experiences are activities that extend students’ learning outside their university courses. The Brennan program (page 18) and ACCOMPLISH (page 19) enable students to volunteer, do internships and gain career skills they can demonstrate to employers. While Facebook groups (page 4), U:PASS (page 19) and HELPS (page 8) are just some of the ways UTS is supporting students to succeed, from first year through to graduation.

I hope you enjoy reading the inspiring examples of the ways in which the UTS Graduate Profile Framework is providing a focus for the development of students’ graduate attributes in the context of what, where and how the attributes are developed.

Photographer: Joanne Saad

Cover: The circular shapes on the front cover symbolise the all-encompassing, wholistic attributes UTS students graduate with. The overlapping white circles link these skills together in the three categories symbolised by the three outer-most circles – personal, intellectual and professional. At the centre is the student. The colours chosen represent the vivacity of UTS as a place for ideas, learning, growth and social activities.

Jennifer Nunez
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The first year of university can be daunting: there’s the struggle to find lecture theatres, then looming assessment deadlines and, often, a distinct feeling of disorientation.

But that’s changing. Facebook is providing more experienced students with the means to mentor newer students, and to facilitate peer-to-peer assistance.

PhD student, and mentor to first-year environmental science students, Megan Phillips agrees the first year of uni can be tough. “Your entire work-life-study balance shifts and you’re suddenly surrounded by hundreds of people you’ve never met before.”

Phillips says the idea to create a private Facebook group and use the social networking site for support originally came from UTS’s Undergraduate Coordinator for Journalism Jenna Price. “Jenna’s had a UTS journalism group running for a few years, with great success. She collaborated with the School of the Environment to get it happening here in Science, and I got the job of setting it up and managing the project.”

First-year business and environmental biology student Sophie Hargreaves has used the Facebook page to ask for help. She says, “It’s pretty good when you see other people’s concerns and realise you’re not the only one struggling.”

Price says Facebook is providing an environment where mentors can speak in a relatable manner to first-year students. And it’s changing the way students interact with each other.

“Students who are older are able to give you a real, honest, student-focused answer,” she says. “Plus, the response online is often far more immediate than seeking out a lecturer or tutor.”

Online group mentoring has benefits for the mentors too. Price says more experienced students on Facebook “learn how to share their knowledge in a generous, rather than hierarchical, way”.

Environmental Science PhD student and mentor Daniela Cortez agrees. “I know what it’s like being in their shoes.

“Encouraging people to pull through all of the hardships that are involved in university life, particularly in that first semester of studying, is very satisfying.”

Phillips agrees. “Being able to help students with their challenges and listening to their experiences is really satisfying and rewarding. Mentoring really is a two-way street – I help them by offering my own experience of going through the degree and they give me such open and honest feedback. I can help them make sure they’re getting the most out of their degrees and time at uni.

“The reality is, most careers you choose in science will have you communicating with people and solving different problems every day, so helping students as a mentor ends up being fantastic practise for a future job.”

Being on the ‘same page’ is one of the main advantages of the social network. On Facebook, students are surrounded by their peers, who often share their concerns, and they are literally all on the same webpage.

It’s this, the fact that Facebook can be a ‘one stop shop’ for first-year students to troubleshoot and bounce their ideas around, which makes online pages a uniquely helpful environment. The site also helps allay the concerns of worried students and provides mentors with a platform to easily pass on advice.

Price says, the benefits of such pages are already being seen: “Far fewer students drop out now because they have a place to go to talk among themselves.”

Alexander Shaw
Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Journalism)/International Studies
Photograph (M Phillips) supplied by: Megan Phillips
Photograph (D Cortez) supplied by: Daniela Cortez

Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2012/08/face-to-facebook
“I like to get big creative ideas and make them happen,” says first-year Bachelor of Business student and Integrating Business Perspectives (IBP) study group leader Teagan Llewellyn.

As part of the IBP subject, which was launched last year, students work in groups to develop a business concept they can pitch to investors. The subject, which is open to all students across UTS but mandatory for those studying business, aims to help students work together and look at problems in new ways.

Llewellyn says, “We’ve learned to take an idea, start working and recognise the ‘eureka’ moment.” This year, Llewellyn’s group developed an idea for a household power-monitoring system using a smartphone interface. They named it Smart Power because it allows the user to switch between non-essential devices when power is cheaper or there is less load on the grid and to get the ‘smarter’, most efficient energy package for their home.

According to Edwards, the project begins with students spending four weeks practising creative approaches to problem solving. “We work with problems known as ‘wicked problems’, which have no neat solution, and include issues such as climate change. The students have to consider the various stakeholders involved and the different approaches they could use to deal with the issues.”

Over the next seven weeks, students work in teams to develop their concept, identify stakeholders, conduct market analysis, learn how to create ‘buzz’ around their product and develop a business case. The teams deliver two pitches – the first to potential users and the second to potential investors. Workshop leaders then select teams to compete in the Wicked Business Concept Competition. This year’s competition was held in July.

IBP Tutor Tayyab Waqas Amjed says the subject, “is about real ethical dilemmas. The examples are based on life.” Amjed, who previously worked for Nestlé, says employers are looking for people who can work with issues of ethics and sustainability as well as profits and supply chains.

“Anywhere they work in the world there will be a range of different cultures and skills in business teams. The project work in IBP helps students develop skills for working together, such as communicating, reporting, and giving feedback.”

“One of the great things about IBP,” says Llewellyn, “is we learn to use the strengths in the group. That’s something that works at UTS and a skill we’ll need to work in business too.”

Paul Clark
Master of Arts in Journalism

Photographer: Jennifer Nunez

Read more or comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2012/08/wicked-business
Being a student isn’t always easy. It’s often a fine balancing act – paving the way for your future career, developing new skills in leadership, communication and endurance, and competing to secure the ideal job.

By saying ‘yes’ to opportunities and extra-curricular activities you can make light(er) work of the often arduous climb.

WHERE AM I GOING?

With its campuses dotted around the city, UTS can be confusing to navigate. And since Marauder’s Maps don’t exist beyond the world of Harry Potter, the UTS Peer Network is the next best thing. This orange-clad army of students guides new students, runs events on campus and answers any question you might have about university life.

MOVING OUT

The move out of home can make you feel isolated, poverty-stricken and surrounded by all things unfamiliar, if you allow it. But living in residential housing or in a share house while at university can teach you lessons in life that you will never find in any subject outline. You can find out more from UTS’s Housing Service.

LEAD FROM THE FRONT

If you want to become a well-rounded graduate, leadership programs are the go. There are student-run clubs like AIESEC, which offers opportunities to get involved in volunteering overseas, or UTS-run programs like BUIld and SoUL or if you’re a law student the Brennan Justice and Leadership Program (see the article on page 18).
MOVIE IT, OR LOSE IT

Slumping over your desk for hours on end is not only bad for your posture, but also your brain. If you brush aside the guilt that sinks in at your dwindling fitness levels, you’ll recognise sport is an invaluable tool to help students’ mental and physical health during their studies. We might not all be able to reach the elite level, but getting involved in a sport can demonstrate an ability to work well in a team. Chat to the UTS Union to find out how you can join in.

EXPERIENCE, EXPERIENCE, EXPERIENCE

While money and time are clearly precious, giving up both to volunteer while you are a student can provide an invaluable experience. It also works wonders for your resume – check out radio station 2SER or, if that’s not up your alley, find work on campus through the Careers Service’s StudentJobs@UTS. However, there are no guarantees about your stress levels staying low as you juggle your responsibilities!

MAKE YOURSELF HEARD

We’re all capable of having an argument. But locking horns across the dinner table is starkly different to honing your skills in debating at university. This intellectually stimulating craft develops your ability to think on your feet and if you join the UTS Debating Society, it could give you the opportunity to compete at an international intervarsity level.

GET THAT JOB

Some students find it difficult to sell themselves to employers. The new ACCOMPLISH program (see the article on page 19) gives you the chance to turn the tables; it rewards students who partake in leadership activities beyond their degree and helps to shape their ability to communicate their skills and experiences to employers.

MI SCUSI! EXCUSEZ-MOI! ENTSCULDIGUNG!

While making the commitment to learn a language can be tough, it should be something on everyone’s ‘to do’ list. Extensive practise is required – so it’s a good thing you can add International Studies to your degree. Developing your skills opens doors and the benefits far outweigh the challenges.

PROCRASTINATION

As students, we’re not only financially poor, we’re time poor too. Yet we add to this strain by spending a lot of our precious time procrastinating. Organisation is the key, and we need to get our heads around this concept if we are ever going to rise to any challenge in future employment. Plus, bags under the eyes aren’t a good look for job interviews. Check out Student Services online self-help resources at ssu.uts.edu.au/counselling/self.
"For someone with English as a second language, trying to study is very hard, but HELPS is one of the best services at UTS; it really meets students' needs," says Bachelor of Teaching in Secondary Education student, and native Vietnamese speaker Lydia Le.

Le recently undertook a one-on-one, 40-minute academic writing session at UTS: HELPS, or Higher Education Language and Presentation Support. "My English is not good in some ways," says Le. "But the academic writing session helped me with grammar and explained exactly what I need to do in an academic essay."

HELPS, which is run by the Student Services Unit, provides English language and academic literacy support to undergraduate and postgraduate students at UTS. Since it was established in March this year, over 1000 students have already taken advantage of the free service.

Operations Manager Sang-Eun Oh says, "We've tried to create a place where students can just drop in and ask any question relating to English and their academic literacy issues. This is a place especially for those who lack confidence in their language skills.

"Because HELPS is brand new, we're trying to find out the range of student needs.

"So far we've been offering programs and workshops according to student demands for developing academic English, such as how to write an assignment, how to interpret assignment questions and how to prepare for your presentations."

However, Oh says the most popular service is the opportunity to drop in and have a consultation with HELPS advisors.

"So anyone can come straight in and have a 15-minute window of time to talk briefly with the advisor about what's troubling them and we try to diagnose what their issues are and how they can be supported. From this diagnostic level we may offer more comprehensive 40-minute appointments if they are needed or we may suggest they attend HELPS workshops where they can build different skills."

"ANYONE CAN COME STRAIGHT IN AND HAVE A 15-MINUTE WINDOW OF TIME TO TALK BRIEFLY WITH THE ADVISOR ABOUT WHAT’S TROUBLING THEM."

Other places students can be referred to include Conversations@UTS, which offers students general conversation practise - one-to-one or in groups - as well as more specific groups aimed at research students, developing group skills and IELTS-style topic discussions. Oh says, "A lot of students have found the conversation groups to be a great way of opening up to new knowledge on social skills for Australian culture."

Alan Shen, a Master of Professional Accounting student from China, attends the research students' group discussions and is getting help, from HELPS, with his writing for an upcoming exam.

He says, "Before I knew about HELPS I seldom spoke to others in English. There are so many Chinese students here and with them I usually speak Chinese, which I have realised is not that good for my English. This service has helped me communicate directly with local people."

Oh adds: "We want our students to be able to go to employers with the right English skills and finish their studies saying ‘I graduated from UTS and I felt supported’."
Facts, figures and numbers govern Ben Ford’s thoughts. As he goes about his work as a bush regenerator – collecting seeds and identifying native plant species – this science-minded man believes he is contributing to more than just ecology.

“There’s a long tradition of people caring for this country; with this ancient culture starting to nurture the land long before science came along,” he says.

Ford, who graduated from UTS last year with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Biology with First Class Honours, had his first encounter with Indigenous perspectives during a two-week trip, in which he visited Mutawintji National Park. The journey was made in 2009 for his science subject Semi-arid Ecology. He was moved by the way Aboriginal people still see themselves as custodians of the land. Ford says, “That was the best subject in the whole course.”

Lecturer in the Faculty of Science’s School of the Environment Dr Andrea Leigh runs the excursions and says Ford’s experience is one too few students have. Leigh says Indigenous speakers have been included in the subject for over 10 years. They were initially introduced by fellow Semi-arid Ecology Instructor Peter Jones, to give students a contextualised perspective of the land.

“It’s important for the students to understand the stakeholders, the people who use, live in and relate to that environment.”

She says the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives is now one of the key features of the subject.

“I’ve had the most ‘die hard’ city kids on the trip who are doing this because they have to as part of their course. They go out really sceptical but they come back at the end of these trips and say, ‘That was the most amazing experience of my life’.”

Director of Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning Michael McDaniel says integrating Indigenous perspectives into teaching and learning is one way to ensure all students learn about Indigenous culture.

Another, he says, is increasing the number of Indigenous students enrolled at university. And centres like Jumbunna play an important role in getting Indigenous students into university and through to graduation.

"Every Indigenous student across the university is case managed by a team of academic and non-academic staff twice per semester," says McDaniel. "It’s fairly unique in the country; we’re not aware of any other university that monitors and tracks their Indigenous students to the degree that we do."

And the benefits, he says, are felt by all students because “the capacity to work professionally with Indigenous people becomes embedded within their study. Many non-Indigenous students don’t know to go and look for it. However, I’ve invariably found that when they have some type of experience due to embedded content in their curriculum, they’re pleasantly surprised, moved and sometimes have experiences like Ben’s.”

Margot Kelly
Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Journalism)/International Studies

Photograph (B Ford) supplied by: Ben Ford
Photographs (landscape) supplied by: UTS: Science School of the Environment

Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2012/08/lessons-of-the-land
Universities are interested in shaping them, and employers are interested in hiring people with them. Graduate attributes are those much sought-after capacities students are expected to have by the time they leave university. Seven recent graduates, one from each faculty, reveal how their studies prepared them for the workplace.

Lily Serna has been described as something of an ‘extroverted mathematician’. Graduating from UTS in 2009 with a Bachelor of Maths and Finance (Honours)/Bachelor of International Studies degree, she now works alongside ABC veteran Richard Morecroft as co-host of SBS quiz show Letters and Numbers.

With four-and-a-half seasons under her belt - not to mention the book she published, Lily’s Number Puzzles - Serna describes how she landed the role: “I’d just started honours and through maybe four degrees of separation, SBS got in contact with me and asked me if I wanted to audition.”

Associate Professor in the School of Mathematical Sciences Tim Langtry supervised Serna in her honours year. He describes her as “almost a contradiction” – a math graduate with the ability to capture the attention of non-mathematical audiences.

“The ability to engage a broad audience with the concepts and discoveries of modern science, and to articulate their significance to a lay audience, is both relatively rare and tremendously important,” says Langtry. Serna says it was on exchange in France, as part of her International Studies course, and in her honours year, that she developed the interpersonal skills needed to bridge the gap between theory and communicating it to audiences.

“International studies was, obviously, completely different to maths and finance in the way that it’s taught and that it’s examined. That broadness of skills all came together in the end and helped develop those skills.”

Though her career is well on the way to breaking the stereotype that ‘math graduates just do math’, even Serna says, “I think there will always be a part of me that wants to be challenged mathematically.”

Complex problems of a different kind are the task du jour for business graduate Suyog Sankhe. After completing his degree, with honours, in 2011, Sankhe is now working as a Consultant at Nous Group, one of Australia’s leading management consulting and leadership development firms.

“We solve complex strategic problems for businesses and assist the government with their policy and regulatory challenges,” says Sankhe.

Associate Professor of Economics Dr Gordon Menzies supervised Sankhe in his honours year. During this time, Sankhe says the two worked to develop “a new economic theory about how people form expectations about the future that is more consistent with what we observe in reality.”

Menzies says Sankhe’s studies “required a lot of critical thinking and creative and analytic skills because doing any research is creative, especially if you’re trying out something new, which he was.” These are skills Sankhe is now putting into practise every day.

Sankhe, who is known for his dry sense of humour, agrees he received more from his degree than an understanding of business. “Being able to then share and debate these ideas with a team or other students, both formally and informally, is another valuable skill UTS sneakily imparted without me even realising it.”
Bernadette Lack is a little more forthright. She believes UTS Midwifery graduates are the future “movers and shakers” in the midwifery field. Since graduating in 2009, Lack has been elected as the President of the Australian College of Midwives’ Northern Territory Branch and has run the Great Ocean Road Marathon to raise $30 000 for the Hamlin College of Midwives in Ethiopia, which trains women to work as midwives in villages where little medical help is available.

“UTS is for the passionate future midwife who wants to graduate with confidence, motivation, competence and dedication to our incredible profession,” she says.

The graduate now works as a Remote Outreach Midwife in the Northern Territory, providing antenatal and postnatal clinical care in isolated Aboriginal communities. This includes holding education sessions in Aboriginal schools and communities, often sitting in a dry creek bed with women and girls discussing ‘women’s business’.

“I also provide education and training to nurses and midwives in these remote clinics,” says Lack. “Every woman needs a midwife and this position enables me to assist in providing this care to women who may not get it otherwise.”

She adds, “The UTS degree enabled me to develop the clinical skills and information necessary to commence working confidently and competently as a midwife upon graduation.”

Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) in the Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery and Health (NMH) Dr Joanne Gray says practical experience is vital for students. All NMH students are trained in state-of-art clinical practice laboratories with authentic case studies and scenarios, and placed in clinical areas during the course.

“Bernadette worked in the maternity care setting for a number of weeks during her program, which provided her with the experience necessary to gain a position as a midwife working with women and families.”

On-the-job experience was also crucial for Alexandra Engel who says a work placement at The Wayside Chapel gave her valuable insight into how the development sector operates. The experience was part of her Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Social Inquiry) and International Studies degree.

The 27-year-old is thankful for the hands-on nature of her study at UTS, which allowed her to develop a diverse set of skills including digital literacy, research and media production.

“Working in the NGO sector often requires you to have a varied skill set, so you can cover positions that might be covered by several different people in a for-profit organisation,” says Engel, who carries out everything from research to producing films in her role as the Campaigns and Advocacy Coordinator at Caritas Australia, an international aid and development agency.

In 2011, Engel was the driving force behind the ‘A Just Climate’ campaign, which made thousands of people aware of the impact of climate change on the world’s most vulnerable communities.

The constant travel and intercultural communication demanded by her job have been made easier by the global outlook with which Engel graduated, having lived and studied in Germany for a year as part of her degree.

Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Dr Paul Allatson believes students like Engel, who have a second degree in International Studies, can really differentiate themselves from other graduates.

“An intercultural awareness, a knowledge of how Australians fit in with the wider world, really good skills in a second language,” are just some of the skills he says are developed during a year overseas.

International experience of another kind has coloured the professional life of Golnar Roshan. The young designer uses design as a way of understanding her heritage and the world around her. Among her favourite works Roshan has designed, is a series of woven and typographic textile pieces which represent the silenced voices of Iranian women.

“My parents are Iranian, but since I have never been to Iran, I am very curious about it and hence use design as a medium to explore it,” she says. “Designing from a genuine place always creates the most responsive outcome.”

After graduating from UTS in 2010 with a Bachelor of Design in Visual Communication/Bachelor of Arts in International Studies, the 25-year-old was accepted as a Junior Graphic Designer at Marcel Wanders Studio, a renowned product and interior design company in Amsterdam.

Her portfolio stood out to the company’s Senior Designer Ruben de la Rive Box because it showed a strong personal view of the world and had its own expressive voice, something which many of the other portfolios lacked.

Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) in the Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building Dr Louise McWhinnie says all students in the design school are encouraged to question and experiment with finding their own design language.
“Students present their work in progress and are open to it being critiqued by staff and other students,” she says. “In doing this, they learn to recognise their strengths and weaknesses in particular areas of design, and develop a design language that is appropriate for both themselves and the work, whilst communicating to the audience for whom it is intended.”

Having studied in Barcelona for a year as part of her International Studies degree, Roshan is confident in the transferability of her skills, and recently moved to London to work alongside designer Tord Boontje in his studio, Studio Tord Boontje. She is looking forward to working in a completely new context and living in such an exciting and inspiring city.

London is also now home to 2010 Bachelor of Science in Information Technology graduate Greg Louden.

Since relocating there last year, Louden has become a Technical Director at visual effects company Framestore where he is part of the computer graphics destruction team on Alfonso Cuarón’s new film Gravity.

Since his career began in Australia with Animal Logic, Louden has worked on seven blockbuster films, including Happy Feet 2, and he designed a number of effects shots centred on the spaceship in Prometheus.

“I got my foot in the door at Animal Logic and ever since then I’ve just been kicking about and proving myself and showing people I can do the job.

“Studying at UTS provided me with a great foundation for the business, network, software development and project management skills I use every day at work,” he says.

Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) in the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology Dr Tim Aubrey, who regularly meets with industry representatives, says communication skills are vital for graduates.

“We hope the process of learning is something they carry forward. Because of that, our students can adapt to new situations that they haven’t been in before and have new knowledge and new skills and processes they develop.”

With technology moving so quickly in the engineering and IT industries, Aubrey says, “The engineers of 2020 are going to need a much more holistic view of what’s going on.”

Seeing the ‘big picture’ is also important for Elizabeth Lehmann. When she began working at the NSW Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP), the 24-year-old communication/law graduate was warned criminal law is much uglier in real life than it is on television. In her role as a Public Prosecution Officer; Lehmann is involved in a range of difficult and confronting cases, from sexual assault to murder.

She is grateful for the practical experience she gained during her Bachelor of Communication (Social Inquiry)/Bachelor of Laws at UTS, for it has given her the confidence to apply the law in challenging, real-life ways.

“In the seminars for law, we did a lot of problem solving tasks,” says Lehmann. “We were given factual scenarios and asked to apply what we’d learnt in the lectures to the problem questions.

“UTS law students develop excellent communication skills which may be applied across complex and sensitive legal issues,” she says.

This ability to communicate with others is one of the fundamental qualities required by a public prosecution officer.

“At the end of the day, you’re talking to people, you’re listening to people and you’re connecting with people, so that together you can find the best solution to the legal and non-legal problems you face,” says Lehmann.

“We hope the process of learning is something they carry forward. Because of that, our students can adapt to new situations that they haven’t been in before and have new knowledge and new skills and processes they develop.”

“I’m a person who learns a lot from doing things, so to have that practical experience at university, and get constructive feedback that I could take away and learn from, was really important.”

Acting Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) in the Faculty of Law Professor Anita Stuhmcke says the practical focus of the course allows students to develop their interpersonal skills through class discussions and group assignments.

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Patrick Griffiths & Miranda Middleton
Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Journalism)/International Studies
Photographer (L Serna & G Roshan): Joanne Saad
Photograph (S Sankhe) supplied by: Suyog Sankhe
Photograph (G Louden) supplied by: Greg Louden
Photograph (B Lack) supplied by: Bernadette Lack
Photograph (E Lehmann) supplied by: Elizabeth Lehmann
Photograph (A Engel) supplied by: Alexandra Engel

Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2012/08/graduates-with-attributes
Grant she received last year as part of the UTS Widening Participation Strategy.

Through EWB, Siqueira has already had the opportunity to travel to Cambodia to see, first-hand, what was being done about water sanitation. She even helped to develop a system to capture human waste, which was previously contaminating the local water supply, and re-use it as compost for farming.

“Inchbold-Busby has been impressed by the students’ ingenuity. “Some of the designs the students have come up with are amazing. They have to source materials, cost it out, come up with an implementation plan and put it completely within the context of the community. It’s quite the challenge but they’ve embraced it.”

Engineering Communication Subject Coordinator Sally Inchbold-Busby says the challenge was able to be integrated into the subject thanks to a First Year Experience.

“THEY HAVE TO SOURCE MATERIALS, COST IT OUT, COME UP WITH AN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND PUT IT COMPLETELY WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE COMMUNITY.”

Inchbold-Busby says practical experience is important. The EWB challenge in particular, “is about providing an authentic experience right from the beginning and allowing students to engage with real-life engineering projects.”

And with the best student designs being sent to EWB (the winner will be selected in December), “There’s always the potential the ideas that start here at UTS could be implemented in Vietnam or other third world communities across the globe.”

Nick Stoll
Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Journalism)

Photographs supplied by: Engineers Without Borders

1. Traditional house along the canal
2. Water storage jars
3. Connection between the grid and the house
4. Traditional house in An Minh

Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2012/08/engineering-change
STATE-OF-THE-ART LEARNING SPACES
BUILDING 6

7AM
The doors are officially open for the day, but overnight students have been going in and out. The computer labs are three-quarters full, the cafe is busy and people are working in each of the workshops on level 2 and studios on level 4.

“We used to have to find the most random corners where there was a free table and work there and it wasn’t particularly fun. We have big tables now, so we can do work, like patternmaking, there; it makes you want to be around more. And they have these lounges, which makes it a nicer place to be in.”
Kathleen Choo, Bachelor of Design in Fashion and Textiles

9AM
Classes are in session. The collaborative learning space on level 4 is filled with 40 Construction Project Management students undertaking the Structures subject. Every other space is populated with students deep in conversation or working.

“This is the most successful use of technology I’ve seen in my two years studying at UTS. The possibility of going back and forth on the smart boards really makes the difference when students need to retrieve notes that would have been inevitably erased on a traditional white board. Plus, the problem of the lecturer not being heard is completely bypassed thanks to wireless microphones and well distributed speakers.”
Flavio Sordoni, Bachelor of Construction and Project Management

12PM
Building 6 has settled into a continuous hum of activity. Classes are finishing and lunchtime is beginning. The small kitchenette areas on level 4 are packed with students chatting, preparing their meals and filling up water bottles. Food is a big part of the social scene at UTS!

“I’m loving computer classes down here on level 3. But unless you’re in a class there’s not really much opportunity to use a computer. So, level 4 is good because you can plug in your laptop and work there.”
Hannah Power, Bachelor of Design in Visual Communications

DESCRIBED BY STUDENTS AS A PLACE WHERE DESIGNS EVOLVE AND FRESH PERSPECTIVES COME ALIVE, THE NEW LEARNING SPACES IN BUILDING 6 ARE ENHANCING THE WAY MANY UTS STUDENTS WORK.
The hum continues: level 4 is full of students working on their laptops.

“Depending on how I’m feeling, I can work in the right sort of environment – I can knuckle down at the benches if I don’t want to see anyone, or, if I do, I can sit on the couches.”

**Alex Bentley, Bachelor of Design in Industrial Design**

4PM

Students are coming out of lectures, and others are waiting to go in. The cafe is packing up for the day, but the rest of the building continues to pulse with life.

“We sometimes have lectures in the Guthrie Theatre, but most of our classes are in the Tower building. I like it here with the big windows, it’s quite bright. It makes you feel relaxed; it’s kind of fashionable! The Tower is ordinary and old fashioned.”

**Lili Qian, Bachelor of Business**

7PM

Most of the classes have finished, and the atmosphere is more relaxed. People are now studying and chilling out in equal measures.

“Where once there were circulation spaces – corridors and lobbies – now every space is a break out space. Students can get into little groups and just disappear. They can plug their laptops in and say, ‘This is what I’m working on, what do you think?’ and critique each other’s work – that was the idea.”

**Brandon Bell, Senior Project Manager**

10PM

The day is winding to a close, but the level 3 computer labs are still quite full. The atmosphere is now very laid back and sociable. The level 4 breakout area, study rooms and studios are dotted with students, who, for the most part, are lost in private study.

“I’m currently completing my PhD in Spatial Design. I am really enjoying the new student spaces – they are an effective tool in encouraging collaborative research processes. They are also flexible enough to accommodate the many possibilities of interactive research, from private, quiet study to group discussions and presentations.”

**Evelyn Kwok, PhD student**
It always freaks people out when they first see SimMan because you look at him and all of a sudden he’ll blink. But I like it; it adds an element of fun, and learning practically is the best way to learn. I find it much easier to remember the process of doing something if I actually do it myself.

The patient simulators have pulses, they breathe, they blink, they sweat – it’s very realistic. I’ve been using the simulators since I first started studying nursing at UTS last year. Some of our subjects include a simulation session – they’re basically part of our labs – where we have to deal with a situation that would happen in a hospital. So we can have a Sim patient go into cardiac arrest and we have to respond, or we have to care for someone who’s unwell. They can be programmed to have a number of conditions.

It’s the same method of learning as in any practical environment – you don’t spend that much time sitting in your chair and listening, you’re actually getting up and practising it for yourself. We recently got a paediatric simulator and have a newborn baby simulator, SimNewB. Those are really useful because we do a children’s nursing subject. Practising your skills in a simulated environment really helps to give you an idea of what it would be like in real life. And because the simulations are recorded, we can sit down with our tutor and review what we’ve done, including how we’ve communicated with our patients and our colleagues.

Every element we learn is sent into the simulation – from wound dressing to insertion of nasogastric tubes. If you’re doing IV antibiotics, there are drip poles and burettes for you to practise the set-up and administration. Sometimes we don’t get to do everything on clinical placement that we’ve learnt about, as things can vary with the type of ward you’re placed on. With simulation, we’re exposed to all these skills so there are no gaps in the practical element of our learning.

The fact that we get to practise our skills in a lab helps to reduce our fear. With CPR, I’ve never had to do that in a real-life situation, and it’s not something I’d particularly like to have to do, but I know it will happen at some point and the fact I’ve done it in a simulated environment makes it a little less confronting and gives me confidence. I know I’ll end up walking out of my degree better equipped to start being an independent nurse.

EmILY BALDWIN

In real life, clinical settings nurses may not get a second chance, but at UTS, in our state-of-the-art simulation labs, nursing students do. Emily Baldwin is a second-year nursing student who regularly uses the life-like patient simulators to practise her skills.

Michael Lee is a fourth-year mechanical and mechatronic engineering student, who, as part of an internship with the university, maintains and programs the simulators to groan, vomit and act out any number of illnesses or injuries medical professionals may have to face.
I started working in the sim labs in January, before the semester began, and have learnt things I would never have been taught in my engineering degree. I got the job through I2MS – an online internship board for engineering students. I sent through my resume and was asked to attend an interview, and I got the job. Each day I make sure the patient simulators are working correctly by checking the calibrations, timings and vitals, by ensuring the recording systems are working and that the participant positioning is correct and the audio is clear.

I’m also responsible for running and maintaining the Sim patients during simulations and general usage – so I program their vital signs, like their heart and respiratory rates, their vocal responses, such as groaning and vomiting, and bodily fluids, such as sweat, blood and urine. I also record and edit the simulations for instructional videos, academic examples of simulations, and assessments for tutors so they can review students’ clinical, communication, time management and team work skills, and give them feedback.

The patient simulators range from the high-fidelity ones that act and look real to the unrealistic full-body dummies and single piece arms, legs and torsos. The high-fidelity ones have the ability to breathe – their chest will rise and fall and they’ll exhale air – blink with pupil response to light, talk through an internal speaker and simulate heart and lung sounds, a pulse, and a number of other bodily functions. How the simulator progresses through these states depends on the student input – medications they administer or if they do CPR – as well as time-based factors that simulate the deterioration of the patient or manually through academic input. So it means the patient’s physical response for a particular injury or illness can be simulated.

Working with the Sim patients reinforces the theory work I’ve completed at uni. I get to apply things like general troubleshooting, programming syntax, mechatronics general knowledge and project management skills. And I’ve been exposed to the medical aspects of engineering, which I never considered before.

My favourite part is the ability to manipulate the simulators – they’re amazing pieces of technology. They replicate large amounts of the human anatomy, all within the size constraints of the human body. It’s made me consider a biomedical or medical aspect to my future career because I’ve seen how my degree can assist in education and the treatment of future patients.
There’s more to being a lawyer than litigation and billable hours. The Brennan Justice and Leadership Program is offering UTS law students practical experience, exposure to social justice and a competitive edge once they graduate.

The Brennan program, named after former Chief Justice of the High Court and former UTS Chancellor Sir Gerard Brennan, is a joint initiative between the Faculty of Law and the Law Students’ Society. It was launched in March 2011 and is a voluntary program where students can accumulate points by taking part in seminars and discussion groups where they explore the idea of justice and volunteer services. Those who earn the necessary points are eligible for the Brennan Justice and Leadership Award.

“All the lectures and seminars have to be related to the idea of justice and the law – privacy, issues for females in the legal industry, gender rights, environmental issues,” says final-year social inquiry/law student Jerome Doraisamy. As the former Vice-President of the UTS Law Students’ Society, Doraisamy was one of the founding members of the program.

“I think all first-year students enter their degree with a great amount of idealism,” he says. “If you want to retain that sense of idealism, getting involved with the Brennan program is a very good way. You also get the opportunity to broaden your horizons and gain experience you’re not going to get within the course.”

Nicholas Briggs graduated from the Faculty of Law last year with a Juris Doctor. He is now working for commercial law firm Piper Alderman. He believes the Brennan program helped him stand out from other applicants. “Almost all of the companies who interviewed me asked me about the program, without me prompting them; they saw it on my CV.” Briggs says one of the best features is the program’s point system because it allows students the flexibility to undertake activities that interest them.

“For example, I noticed some students have a particular interest in refugees – they were working towards completing the program by teaching English to Sudanese refugees. I have an interest in copyright law, so I did my volunteer service with a legal think tank – the UTS Communications Law Centre.” Briggs says the program also served as a constant reminder that the law is about more than the study of rules and regulations, its ultimate aim is to help develop a society that’s just and equitable.

“The Brennan program was a constant reminder of that, even when I felt overwhelmed by the more practical parts of my coursework.”

Brennan himself says it’s important for those who practise law to uphold the basic, enduring values of the community. “There are a number of these – for example the dignity of the individual, equality of all people, the entitlement to freedom of conscience, the expression and association – and the program promotes these,” says Brennan.

Joint-director of the Brennan program, and Sir Gerard Brennan, Professor Paul Redmond believes it also offers students a great way to connect with each other (there are currently 800 involved) and to develop a sense of justice and leadership through service to others. “Developing students’ understanding of the notion of justice is very important.

“In a law school, the nature of justice has to always be there, side-by-side with an understanding of the law and legal system. Also, if you pursue the practice of law with a sense of service, you’ll find greater satisfaction and derive meaning and fulfilment that sustains you across the years.”

To register for the program or find out more, visit law.uts.edu.au/brennan

Jeff Li
Graduate Diploma in Journalism
Photographer: Jennifer Nunez

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“YOU ALSO GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO BROADEN YOUR HORIZONS AND GAIN EXPERIENCE YOU’RE NOT GOING TO GET WITHIN THE COURSE.”
Mustafa El Cherkawi never thought studying the effect of stress on beams and columns would make him a great leader. But excelling in class has helped him excel outside class too.

El Cherkawi came to Sydney from Lebanon five years ago. He started studying at INSEARCH before entering civil engineering at UTS. Making the transition was tough. "As an international student I was always concerned about my English, especially my accent," he says. "Usually I was shy or scared to talk in front of people." English is his third language, after Arabic and French.

Despite his concerns, El Cherkawi's grades were so good that in 2010 he was offered a position as a U:PASS leader, guiding fellow UTS engineering students through the subject Mechanics of Solids.

Manager of Peer Learning Programs Georgina Barratt-See is the Coordinator of U:PASS. Last year, the peer-to-peer study program – which is available to all UTS students – won a Federal Government Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning. She says, "We don't want to teach, we want to help students learn. One of the biggest things that U:PASS is doing is helping you become a leader in your own right."

El Cherkawi graduated last year and has since been working as Site Engineer for civil construction company Killard Excavations. He jokes, "It's really nice, and to be honest, it's like U:PASS but bigger!"

"Being a U:PASS leader helped me improve my public speaking, my ability to help people, to talk loudly and it gave me confidence," he says. "When I submitted my resume to Killard Excavations the only experience I had was U:PASS and they liked it and employed me."

From next year, the new ACCOMPLISH award program, which is currently being piloted, will offer another avenue of assistance to students.

ACCOMPLISH, an initiative of UTS's Careers Service, aims to improve graduate employability. It is currently being trialled by 100 students. Over the course of two semesters, the participants complete workshops on resume writing, interview techniques, networking, self-marketing and communication as well as 100 hours of employment activities, including paid work, internships and volunteering. At the end of the program, students attend a trial interview with an employer, who gives them direct feedback on their skills and presentation.

Careers Service Manager Malcolm McKenzie says there was a need to better prepare students for the employment process. "We've had a lot of conversations with employers and they told us many students were being eliminated at the first stage of the application process. They weren't even getting to the first round interview."

"That made us start thinking about what we can do to try and increase student awareness of the need to articulate their skills, their competencies and their experience in relation to the particular job they're applying for."

Karla Ranby is a second-year journalism student and is halfway through the pilot program. She credits ACCOMPLISH with helping her land internships at Crikey and The Punch. "I feel like I had a lot to offer, but I wasn't conveying it in the best way possible. The program has really helped me, particularly the resume review sessions and the coaching, to nut out a decent looking resume."

Barratt-See says the two programs are complementary. "While the U:PASS leaders program is very focused on high-achieving students, ACCOMPLISH can help all our students, especially with skills you're not traditionally taught in the classroom.

"It's incredible to see a student's communication skills, leadership skills and confidence soar. It's a joyous thing to watch." And from next year, more students will have that opportunity.

To inquire about ACCOMPLISH, email anastasia.medvedskaya@uts.edu.au or for U:PASS, email upass@uts.edu.au.

Fintan McDonnell
Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Journalism)
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THE SUBJECT:
Urban Design Studio, 2009

THE BRIEF:
Design a high-speed rail terminal and new urban precinct in Beirut, Lebanon

THE STUDENTS:
Alina McConnochie and Erik Escalante

Now both Master of Advanced Architecture graduates, McConnochie is working at S333 Architecture + Urbanism in London and Escalante at Grimshaw Architects in Sydney.