Lawyer, PhD candidate, family man and jogger
Kevin O’Toole jokingly remarks that the ducks and swans at Lake Monger are onto something. “I jog around other lakes but the ducks and swans at Lake Monger seem to spend much more time underwater,” he said. “They’re probably viewing their private collection of Sir John Winthrop Hackett’s missing casts.”

While Mr O’Toole, who is a part-time intellectual property solicitor with UWA’s Legal Services, is being flippant about the wildlife, he is serious in his belief that there could be something under the water at Lake Monger worthy of admiration.

Undertaking a PhD supervised by Classics and Ancient History Professor John Melville-Jones, Mr O’Toole is interested in the whereabouts of many casts of Greek and Roman sculptures that fellow lawyer, UWA founder, newspaper owner and Museum campaigner Sir John Winthrop Hackett imported from London for himself and the Western Australian Museum in the first decade of the 1900s.

He explained the casts were made in the 19th century by London cast-makers Brucciani and Company and, in the case of casts of the Parthenon Ionic frieze, were an important record of the original stones that had since deteriorated.

While casts of more than 60 blocks of the Ionic frieze from the Parthenon, some 90 metres in all, adorn the high interior walls of the Hellenic Gallery of the Museum, Mr O’Toole said the numerous other classical items imported by Sir John and listed in The West Australian and Museum archives of the day are not accounted for. “There is a rumour that some ended up in Lake Monger,” he said.

Professor Melville-Jones said he too had heard a similar rumour. He added that at the turn of the last century copies of classical artefacts often adorned public buildings. “Going back 100 years, when banks were considered very respectable, you would expect some Greek-style columns at the entrance to inspire confidence,” he said. “Perhaps we need to return to those days.”

Mr O’Toole said Sir John’s interest in the classics was shared by Sir Walter Murdoch, a great educator and Professor of English at UWA, who went to Europe in 1927 and purchased, with funds from the Hackett bequest, reproductions of a number of works of classical and later art for the University, most notably the copy of Donatello’s statue of St George, now in St George’s College.

“The classics stand for values of intellectual curiosity, of the cultivation of aesthetic taste, of the fearless pursuit of knowledge and of the idea that one’s life should be lived seriously,” he said. “Clearly these were ideas that motivated Sir John Hackett, and Sir John would have agreed with Socrates for whom a habit of intelligent introspection was indispensable to a life worth living,” he added.

While the focus of Mr O’Toole’s PhD is the Archon Basileus, or King Archon, who adjudicated in respect to the religious affairs of the ancient Athenian city-state and who is probably a principal figure in the Parthenon Ionic frieze, he enjoys the related intrigue lent by the mysterious disappearance of Sir John Winthrop Hackett’s classical imports.
Accolade for chemicals safety proponent

Twelve years of dedication to occupational safety and health (OSH) on campus and in the wider community by Dr Allan McKinley, Deputy Head of the School of Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences, has resulted in his nomination for this year’s Work Safety Awards.

Dr McKinley is a finalist in the Best Individual Contribution to Safety and Health in the awards organised by the State Government’s Department of Consumer and Employment Protection.

Michael Rafferty, Manager, Safety and Health at UWA, said Dr McKinley was extensively involved in briefing the architects and consultants for arguably one of the best chemical laboratory buildings in Australia, UWA’s Molecular and Chemical Sciences building, the recipient of the Master Builders’ Association’s Overall Winner Award in 2005.

“As a member and then Chair of the University Safety Committee since 2001, a committee which oversees all aspects of OSH at UWA, Dr McKinley has been directly involved in all major policy initiatives concerning the management of hazardous substances and electrical testing and tagging,” Mr Rafferty said.

“He has also helped several research institutes to set up their own local safety committees. Hazardous substances are increasingly being used in ‘non-chemistry’ areas around the University and constant vigilance and support to personnel in these areas is required to ensure these substances are stored, used and disposed of safely.

“Dr McKinley has also made extensive contributions to all aspects of training and education involving the chemical and laboratory aspects of OSH and has provided advice and courses to local industry.”

An innovative component of Dr McKinley’s Chemistry in the Workplace teaching involves encouraging the students to create posters on an aspect of chemical OSH, some of which are on display.

While Dr McKinley understands better than most the dangers posed by hazardous substances, he puts a lot of emphasis on not making people chemophobic. “Having knowledge of the dangers shouldn’t put people off chemistry,” he said. “I encourage people to understand the properties of chemicals so they can use them in a safe manner.”

Healthy eating getting easier

Many people’s New Year resolution to lose weight might be more achievable in 2009, thanks to new research. Farmers might have something to smile about, too.

With our State producing about 80 per cent of the world’s sweet lupins, using them to produce diabetes-busting foods makes economic and health sense, according to Professor Peter Leedman, Director of the Centre for Food and Genomic Medicine (CFGM) at the WA Institute for Medical Research.

By Christmas, healthy lupin-based pasta and biscuits are likely to be on the supermarket shelves. High in protein and dietary fibre and low in fat and GI, lupin-infused alternatives, studies suggest, help people feel fuller for longer and curb calorie intake.

New noodles, muffins and crisps will also be available, joining Slimmer’s Choice, the lupin-based bread released onto the market more than a year ago by Fremantle’s Bodhi’s Bakehouse after the CFGM first created it.

““All our new food products have been through rigorous testing, including the all-important test-taste, and have passed with flying colours. We’ve got some really solid, marketable products,” said CFGM Associate Professor Vijay Jayasena, who is Curtin University of Technology’s Food Science and Technology Program Leader.

““It’s clear that we need to start looking at foods for the future that may help us steer clear of the health problems we’re facing as a result of growing obesity rates – especially if we can encourage children to choose healthier food options,” Professor Leedman said.
Almost 500 roses – each representing a person – bedecked Winthrop Hall for a special memorial recently. The blooms were given to family members at the end of the service to honour those who had bequeathed their mortal remains to the University for the teaching of Anatomy.

It was the fourth such service since 1999, when the first was held by the School of Anatomy and Human Biology. About 2,000 students are enrolled in its teaching programs every semester, undertaking degrees in science, medicine, dentistry and podiatry. The School’s anatomy facilities are also essential for the training of medical and allied health professionals at the State’s four other universities and works closely with the Clinical Training and Educating Centre in the presentation of professional training courses.

The service was organised to underline the School’s gratitude to those people, from all over WA, who donated their bodies to science, to celebrate their lives and to acknowledge the benefit their gift provides to the University and the wider community.

The names of all the donors from 2005 to 2007 were read by students from Science, Podiatry, Medicine and Dentistry. The names have also been inscribed in a Book of Remembrance kept in the School.

Head of School, Professor Linc Schmitt told the donors’ relatives and friends that the School recognised that the mortal remains, “gifted to us as a final, profound gesture, are unique and special.”

Chancellor Dr Michael Chaney, Vice-Chancellor Professor Alan Robson, and Emeritus Professor David Allbrook also spoke at the service. Andrew Cichy played the organ and soprano Terry Burridge sang.
The value and contribution of our University to the State and the community over almost a century continues to be reflected in our ability to win substantial national competitive research grants.

The importance of UWA’s performance in this regard should not be underestimated, particularly in the scale and quality of the research outcomes which deliver economic and social benefits to the entire community.

Winning more than 70 per cent of the $20.7 million allocated to Western Australia in the latest rounds of Australian Research Council funding confirms our position as the State’s premier research institution.

In recent years, the University has expended more than $236 million a year on research. External research income of more than $146 million a year has made that possible. But these figures highlight a problem that is confronting universities around the world – that the cost of carrying out research is always much greater than the funds granted.

Across the Group of Eight Australian research intensive universities, competitive research grants are funded on average for only 70 per cent of the direct project costs. This partial funding of research, and also the funding of teaching and community service, is an unsustainable position for the university sector; and high quality standards cannot be maintained unless the full actual costs of the activities of universities are met. This is something we will continue to push with Federal and State Governments and others.

We can all acknowledge that our success in bridging the gap between the funding supplied and the funding necessary to sustain an internationally competitive university is a tribute to the capacity of academic and professional staff to identify additional sources of funding. We also acknowledge that there is the strong financial support we enjoy from the business community without which many important programs and features of our University would not have come to fruition.

In the latest round of funding UWA received more than $3 million for eight projects under the Linkage Projects scheme which funds collaborative efforts between university researchers and partner organisations; and we won almost $12 million for 32 projects under the ARC Discovery Projects Scheme which recognises research of national and international significance.

These 40 research projects will yield a range of benefits for all West Australians, contributing to many sectors including the economy, the environment, our cultural well-being, health, education, water and agriculture.

Notable among this round was the success of our Faculty of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics, which won 14 of the 32 Discovery Grants and four of the eight Linkage Grants.

Congratulations go to all successful grant recipients. We compete for funding in an increasingly competitive environment, emphasising the need for substantial work in the submission process. Throughout all of this, we can all be confident our importance and relevance as Western Australia’s finest research university are growing.

Alan Robson
Vice-Chancellor
Only seven months into his PhD, 24 year-old Richard Maganga (above) has already had a paper accepted by a prestigious American science journal — one with a rejection rate of 66 per cent. And his paper was accepted within 12 hours of his having submitted it online recently.

“I have never known anything like it!” enthused one of his supervisors, Professor Arun Dharmarajan, who is Associate Dean (South Asia Research Initiatives) in the Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences. “To have a paper accepted so quickly is unheard of.”

Mr Maganga, an international student from Malawi, has been in the School of Anatomy and Human Biology since starting as an undergraduate in 2003.

He is looking into the role of a protein, Secreted Frizzled Related Protein 4 (SFRP4), in skin differentiation and hopes that, in conjunction with his co-supervisors, Clinical Professor Fiona Wood of the Burn Injury Research Unit and Dr Mark Fear of the McComb Foundation, and fellow researchers, his work may help develop skin-healing therapies.

Mr Maganga explained that Professor Dharmarajan had found that SFRP4 blocked blood vessel formation — research crucial in finding a cure for cancer.

“My work is with skin,” Mr Maganga said. “Skin is a layered structure and as the cells gradually move up to the top this protein is naturally expressed. What I’ve done is treat skin cells in the laboratory with SFRP4. We’ve noted that the cells have less multiplication and growth but they are not dying. What is happening instead? Is SFRP4 promoting differentiation in the cells?

“So we looked for the cell marker, involucrin, and found it was positively expressed in these cells. It was not present in skin cells not treated with the protein so it is possible that the protein promotes the regeneration of the top layer of skin — and maybe it could help us develop better ways to get skin to heal.”

This work is the topic of his paper Secreted Frizzled Related Protein-4 (SFRP4) promotes epidermal differentiation and apoptosis, published in the journal Biochemical and Biophysical Research Communications last month.

Mr Maganga said his family were very proud of him. “My mother works in public relations for the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy in Malawi and my father is a management consultant,” he said.

“My sister is married and my brother is doing a Masters in Anthropology in South Africa. They’re looking forward to reading an online version of my paper soon. However, I could not have done it without the support of my supervisors and the whole team.”

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Our State could be under threat from the dengue virus according to finishing PhD and Masters of Infectious Diseases student Kasie Mearns (pictured below).

Ms Mearns said the dengue virus affected more than 50 million people around the world every year with symptoms varying from mild fever, headache and rash to fatal internal bleeding.

“There is no vaccine and no cure. There are four different types of the virus and all affect humans. It is the most important emerging infectious disease in the world today and its impact in developing countries is huge,” she said.

With more West Australians installing water tanks in their gardens, the likelihood of dengue virus plaguing our State is increasing. Water bowls for dogs and plants such as bromeliads, amongst whose leaves water collects, could also provide breeding conditions suitable for the dengue-carrying mosquito. They are also breeding sites for mosquito vectors for Ross River virus, a current problem.

“If you do get a tank, make sure it abides by Government guidelines, and empty and refill the dog’s bowl every day,” Ms Mearns said. “It is only a matter of time before a dengue-carrying mosquito reaches WA again.”

Ms Mearns, whose supervisors are Dr Jan Meyer in the School of Anatomy and Human Biology and Dr Silvana Gaudieri from UWA’s Centre for Forensic Science and Royal Perth Hospital, said she began work on her research when she noted that maps showing parts of the world currently affected by dengue virus and regions inhabited by flying foxes overlapped.

Along with her supervisors, she was greatly assisted by Dr Hume Field of the Queensland Department of Primary Industry and staff from PathWest at QEII.
Smoothing the way for 21 years

Adjusting to university life is not always easy but at UWA a special program is so successful at smoothing the way that it has won the ALTC Award for Programs that Enhance Learning.

UniSkills, which provides academic, social and personal support for its students, recently celebrated its 21st anniversary. More than 4,200 students have benefited from the comprehensive year-long program.

Dr Judy Skene, Manager of Student Support Services and Diversity Adviser, said the UniSkills program had grown from an enrolment of 30 students in 1987 to 470 this year.

Dr Skene will fly to Canberra at the end of the month to receive the award on behalf of her team — Ms Sarah Evamy, Ms Megan Henderson and Mr Jon Stubbs.

“For many students, starting University can be a daunting process,” Dr Skene said. “For those entering through alternative pathways or from recognised equity groups, the social and academic isolation can be overwhelming and defeating.

“The success of the program has been judged by the higher retention rate of UniSkills students progressing from first to second year and the achievement of similar academic performance levels to that of non-UniSkills students, despite commencing University with much lower entrance scores.”

UniSkills also offers the ‘Flying Start’ orientation program which allows new students to meet each other and get to know their way around campus.

One student commented: “I want to take the opportunity to praise the amazing ‘Flying Start’ program. It was definitely the best thing I could have done before starting Uni and I have so many friends that I made over the two days that have made my transition to Uni so much easier. I actually dread to think about how it would have been starting without the awesome people I met.”

The success of the program has been judged by the higher retention rate of UniSkills students … and academic performance levels

Passing on the passion to students

Ask Dr Peter Whipp’s students about him and this is what you’ll hear: “He is able to connect with the students. He is one of the best lecturers I have ever had”; “Peter is very professional in all lectures and encourages students to be the same by setting an example”; “As a teacher he is my biggest inspiration”; “He is passionate and motivated and he passes it on to us”.

The man they call ‘Whippy’ has just won national acclaim for his teaching — the Australian Learning and Teaching Council’s individual Early Career Award for Teaching Excellence. A lecturer in the School of Sport Science, Exercise and Health, Dr Whipp is in his sixth year of coordinating and teaching in the Health and Physical Education domain of the UWA Graduate Diploma in Education.

He brings to the classroom first-hand experiences of current secondary student learning, curricula and needs. His external positions as an examiner, consultant and writer for the State curriculum provide current, relevant and authentic learning resources for his students, fellow staff members and educational stakeholders.

Dr Whipp’s teaching outcomes are enhanced by a strong research commitment including a State grant for an innovative mentoring program for teachers. His graduates are employed in WA’s diverse metropolitan, regional and remote Government and private schools.

“What makes me an effective educator is difficult to summarise,” Dr Whipp said. “Fundamentally, it’s about the students. The diversification of pedagogy, content and activities to meet not only their individual needs but also to prepare them for their careers in a varied employment context is foremost in my teaching.”
The first Indigenous social worker appointed as a lecturer in any university in Australia, Violet Bacon, is the winner of the ALTC Neville Bonner Award for Indigenous Education.

Ms Bacon’s practical and compassionate approach helps her Social Work students to become capable, confident and comfortable with the skills she teaches, which include narrative therapy.

“My own learning is never-ending,” Ms Bacon said. “My personal philosophy of teaching is grounded in what I consider to be the core element of social work — working for the betterment of humanity.

“My philosophy of teaching has been strengthened by the introduction of narrative therapy into aspects of my teaching. I highlight the stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. It is the students’ ability and willingness to listen and ask questions that is crucial, as there is always another story interwoven within the answers we receive.

“As social workers we need to yarn with a purpose and listen to the multitude of layers entwined within every story we hear. Students are taught to look for strengths within their clients, within their families and within their communities so they can build on these strengths to provide solutions.

“I realise that there are continuous changes within Aboriginal communities and these must be discussed so students can be aware of current issues. One example was the significant and symbolic occasion of ‘Sorry Day’ on 13 February.”
When the going gets tough

Sturt desert pea, wattles, bacon and egg pea and running postman – these are native plants with which most West Australians are familiar. Some people even grow them in their gardens.

These flamboyant and loved plants are members of the legume family but other, lesser-known native legumes, belonging to the unfamiliar *Cullen* genus, will outshine them all if PhD researcher Richard Bennett has his way.

Mr Bennett, supported by Meat and Livestock Australia, the Future Farm Industries CRC, and the AW Howard Memorial Trust and working in the School of Plant Biology, is conducting trials on eight species of *Cullen* in the hope that some will prove to be good perennial legume pastures for farmers with rainfall of less than 450mm a year. These farmers, roughly in districts east of a line between Geraldton and Katanning, currently rely on lucerne as the sole perennial legume on which to graze their sheep.

But lucerne does not perform well in these low rainfall areas, especially when the soils are acidic. In contrast, *Cullen* species in Mr Bennett’s trial plots at Buntine (in the north-eastern Wheatbelt) and Shenton Park are proving to be drought-resistant and tolerant of acidic soils – traits they have relied on for survival in their natural habitats.

Supervised by Dr Megan Ryan, Associate Professor Tim Colmer and Dr Daniel Real, Mr Bennett said he has trialled seed from eight species of wild *Cullen* plants collected from about 120 locations in the rangelands of Australia.

“The eight species range from erect shrubs like wattle to prostrate plants like running postman. They have little pink or purple pea flowers about 5mm across and set lots of seed,” he said.

“The range of growth forms could be useful under different conditions and low-cost seed production should make farmers more willing to give them a try.

“Lucerne has been domesticated over thousands of years so I don’t expect the productivity of *Cullen* to compete with it head-on. However, *Cullen* should fit a niche as a plant well-adapted to dry conditions. In WA, this niche is really quite big,” Mr Bennett said.

“Developing useful plants from wild species is time-consuming, involving seed collection, evaluation, selecting the best of the best, and breeding, as well as the new duty-of-care requirements that ensure farmers are not being sold a product that could damage their land or their animals.

“In a best-case scenario, you can move quickly from selection to release but if there are problems such as toxicity, grazing intolerance or the risk of the plant becoming a weed, you need the breeding process to work these problems out. It’s a major investment of time and money.”

Mr Bennett said sheep had grazed on his *Cullen* trials. But from the grazing patterns he has observed at other localities, he has seen signs that suggest they eat the more familiar annual pasture plants and weeds first and leave the perennial *Cullen* to last. This would be a windfall to farmers by ensuring they have green fodder almost all year round.

Other benefits of *Cullen* are that, like all legumes, they fix nitrogen in the soil and, being native, they also need very little phosphorous, cutting down the cost of fertiliser. Giving farmers new plants to use will also increase rural biodiversity.

So far, *Cullen australasicum* is proving to be the most likely species for further work, having shown itself to be capable of not only surviving better than lucerne in dry conditions but staying leafy and green well into the summer months.

“Certainly, with the profit margins of livestock farming becoming increasingly tight and climate change making more areas of WA marginal for cropping, the demand for something that makes pastures easier and more profitable won’t go away – but we’re still in the very early stages,” Mr Bennett said.
Adjunct Associate Professor Ed Barrett-Lennard knows at first-hand the devastation wreaked by creeping salinity in the State’s agricultural areas and he is committed to helping find a way of mitigating the effects, partly because he sees salinity as ‘an equity issue’.

“Salinity is not democratic. It’s highly variable. Not everyone gets the same amount,” he said. “While most farms in WA will only be five to 10 per cent salt-affected, for some farmers, 50 per cent of their farmland can be salt-affected and gaining a living from such intensively salinised landscapes is not easy.”

About 10 per cent of the Wongan Hills wheat and sheep farm on which he grew up is now salt-affected and he has seen the effects of this on his father, Irwin (a former member of the UWA Senate), brother Hugh and the family.

“A branch of the Mortlock River runs through the family farm and my father remembers his brothers looking at the area during the Depression and suggesting it would be a good place to grow a vegetable garden. It’s now very saline and all the vegetation has died,” A/Professor Barrett-Lennard said.

“A tongue of salinity about 3km long has moved up the valley from that location to where the farm sheds are and a dam that was once filled with water for horses is now permanently salty. Particularly in broad valley floor farms, salinity affects farm infrastructure and farmers’ livelihoods.

“Until now, most research into plant salt-tolerance has focused on the development of saltland pastures,” A/Professor Barrett-Lennard said. “However, many farmers are more interested in cropping than in pasture. And while pasture species for salt-affected land have been developed, WA farmers are yet to see a viable crop plant for saline land.”

As a young man, an interest in salinity drove A/Professor Barrett-Lennard to UWA where he studied Agriculture. His PhD thesis was co-supervised by Vice-Chancellor Professor Alan Robson. Associate Professor Hank Greenway was his principal supervisor.

“I had the chance to do an Honours project on salinity as an undergraduate and, although my PhD thesis was on enzymes as biochemical markers of phosphorous deficiency, my career began with salinity,” A/Professor Barrett-Lennard said.

Today, A/Professor Barrett-Lennard is the Future Farm Industries’ Farming Saline Landscapes Program leader. As the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia’s Principal Research Officer he is now translating some laboratory and glasshouse work on salt-tolerant cropping plants into field studies.

“A/Professor Tim Colmer from UWA and Dr Rafiq Islam from the University of Adelaide and associated PhD students have done some impressive breeding and physiological work to develop 16 salt-tolerant amphiploids. (Amphiploids are single plants that contain all the chromosomes from a pair of plants – in this case from the salt-tolerant weed, sea barley grass, and bread wheat.) It’s been a long development phase and I am now taking some of this material into the field to compare it with other species,” A/Professor Barrett-Lennard said.

A field trial is underway at Lake Grace and Wheatbelt farmers are holding their breath as they await the outcome.

Meanwhile, the fruits of the past work of the Future Farm Industries CRC in the development of saltland pastures is now available on the web – visit www.saltlandgenie.org.au

A/Professor Barrett-Lennard said the ‘Saltland Genie’ would almost certainly be recognised by the farming community as Australia’s greatest expert on saltland management, providing all the information farmers need to implement saltland pastures on their properties.
It is hard to miss the handiwork of Ania Badziak around the University. Look for distinct interior wall-colours, surprising and cleverly framed art-works and bold mixes of metallics and mattes.

The Facilities Management architectural draftsperson who trained in Poland has worked at UWA almost as long as she’s been in WA – 25 years.

Her latest project has been the refurbishment of the Dolphin Theatre’s foyer and bar. These areas needed revamping and who better to come up with an interior design plan than Ms Badziak with her flair for colour and sense of drama.

She had helped with the recent renovation of the Octagon’s foyer and enjoyed injecting excitement and freshness into the décor. Linking the two theatres was important – and this was done by echoing some of the colours used in the Octagon, particularly the peacock tail-inspired mauve and purple. The mauve has been carried into the Dolphin, with the addition of the shiny silvers and blues of a dolphin’s body.

“There have been a lot of changes on campus since I started working here, with many new buildings, such as the new Chemistry building and the new Business School on the southern part of the campus, bringing exciting architecture and reflecting the character of the activities undertaken within them,” Ms Badziak said.

“Great care has been taken to marry function with aesthetics and to sensitively express balance and harmony between open, green spaces and the need to educate more students on the campus, which is one that staff, students and members of the public enjoy.”

The first play to be staged in the new-look Dolphin is UWA’s Graduate Dramatic Society’s Australian debut of A Laughing Matter by contemporary British playwright April de Angelis. It’s a bawdy, hilarious play about the behind-the-scenes action at 18th century actor/producer David Garrick’s Drury Lane Theatre. You can catch its last few nights on November 4 to 8 through BOCS Ticketing 94484112 or www.bocs.com.au

What will the Garnaut Report, Federal Government Green and White Papers, carbon pollution reduction schemes and carbon emission reduction obligations mean for local, State and national jurisdictions in Australia?

You’ll find the answers in a 400-page book launched at UWA’s Co-op Bookshop recently. Global Climate Change: Australian Law and Policy was co-written by David Hodgkinson and Renee Garner when they were Research Fellows in the Discipline of Political Science and International Relations.

Published by LexisNexis, the book takes a multi-disciplinary and multi-jurisdictional approach to provide an integrated understanding of climate change law and policy at all levels.

“Associate Professor Bruce Stone and the Discipline’s administration officer Linley Hill were incredibly supportive and spent a lot of time dealing with this project,” Mr Hodgkinson said.

“Discipline Chair Associate Professor David Denemark very kindly agreed to act as MC and I’d also like to thank Alyson de Souza, the manager of the Co-op, and the staff, for the launch, which was attended by more than 70 representatives from the University, Government and business.”

Mr Hodgkinson said the City of Subiaco — a case study in the book — demonstrated the virtue of local Government taking a proactive approach to the problems presented by climate change.

The physical science of climate change is examined in the first chapter, followed by the legal frameworks to deal with climate change internationally and domestically. Other topics include carbon sequestration, climate change litigation, emissions trading and carbon markets, risks of climate change, and future and post-Kyoto proposals.
One of The Art Gallery of Western Australia’s greatest acquisitions isn’t a painting or an installation or a piece of sculpture. In fact it’s not even a work of art. Instead, he’s a valued member of staff – UWA graduate Chad Creighton, the recipient of the Gallery’s Indigenous Curatorial Internship.

Originally from Broome, a member of the Nyullnyull and Bardi people, Mr Creighton undertook UWA’s Pre-Law program before studying Law for two years and realising it wasn’t for him: “I couldn’t see myself as a lawyer,” he said.

He had always been interested in fine arts – at high school he won first prize in Chisholm Catholic College’s Angelico Art Exhibition – and as he worked his way through a UWA Fine Arts degree he became more certain that this is where he wanted to focus his career. However, while studying at University he still found time to join UWA’s Western Waagyls, who recently won the National Indigenous Games, and the WA Student Aboriginal Corporation – commitments that gave him the chance to visit other parts of Australia.

“I heard about the three-year internship from a good friend at UWA and applied. It was very competitive and I was successful,” Mr Creighton said.

As well as learning the ropes at the Gallery, with installation, conservation and curatorial duties, he completed a Graduate Diploma in Cultural Heritage Studies and has helped prepare exhibitions including Year 12 Perspectives, Western Desert Satellites, Egyptian Antiquities from the Louvre – Journey to the Afterlife, and Paddy Bedford.

Mr Creighton was recently involved in Presence, the Indigenous contribution to the Wonderlust New journeys Your collection displays of the State Art Collection.

His final internship project, in 2009, will be Yirrkala Everywhen: Bark Paintings from the State Art Collection.

Alan Kelly (pictured above) is one of the few Carrolup residents still alive and he stunned the visitors not only with his paintings, which he has continued to do, but also with his accounts of having been taken from his school at Brunswick Junction when he was eight, never to see his parents again. His art, which started out as his escape, has helped create a link between two far-flung communities.

Patricia House, Manager of Katanning’s Mungart Boodja Art Centre, said the visit to Katanning and Carrolup by the 15 US exchange students and their teacher, Professor Ellen Kraly, had another benefit. One of the students, who has an Inuit background, was so fascinated by her immersion into Noongar culture that she determined to explore her own heritage when she returned home. “The visit was so successful that another group from Colgate are planning to come next year, at the end of May or the beginning of June,” Ms House said.

Mr Kelly passed on his skills to his nephew, Lance Chadd, who in turn taught Troy Bennell. “All three have very different styles, but the landscape theme is strong in all their work,” Ms House said.

The Carrolup children, aged between five and 14, created such compelling paintings that they were exhibited around the world. Some ended up at Colgate University – and now Colgate University representatives are completing the circle.

UWA’s Berndt Museum of Anthropology has many of the paintings that astounded the art community. “The Museum has played a crucial role in bringing Australia’s attention to this school of art through two national travelling exhibitions, Nyungar landscapes (1992) and Aboriginal artists of the South-West (2000), and during the Festival of Perth, Coorah Coolingah: Children Long Ago (2006),” Director Dr John Stanton said.

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Major boost for funding research

The results for the major Australian Research Council and National Health and Medical Research Council grant rounds were released last week. “Once again UWA performed strongly and all grant recipients are to be congratulated on their success,” said Professor Doug McEachern, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation).

Professor Jim Whelan, one of the Chief Investigators in the ARC Centre of Excellence in Plant Energy Biology, won a Discovery Project grant for his work on cell communication in plants. His work is based not just in collaborations with Australian partners but in international collaborations. Of interest here is his role as Deputy Director of a joint laboratory run in Zhejiang University in China.

The work on sub-sea pipelines by a team of researchers from the Centre for Offshore Foundations (COFS) made up of Professor Mark Randolph, Dr David White and Professor Liang Cheng has attracted a major contribution from Woodside.

There were eight successful Linkage Projects in the first of two rounds for 2008. Professor Dongke Zhang won a major grant worth $510,000 for improving the efficiency and reducing emissions from diesel engines and a large Discovery Project grant for fundamental research on coal combustion. Another dual winner was Professor Zed Rengel who won a Linkage grant for his work on acid sulphate soils and pollution in the Swan coastal plain and a Discovery grant for work on sophisticated modelling of the function of roots in dry land farming systems.

The Faculty of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics was the most successful faculty in the ARC round this year with 4 Linkage grants and 14 Discovery grants.

The University maintained its good performance in the NHMRC Project Grants scheme, winning an extra $2 million this year with 38 grants funded. Successful applicants included A/Professor Lin Fritschi working on a project on environmental causes of chronic adult diseases in early life. Syndrome, hereditary haemochromatosis, and the genetic and cancer prevention, anti-tumour immune therapy, metabolic elements in the development of breast cancer; Professor Leonie Rennie, Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences, Graduate School of Education, Curtin University of Technology, School of Education, Curtin University of Technology, University of Queensland, Disability Services Commission, Down Syndrome Association of WA, Edge Employment Solutions, Department of Education and Training WA: ‘The Transition from Secondary School to Adulthood: Experiences and Life Outcomes for Youth with an Intellectual Disability and Their Families’ — $365,000 (2009-13)

Prof David Blair, Dr Li Ju, Dr Alexey Veryaskin, Dr Peter Wolfgram, Mr Howard Golden, Physics, Gravitic Instruments (ALU) Pty Ltd, Fugro Airborne Surveys Pty Ltd: ‘Advanced Electromagnetic Sensors and Magnetic Gradiometers for Natural Resources Exploration and Future Space Missions’ — $800,000 (2009-11)

Prof John Delli, Dr Robert Woodward, Dr Mariusz Martyniuk, Dr Roger Jeffery, Electrical, Electronic, Comp Engineering, Physics, ST Synergy Ltd: ‘Investigation of novel magneto-optic materials exhibiting high Faraday figure of merit’ — $450,000 (2009-11)

Prof Dongke Zhang, Mechanical Engineering, Fuel Technology Pty Ltd, BHP Billiton Iron Ore Pty Ltd: ‘Homogeneous Combustion Catalysts for Efficiency Improvements and Emission Reduction in Diesel Engines’ — $510,000 (2009-12)

Prof Zdenko Rengel, A/Prof Christoph Hinz, Dr Andrew Rate, Earth and Geographical Sciences, ALS Laboratory Group, RPS Environmental Pty Ltd, Water Corporation WA: ‘Environmental risk assessment of acid sulfate soil formation and pollutant generation in Swan Coastal Plain’ — $540,000 (2009-11)

Prof Liang Cheng, Dr David White, Prof Mark Randolph, Civil and Resource Engineering, Centre for Offshore Foundations Systems, Woodside Energy Limited: ‘On Bottom Stability of Large Diameter Submarine Pipelines’ — $300,000 (2009-11)

Dr Christophe Gaudin, Prof Mark Cassidy, Dr Britta Bienen, Dr Ocky Purwana, Dr Matthew Quah, Centre for Offshore Foundations Systems, Keppel Offshore and Marine Pty Ltd: ‘A Novel Foundation to Extend the Operation of Mobile Structures into Deeper Water’ — $175,000 (2009-11)

ARC DISCOVERY PROJECTS

Prof Yasmin Haskell, Humanities: ‘Mapping the Latin Enlightenment: Centres and Peripheries’ — $248,000 (2009-11)

A/Prof Lynette Parker, Dr Chang Hoon, Dr Rahani Rahiani (APD), Social and Cultural Studies, State Islamic University of Riau: ‘Education for a tolerant and multicultural Indonesia’ — $445,000 (2009-11)


Dr Susan Gourvenec, Prof Mark Randolph, Centre for Offshore Foundations Systems: ‘Shallow Foundation Solutions for Offshore Oil and Gas Facilities’ — $848,000 (2009-11)

Prof Liang Cheng, Dr Ming Zhao, Civil and Resource Engineering: ‘Scour and Scour Protection Around Gravity Anchors’ — $170,000 (2009-11)


A/Prof Brett Nener, Dr Giacinta Parish, Dr Martin Kocan, Dr Kevin Pflegler, Prof Umesh Mishra, Electrical, Electronic and Computer Engineering, UWA Centre for Medical Research, Faculty of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics, University of California, Santa Barbara: ‘Advanced Microelectronic Transistor Structures for Novel Biosensor Technology’ — $310,000 (2009-11)

Mr Bradley Treeby (APD), Prof Jie Pan, Prof David McAlpine, Mechanical Engineering, University College London: ‘Modelling the Acoustical Scattering Properties of the Human Auditory System’ — $275,000 (2009-11)

Prof Mark Bush, Dr Brian Lawn, Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering Computing and
Mathematics, National Institute of Standards and Technology: “Failure of Worn Tooth Structures” — $456,000 (2009-11)
Dr Duc Do (ARF), Mechanical Engineering: “Coordination Control of Underactuated Ocean Vehicles for Ocean Forecasting” — $521,510 (2009-13)
Prof Dongke Zhang, Prof Hai Zhang, Mechanical Engineering, Tsinghua University: “Ignition Mechanisms and Phase Evolution of Single Particles and Clouds of Pulverised Coal under Micogravity Condition” — $380,000 (2009-11)
Prof James Whelan, Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences, ARC Centre for Plant Energy Biology: “The Regulation and Role of Dual Targeted Proteins in Plant Cells” — $300,000 (2009-11)
Prof Susan Berns-Price, Dr Aleksandra Filipovska, Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences, UWA Centre for Medical Research: “Gold-Based Mitochondria Targeted Chemotherapeutics: Mechanistic Studies Probing Interactions with Thiol and Selenium Containing Proteins” — $330,000 (2009-11)
Dr Joshua Heazlewood (QE11), Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences, University of Western Australia: “Transience in Children” — $204,000 (2009-11)
Dr Deborah Trinder, Prof John Olynyk, Dr Anita Chua, Dr Ross Ong, Dr Deborah Saunders, Dr Karen McCaughey, Dr Jodi Bower, Dr Nicholas O’Toole, Prof Hai Zhang, Mechanical Engineering: “Understanding and preventing Secondary Degeneration after CNS Injury” — $393,000 (2009-11)
Prof Matthew Knuiman, Dr Tom Briffa, Prof Paul Norman, A/Prof Joseph Hung, Dr Elizabeth Geelhoed, Clin/Prof Peter Thompson, Surgery, Medicine and Pharmacology, Population Health: “The Real and Changing Atherosclerotic Disease Burden and Secondary Prevention” — $489,500 (2009-11)
Dr Guicheng Zhang, Paediatrics and Child Health: “The Interaction of LPS Pathway Genes with Pre-Natal and Early Exposure to LPS and Allergens Predicts Atopy at Age One” — $361,400 (2009-12)
Dr David Burgner, Dr Andrew Currie, Dr Peter Richmond, Prof Karen Simmer, A/Prof Ofer Levy, Dr Tobias Strunk, Paediatrics and Child Health, Women’s and Infants’ Health, Harvard University, Princess Margaret Hospital for Children: “A Prospective Study of the Development of Innate Immunity in Preterm Infants and Susceptibility to Neonatal Infection” — $363,250 (2009-11)
Prof Geoffrey Shellam, Dr Lee Smith, Dr Alec Redwood, A/Prof Ann Hill, Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences, Oregon Health Sciences University: “Effects of natural sequence variation on evasion of cytotoxic T lymphocytes by murine cytomegalovirus” — $531,500 (2009-11)
Prof Nicola Lautenschlager, Dr Kay Cox, Prof Osvaldo Almeida, Prof Leon Flicker, Prof David Ames, A/Prof Gerard Byrnes, Prof Keith Hill, Medicine and Pharmacology, Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences, University of Queensland, LaTrobe University National Ageing Research Institute: “A multicentre randomised clinical trial of physical activity for the treatment of patients with Alzheimer’s Disease” — $687,100 (2009-11)
Prof Geoffrey Shellam, Dr Alec Redwood, Dr Lee Smith, Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences: “Determinants of cytomegalovirus salivary gland persistence” — $544,500 (2009-11)
Dr Dick Chan, Prof Gerald Watts, Prof Hugh Barrett, Dr Leon Adams, Medicine and Pharmacology, Internal Medicine and Child Health: “Regulation of Hepatic Steatosis and Lipid transport in the Metabolic Syndrome” — $501,775 (2009-11)
Prof Hugh Barrett, Prof Gerald Watts, Dr Dick Chan, Medicine and Pharmacology, Internal Medicine and Child Health: “Regulation of Hepatic Steatosis and Lipid transport in the Metabolic Syndrome” — $501,775 (2009-11)
Dr Deborah Trinder, Prof John Olynyk, Dr Anita Chua, Dr Ross Graham, Medicine and Pharmacology: “Regulation of liver continued on next page
Iron loading in hereditary haemochromatosis — $837,500 (2009-11)
Dr Elizabeth Milne, Dr Michael Fenech, Prof Bruce Armstrong, Prof Nicholas Dean, Prof Margaret Miller, Paediatrics and Child Health, Population Health, University of Sydney, Edith Cowan University, CSIRO: ‘Nutritional and Genetic Factors Associated with Genome Damage in Children’ — $866,601 (2009-11)
A/Prof Ruth Ganss, UWA Centre for Medical Research: ‘Improving Immunotherapy by Vascular Targeting and Barrier Retaliation’ — $506,250 (2009-11)
A/Prof Philip Burcham, A/Prof Peter Henry, Medicine and Pharmacology: ‘Mechanisms of Epithelial Damage by the Noxious Smoke Constituent Acoron’ $633,500 (2009-13)
Prof Jonathan Emery, A/Prof Alex Boussioutas, Dr Rebecca Fitzgerald, Dr Fiona Walter, Prof Jane Blazey, Primary, Aboriginal and Rural Health Care, University of Bristol, University of Cambridge, University of Melbourne: ‘BEST-Australia: A Phase II Study of Non-Endoscopic Screening for Barrett’s Oesophagus in Primary Care’ — $493,500 (2009-11)
Prof Brendan Waddell, Dr Peter Mark, A/Prof Jeffrey Keelan, Dr Trevor Mori, Medicine and Pharmacology, Anatomy and Human Biology: ‘Women’s and Infants’ Health: Prevention of Placental Oxidative Stress and Inflammation by Dietary Omega-3 Fatty Acids’ — $256,000 (2009-11)
Clin/Prof Graeme Hankey, Prof Konrad Jamrozik, A/Prof John Eikelboom, A/Prof Frank van Bockxmeer, Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, Medicine and Pharmacology, University of Adelaide, McMaster University: ‘VITATOPS Study — A randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial of vitamins to prevent stroke’ — $480,925 (2009-11)
Dr Kun Zhu, A/Prof Richard Prince, Prof Leon Flecker, Dr Janine Calver, Medicine and Pharmacology, UWA Centre for Medical Research: ‘Determinants of Musculoskeletal and Other Diseases, Health Service Utilisation and Mortality in a Cohort of Older Women’ — $816,050 (2009-13)
A/Prof Deborah Lehmann, Dr David Smith, Dr Peter Richmond, Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences, UWA Centre for Child Health Research, Paediatrics and Child Health: ‘Aetiology, Burden and Causal Pathways of Acute Lower Respiratory Infections Using Population Linked Data’ — $421,288 (2009-11)
A/Prof David Joyce, A/Prof Peter Henry, Medicine and Pharmacology: Macrophage Uncoupling Protein-2 Regulation and Expression in Inflammatory Joint Disease and Hypertrophic Lung Damage — $289,250 (2009-11)
A/Prof Peter Eastwood, Prof David Hillman, Dr Jennifer Walsh, Dr Jason Kirkness, Anatomy and Human Biology, Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital: ‘Collapseability of the Human Upper Airway — Relationships Between Sleep, Sphincter Anaesthesia and Head Posture’ — $451,250 (2009-11)
Prof Lyle Palmer, Dr Craig Pennell, Prof Lawrence Bellin, Prof John Newholm, Prof Stephen Lee, Prof George Davey Smith, Medicine and Pharmacology, UWA Centre for Medical Research, Women’s and Infants’ Health, University of Bristol, Mount Sinai Hospital (Toronto): ‘A Genome Wide Search for Genes Underlying the Developmental Origins of Health and Disease’ — $988,900 (2009-11)
A/Prof Maripria Degli-Esposti, Prof Christopher Andoniou, Centre for Ophthalmology and Visual Science: ‘Mechanisms of Virally-Induced Immunosuppression — Effects on DC-NK Networks’ — $543,750 (2009-11)
Prof Bruce Robinson, Dr John Alvarez, Dr Andrew Currie, Adj A/Prof Richard Lake, Surgery, Medicine and Pharmacology, Paediatrics and Child Health: ‘The Scientific Basis for the Integration of Surgery and Immunotherapy for Lung Malignancies’ — $496,250 (2009-11)
Prof Ming Zheng, A/Prof Jiak Xue, Surgery: ‘The Interaction of Ao45 with V-ATPase and its Function in Osteoclastic Bone Resorption’ — $809,000 (2009-12)
Dr Anna Nowak, Adj A/Prof Richard Lake, Prof Michael Millward, Dr Robbert van der Most, Prof Bruce Robinson, Medicine and Pharmacology: ‘Optimising Regulatory T Cell Depletion in Combination with Chemotherapy for Enhanced Anti-Tumour Immunity’ — $254,250 (2009-11)
A/Prof Jiak Xue, Prof Ming Zheng, Surgery: ‘The Role of the Secreted SIVSP Protein in Bone Mass’ — $581,500 (2009-11)
Prof Osvaldo Almeida, Prof Leon Flecker, Dr Kieran McCaul, Medicine and Pharmacology, UWA Centre for Medical Research: Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences: ‘Randomised Trial of Homocysteine Lowering Treatment of Depression in Later Life (R-VITAge)’ — $747,750 (2009-11)
Prof Wayne Thomas, Dr Peter Richmond, UWA Centre for Child Health Research, Paediatrics and Child Health: ‘Immunity to Colonising Bacteria of the Respiratory Tract in Atopic and Non-Atopic Children’ — $237,000 (2009-11)
Adj Prof Prudence Hart, Dr Shelley Gorman, UWA Centre for Child Health Research: ‘Cutaneous Inflammation, Bone Marrow Dendritic Cells, and Implications for Immune Responses and Immune Homeostasis’ — $314,250 (2009-11)
Adj A/Prof Steven Mutsaers, Dr Yun Chor (Gary) Lee, Medicine and Pharmacology: University College London: ‘The role of the Hedgehog signalling pathway in asbestos associated malignant mesothelioma’ — $541,500 (2009-11)
Dr Thea Shavlakadze, Prof Miranda Grounds, Dr Chris McMahon, Anatomy and Human Biology, AgResearch Ltd: ‘Clarifying Molecular Role of IGF 1 Ea Isolforms in Skeletal Muscle Hypertrophy and Atrophy’ — $379,500 (2009-11)
Dr Charlene Kahler, Dr Martin Scanlon, Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences, Monash University: ‘The role of protein oxidation and isomerization pathways in the pathogenesis of Neisseria meningitidis’ — $254,250 (2009-11)
Clin/Prof Timothy Jones, Dr Paul Fournier, Dr Elizabeth Davis, Sport Science, Exercise and Sport Science, UWA Centre for Child Health Research: ‘Clinical modulation of the hyperglycaemic effect of a 10-second sprint in type 1 diabetes’ — $545,425 (2009-11)
Dr Graham Hall, Dr Peter Franklin, Prof Zoëntz Hantos, OPR for Asthma and CAARR (Asthma, Allergy and Respiratory Research), Paediatrics and Child Health, University of Szeged: ‘Impact of Exposure to Air Pollutants During the Prenatal Period on Lung Function in Infancy’ — $611,250 (2009-11)
A long overdue synthesis image of Centaurus A

Wednesday 5 November 2008, 6-7pm, Social Science Lecture Theatre

All welcome, no RSVP necessary.
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This lecture traces and explains the transformation of Leonardo’s Mona Lisa into the great portrait par excellence and its rise to global fame from the nineteenth century to the present.

Dr Bonnie Thomas (School of Humanities)

Dr Thomas’s area of research is French Caribbean literature. Her monograph entitled Breadfruit or Chestnut?: Gender Construction in the French Caribbean was published in 2006. Dr Thomas has made an outstanding contribution to the development of teaching in the Faculty and sets high standards for all of those in the language teaching area. In 2008 she was a UWA nominee for an Australian Award for Teaching Excellence in the ECR category.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Dr Alice Niemeyer (School of Mathematics and Statistics)

Dr Niemeyer’s area of research is computational group theory, proportions of elements in groups, and combinatorics. Numerous invitations to give lectures at international conferences further attest to this. Dr Niemeyer places high value on student engagement, curriculum development and graduate supervision and she has provided significant contributions by way of service to the School and Faculty.

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LECTURER

Dr Daniel Franklin (Centre for Forensic Science)

Dr Franklin’s area of research is in the discipline of physical/forensic anthropology and bioarchaeology. Professional collaborations have allowed him to assimilate cutting edge morphometric technologies and their appropriate implementation into forensic investigation. This work has resulted in numerous peer reviewed publications in international journals. Dr Franklin has made a major contribution to the teaching activities of the Centre for Forensic Science and in his role as Director of Studies, has introduced new courses and units. He is actively engaged in professional societies and in representing the University to the public.

SENIOR LECTURER

Dr Tanya Dalziell (School of Social and Cultural Studies)

Dr Dalziell is developing a national and international reputation in the field of Australian literature and cinema, feminist studies, modernism and post colonialism. Her 2004 book Settler Romances and the Australian Girl won the Walter McCrae Russell Award. Dr Dalziell has developed a series of innovative undergraduate courses and coordinated the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences flagship community program, SmARTS. She has been involved in the secondary education sector as a member of the Tertiary Entrance Examination Committee and the Curriculum Council, as a marker of TEE English papers, and as UniLinks coordinator for Shenton College.

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A thriving student experience

Nik Barron
95th Guild President

At this University, as at many others, we talk a lot about the ‘student experience’, the loosely defined combination of staff/student interaction, course content and delivery, extra-curricular activities and student amenities that form an environment which helps students develop into educated, mature and thoughtful citizens.

UWA has enjoyed some considerable success on this front, especially in out-of-classroom, extra-curricular areas. The UWA Student Guild currently enjoys the highest rate of financial membership in the nation, outdoing many other campuses by double-digit margins. A robust system of student representation and engagement exists at the faculty level through faculty societies. We host a network of dozens of clubs and other student-initiated activities, groups and events. And perhaps most importantly, we have a mutually respectful and cooperative relationship between student representatives and University administrators.

But the metrics and measurements of this concept have been commented on plenty of times before. What makes a discussion of the student experience at UWA so relevant right now is how much it is poised to change in the space of just a few short years.

Recently, the final report of the Review of Course Structures steering group was released. It laid out a new framework for degrees at UWA which include a number of significant variations from the current system, including the movement of undergraduate professional degrees to the postgraduate level, the scaling back of undergraduate course offerings to five (or six, depending on how you count) ‘named’ degrees and a requirement that all undergraduate students do some form of community service during their time at UWA.

These changes present a wide range of challenges and opportunities to nearly everyone in the UWA community. For those involved in promoting the student experience, substantial changes will probably have to be made to adapt to this new framework.

A number of factors have to be considered. At this point, it is difficult to determine what services a new cohort of postgraduate coursework students will require from the Guild and the University, and whether we’re equipped to provide them. The combination of a broader undergraduate education and a postgraduate professional structure may dissolve a lot of the traditions and networks that have been built up at the faculty or disciplinary level. The fact that some students will have to study longer may turn some away from the idea of pursuing higher education further, or leave students who are already struggling financially in that situation for longer periods of time.

These are complex issues without easy solutions. Some will no doubt be tackled during the implementation phase of the Review’s recommendations. Others will likely be irresolvable until that process is actually complete.

It should also be noted that there are many opportunities to craft a new and better student experience within the proposed framework. The flipside of intra-disciplinary or intra-faculty camaraderie is factionalism and isolation. The introduction of a common, flexible undergraduate structure with broadening components could potentially compel much more interaction between students in different degrees who would have otherwise had very little to do with each other. Community service requirements will mean that a great many students will be granted an opportunity to get a new perspective on society that they would not have pursued of their own accord. And both the Guild and the University remain very committed to making sure that students should be able to study at UWA without regard to financial considerations.

Still, we cannot afford for questions about the student experience to be far from our minds over the next few years. Over the course of almost a century, UWA has managed to foster and shape a very vibrant, inclusive and active student culture. That environment is already under constant attack: students have less and less time to spend on campus as they grapple with an inadequate income support system and the demands of paid work. The very organisations designed to protect them, like the Guild, are undermined by external legislation such as the ‘voluntary student unionism’ laws. Preserving and growing the student experience under these circumstances would pose a real challenge in less tumultuous times. To do so whilst pursuing a major reorganisation of the entire University at the same time is another thing entirely.

I remain optimistic. One thing that has allowed this University to build the campus atmosphere that we now enjoy has been that everyone throughout the UWA community has understood and appreciated its importance. As long as we continue to do so, even as a million other things occupy our minds during this period of transition, I’m sure that the student experience will continue to thrive at UWA.