

2 - 5.30pm, Thursday 23 November

Scientia Education Academy: Sharing Knowledge, Practice, and Awards

Hosted by UNSW Scientia Education Academy

On campus: UNSW Teaching Commons, Dalton Building F12
Kensington Campus

Online: [MS Teams session](#)

[Register to the event](#)

Time	Topic	Presentation title	
2:00 - 2:05	Opening	Acknowledgement of Country & SEA Initiatives Overview Presenter: Prof. Patsie Polly	
2:05 - 3:00	Guest Speaker Presentation	First Year Transition for Diverse Equity-Bearing Cohorts Presenter: Prof. Sally Kift (introduced by Helen Gibbon)	Abstract
3:00 - 3:50	Group Presentation	Healthy Universities Initiative Presenters: Dr Leesa Sidhu, Prof. Gary Velan, Prof. Tini Mathies, Dr Jessica Macer-Wright, Dr Chris Maloney and Prof. Peter Heslin	Abstract
3:50 - 4:35	Round Table	AcademiUS SoTL review portal/TALIS Presenters: Prof. Isabella Dobrescu, Prof. Alberto Motta and Dr May Lim	Abstract
4:35 - 5:15	Awards Presentation	Exemplary Teaching Practice Awards Presenter: Prof. Peter Heslin	
5:15 - 5:20	Closing	Thank you and closing remarks Presenter: Prof. Patsie Polly	
5:30 - 6:30	Networking	Social Networking & Celebrations Thirsty Burger, UNSW Roundhouse	

Presentation Title **First Year Transition for Diverse Equity-Bearing Cohorts**

Presenter: Prof. Sally Kift

The July 2023 Universities Accord [Interim Report](#) sets out that, to meet Australia's future jobs and skills needs, the higher education (HE) sector will need to double in size to 1.8 million Commonwealth Supported Places (CSPs) by 2050. The Accord Panel goes on to point out that such expansive participation and attainment goals can only be met by 'growth for skills through equity' and raises the prospect of ambitious targets for equity-bearing students to reach population parity by 2035, with First Nations at HE's heart. In its 2025 Strategy, UNSW has similarly set a Gateway Equity target for itself of enrolling 25% of commencing domestic undergraduates from low-socioeconomic backgrounds and/or socio-educationally disadvantaged schools by 2027.

The mooted influx of equity-bearing students, in conjunction with the Government's newly imposed student support requirements, raise big questions about how we best provide inclusive learning, teaching and wrap-around support to diverse equity-bearing cohorts. This presentation will canvass the current HE landscape and then turn its attention to how learning and teaching needs to respond – if not transform – to deliver on this bold equity agenda. It will argue that high quality curriculum design that does not leave student success to chance, enacted under the auspices of [Transition Pedagogy](#) with whole-of-university intent via academic and professional staff working in partnership with students, is a particularly compelling and sustainable response.



Professor Sally Kift is a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (PFHEA), a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Law (FAAL) and President of the Australian Learning & Teaching Fellows (ALTF). She has held several university leadership positions, including as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at James Cook University. Sally is a national Teaching Award winner, a national Program Award winner and a national Senior Teaching Fellow on the First Year Experience. In 2010, she was appointed an Australian Discipline Scholar (Law). In 2017, Sally received an Australian University Career Achievement Award for her contribution to higher education.

Healthy Universities Initiative

Presenters: Dr Leesa Sidhu, Prof. Gary Velan, Prof. Tini Mathies, Dr Jessica Macer-Wright, Dr Chris Maloney and Prof. Peter Heslin

The Healthy Universities Initiative (HUI) session will provide practical examples of curricular and co-curricular approaches supporting student self-management, academic success and wellbeing.

HUI co-leads Dr Leesa Sidhu and Prof. Gary Velan will begin, with Leesa introducing HUI and discussing wellbeing-supportive curricular approaches used in a compulsory statistics course, and Gary highlighting Medicine & Health's Student Wellbeing Action Groups (SWAGs) which are partnerships between students and staff to support student wellbeing.

Prof. Christine Mathies who champions the UNSW Gateway Program will discuss support strategies for Gateway students.

Student Wellbeing EF Community of Practice (CoP) co-Leads, Dr Jess Macer-Wright and Dr Chris Maloney, will focus on the CoP's work in supporting student wellbeing.

Prof. Peter Heslin will introduce a PG course on employee wellbeing and provide a fresh perspective on student wellbeing.



Dr Leesa Sidhu is (Acting) Deputy Director of Education-Focussed Development, PVCSE Portfolio, and Deputy Head of School (Education) in the School of Science at UNSW Canberra. She has extensive experience in developing and lecturing Statistics courses for Science, Engineering, Business and Arts students, has won one national and numerous UNSW teaching awards, and has a strong interest in applying in-curricular wellbeing-supportive strategies.



Prof. Gary Velan is a national award-winning medical educator. He is Senior Vice Dean (Education) in UNSW Medicine & Health and formerly Co-Director of the UNSW Scientia Education Academy. Gary pioneered online formative assessments at UNSW and partners with students to establish and lead Student Wellbeing Action Groups (SWAGs).



Prof. Tini (Christine) Mathies is the Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs) in the UNSW Business School and Professor of Services Marketing with a passion for equitable access and success in higher education. She has turned 20+ years of teaching excellence and services research expertise into curriculum innovations that have won international awards. Together with Prof Stephen Doherty (ADA), she co-chairs the Gateway Equity Target Student Support Working Group.

Presenter bios continue next page

Healthy Universities Initiative (cont.)

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Dr Jessica Macer-Wright is a lecturer, and EF academic in the School of Clinical Medicine on Birpai Country at the Rural Clinical Campus Port Macquarie. She is the Academic Co-Lead of the Student Wellbeing Community of Practice and has 6 years of experience in enhancing teaching and learning in biomedical sciences and medicine. The focus of Jess' work is in supporting holistic student wellbeing, and creating inclusive and supportive environments for diverse students. She is passionate about building supportive and inclusive communities centred around belonging and wellbeing.



Dr Chris Maloney is an EF Co lead of the Student Wellbeing Community of Practice and Lead Student Support School of Health Sciences. Chris has 12 experience as convenor lecturer and tutor for two courses, teaching communication and research skills to Exercise Physiologists. Chris has two school awards for Enhancing Student Experience 2012, 2022 and Faculty Award for Teaching excellence 2021. Chris is passionate about building communities to support both staff and students enhancing their wellbeing.



Prof. Peter Heslin is a UNSW Scientia Education Fellow who pioneered the study of mindsets in organisations. Formally a consultant at KPMG Australia, Peter created and has published extensively on the concept of being "in learning mode" to enable experiential leadership development and career success. Peter recently developed the UNSW online course on Employee Wellbeing and Engagement.

AcademiUS SoTL review portal/TALIS

Presenter: Prof. Isabella Dobrescu, Prof. Alberto Motta and Dr May Lim

We've all experienced it: the thrill of exploring our colleagues' educational innovations. It's truly inspiring. But what's their secret? How did they gather such compelling evidence of student impact, enough to secure publication not only in specialized educational journals but also in widely-read general interest ones?

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Prof. Isabella Dobrescu, a Professor of Economics at UNSW Sydney, specializes in labor, public finance, health, and applied econometrics. Her work includes studying consumption, saving dynamics, risk-taking, and cognition through nonparametric partial identification methods. Recently, she's been focusing on using theory, empirical analysis, and randomised trials to enhance educational outcomes with technology. Isabella is the Deputy Head of the School of Economics, co-chair of STEP UP in Education, a CEPAR Associate Investigator, and editor of JPEF.



Prof. Alberto Motta, an Economics Professor at UNSW Sydney, specializes in contract theory, development economics, and labor. His research focuses on effective organizational designs in firms, enforcement agencies, and media. Recently, he's leveraging theory, empirical analysis, and randomised trials to enhance educational outcomes through technology. Additionally, Alberto is a Deputy Director Research of UNSW's Scientia Education Academy and co-chair of the STEP UP initiative in Education.



Dr May Lim is a Senior Lecturer at the School of Chemical Engineering. Her teaching interest are in methods that enable engineering students to gain mastery and transcend their discipline through project-based learning and industry relevant learning.