

Postgraduate Research Bulletin



www.alpn.edu.au

May 2007

Contents

- 1 What is ALPN?
- 2 ALPN Conference
- 3 Videoconferencing:
supporting postgraduate
supervision in law
Supervisor Profile
- 4 PhD – Piled Higher and
Deeper
Student Profile



in association with



What is ALPN?

It is my great pleasure to introduce you to the Australian Law Postgraduate Network (ALPN). The ALPN is a national network established under a Carrick Institute Leadership grant. The ALPN seeks to facilitate collaboration and leadership amongst Australia's 29 Law Schools in supporting higher degree research students in law and related disciplines. The ALPN has the support of the Council of Australian Law Deans, which also acts as a reference group.

Our aim is to provide supervisory training, multiple qualified expert supervisors, methodological and statistical support for law higher degree research students, and the promotion of modern collaborative supervisory strategies across Law Schools.

In the coming weeks we will begin unveiling various initiatives to meet our aims and help students and their supervisors achieve successful outcomes in higher degree research and supervision.

This publication is the first edition of a quarterly electronic bulletin designed to keep you informed as to progress on the ALPN project and the services available to support supervisors and higher degree candidates.

The ALPN postgraduate supervision website is now active and may be viewed at www.alpn.edu.au. This website contains a searchable database of supervisor details to assist postgraduate law students in accessing cross-institutional support, help potential students identify potential supervisors, assist students, supervisors and researchers in building collaborative networks. The website will be expanded to include a comprehensive list of grants and scholarships available to higher degree research students, a list of visiting international scholars and a series of working papers relevant to higher degree research. Next year the site will be expanded to create an interactive supervision website.

The inaugural ALPN conference for students and supervisors will take place on the 16th

and 17th of September this year, at the Aanuka Beach Resort in Coffs Harbour. The conference theme is "Collaboration and Creativity", emphasising the new directions in legal postgraduate research and supervision, and the networking opportunities that we provide for students and supervisors alike. The conference will enable postgraduate law students from Australasia to attend workshops on postgraduate study, as well as present their research in paper and poster format. Papers will be double blind refereed for DEST point purposes. In conjunction with this, we will also be holding advanced training seminars for legal postgraduate supervisors. The costs of the conference have purposely been kept as low as possible to enable law schools to send students and staff.

In the coming month the ALPN will be conducting several national surveys into the law postgraduate experience. Initial surveys will be directed to current higher degree research students and supervisors. These surveys are designed to unravel the supervision experience from multiple perspectives to help inform the debate as to how best to advance higher degree research and supervision in Australia.

The ALPN team looks forward to helping students and supervisors make the higher degree research experience both rewarding and satisfying for all involved.

Stephen Colbran

Acting DVC (Academic Planning and Renewal)
ALPN Project Leader





Coffs Harbour - September 16 & 17

alpn07

Collaboration and Creativity



The Australian Law Postgraduate Network, sponsored by the Carrick Institute, is proud to host *Collaboration and Creativity* – the Inaugural Australasian Postgraduate Law Research and Supervision Conference at the Anuka Beach Resort in Coffs Harbour, September 16-17, 2007.

The conference will provide opportunities for both higher degree research students and supervisors in law and law related fields. The following sessions are planned:

- ❖ Instruction and master classes in higher degree supervision
- ❖ Postgraduate student workshops in research, methodology and thesis writing
- ❖ Poster sessions for postgraduate student research
- ❖ Refereed paper presentations in special topic forums for postgraduate research students. Papers will be double blind peer reviewed and will attract DEST points
- ❖ Panel session examining trends in legal research
- ❖ Keynote speakers

Prizes will be awarded to postgraduate students for the best refereed paper and poster presented at the conference.

For more information, or to register, log on to
<http://www.alpn.edu.au/conference>

In proud association with



Australian Law Postgraduate Network

Support for this conference has been provided by The Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education Ltd, an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training. The views expressed at this conference do not necessarily reflect the views of The Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education.

Images copyright Coffs Coast Marketing

Videoconferencing: supporting postgraduate supervision in law

The introduction of high bandwidth Internet videoconferencing enables broadcast quality video and audio so universities now have the opportunity via their academic research network (AARNet) to take advantage of videoconferencing to extend its use in teaching and learning. In addition to regular music master classes, academic skills sessions, tutorials and interactive teaching events, which have been regularly trialled at UNE and elsewhere, institutions are experimenting with multi-point links, streaming, and videoconferencing support for innovative connectivity across a range of purposes from administration to research using access grid technology and in media development such as in games engines and simulations.

We know that a rich media environment where students and staff see and hear each other in real time makes distance students learn more effectively and therefore that videoconferencing holds great potential as a technology to enhance learning and teaching. Experience tells us that students find videoconferencing tutorials in many disciplines, academic skills sessions and face-to-face lessons very rewarding.

Students also report increased feelings of connectedness to the institution and its staff and therefore higher levels of motivation and perseverance tend to follow. For some students, videoconferencing enables them to have regular personalised contact with the university and to work collaboratively in ways that were not possible before this Internet based technology. In particular, the technology has great potential to support postgraduate students and a major research project trialling the scalability of videoconferencing between the UNE and individual students will be completed in 2007. In this project,

we hope to link doctoral students and their supervisors and to have them use videoconferencing from home or work to engage in regular supervision meetings.

The improvements in mobile and videoconferencing technology mean that universities will soon link to students from their homes or workplaces using webcam or 3G/NextG mobile networks. Lecturers' and students' discussions could also be stored and streamed for later use, making it possible for discussions to be revisited, shared and, in some circumstances, for more students to access richer learning experiences, albeit asynchronously.

In the near future videoconferencing to link students to staff and to each other in order to enhance their learning will become commonplace.

Dr Robyn Smyth is a researcher of videoconferencing and works in the Teaching and Learning Centre at University of New England. She can be contacted by email: rsmyth@une.edu.au.

Supervisor Profile

Name: Professor Michael Gillooly

University: University of Notre Dame
Australia

Years of supervisory experience:
Ten years

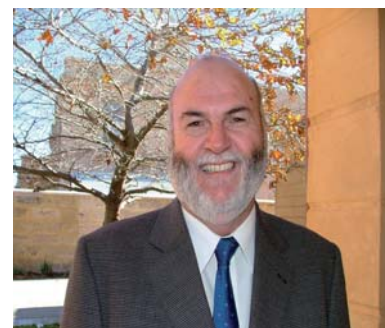
What areas of research do you specialise in? Defamation

What has been a highlight of being a supervisor? Working with talented and dedicated students

What attracts you to being a supervisor? Assisting in the creation of new knowledge

What are the challenges of being a supervisor? Finding the time to devote to supervision

Do you have any advice for new postgraduate law students? Time spent in thoroughly preparing the research proposal is never wasted



Submissions for the ALPN Postgraduate Bulletin

If you would like your profile to appear in the next issue of the Postgraduate Research Bulletin, or if you have any interesting articles about postgraduate research in law, please forward them to The Editor, at bulletin@alpn.edu.au.

List of Research Topics and Supervisors

Are you a postgraduate supervisor with a great research topic in mind, looking for a student to conduct the research? If so, look no further. ALPN is constructing a searchable online database of possible research topics for Masters and Doctoral

research projects, linked to supervisors and institutions, and where possible, certain funding opportunities. If you have any such research opportunities at your institution, or would just like to record an interest in certain topic supervision, please contact ALPN with your details and topic interest for inclusion in the database, at alpn@alpn.edu.au.

PhD – or Piled Higher and Deeper by Jorge Cham

Finding amusement in the trials and tribulations of postgraduate study

YOUR THESIS TITLE CONDENSING OVER HALF A DECADE OF YOUR LIFE IN ONE SENTENCE. www.phdcomics.com
JORGE CHAM © 2006

the colon
Can't decide what to title your thesis? Use a colon!

a preposition
A good preposition tells your readers "hey, this is not just a futile exercise"

"Witty catchphrase" : **Length-enhanced superlative verbiage with prolixity** **in/of/for** **Obscure topic few people care about.**

witty catchphrase
Makes people think you're hip and culturally relevant. Only marginally related to the actual thesis? No problem.

the boring stuff
Nothing says "academic rigor" like a long string of dry scientific-sounding terminology and fancy buzzwords.

obscure topic few people care about
Sad, but true.

Student Profile

Name: Nicola Durrant

University:

School of Law, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane.

Degree:

Doctor of Philosophy (Law) – full-time.

Supervisors:

Principal Supervisor - Professor Douglas Fisher, MA, LLB, PhD (Edin) Professor of Law, Faculty of Law, Queensland University of Technology

Associate Supervisor – Dr Peter Grace Professor of Global Change, Institute for Sustainable Resources Queensland University of Technology

What area are you examining in your research?

My transdisciplinary research is focused on climate change law in the international arena and in the European Union, Australia and India. In particular, my research is focused on the development of a global carbon market and seeks to establish a multinational legal framework for the implementation of transferable market instruments under the climate change regime.

What attracted you to postgraduate study?

Prior to my postgraduate study, I was working full-time as an environmental lawyer in a top tier corporate law firm in Sydney. The PhD provided me with the opportunity to complete a ground breaking and intellectually challenging research project in an emerging and novel area of environmental law. Not only is the in-depth research constantly exhilarating but the PhD will open up a range of career options which would otherwise not have been available to me.

Best part of being a postgraduate student?

The autonomy of a PhD is phenomenal. The hours that I work are flexible and can be altered depending on my mood and my research tasks are dictated solely by my own research interests. The fact that PhD research can be supported by tax exempt scholarships and research grants is also a huge bonus to being a full-time PhD student.

Challenges of being a postgraduate student?

Being your own boss requires a great deal of self-discipline and good time management. Unlike corporate law practice, where

individual tasks are allocated and completed the PhD research is seemingly endless and somehow the research and drafting has to be steadily completed over the three years. That can sometimes make it difficult to tell whether or not you are making good progress.

Advice for anyone considering postgraduate study in law?

Go for it! It is an inherently satisfying and rewarding way to enhance your legal qualifications.



Contact

Australian Law Postgraduate Network
c/- School of Law
University of New England
Armidale NSW 2351
Australia

Phone: 61 02 6773 3493

Fax: 61 02 6773 3602

Email: alpn@alpn.edu.au

Website: <http://www.alpn.edu.au>