INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON
TEACHING AND LEARNING
IN HIGHER EDUCATION

NAIRTL CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS NOVEMBER 2007

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FOREWORD

This publication is a record of the papers and posters presented at the Annual Conference of the National Academy for the Integration of Research & Teaching & Learning. The conference, entitled *International Perspectives of Teaching & Learning in Higher Education*, aimed to focus discussion not only on developments in the Irish higher education scene with respect to teaching and learning but to engage with the international communities and to consider the challenges that meet the teacher today in tertiary education.

The National Academy for the Integration of Research & Teaching & Learning was established in May 2007, following a successful proposal for funding made to the Higher Education Authority as part of the Strategic Innovation Fund Cycle 1. The Academy is led by a partnership of five of the Irish third level institutions: Cork Institute of Technology, National University of Ireland Galway, Trinity College Dublin, Waterford Institute of Technology and University College Cork (lead partner). The five institutions are collaborating to deliver on the aims and objectives of the National Academy. The primary aims of the Academy are to provide a forum for discussion of the multi-faceted issues facing tertiary level teachers in today’s higher education institutions in Ireland and to provide leadership in the development of supports for academic staff in their pursuit of the scholarship of teaching and learning, based on good and excellent international practices.

The Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB) collaborated with the National Academy in the organisation and sponsorship of this conference. The IUQB organises a number of sectoral type projects and one of these currently includes a project on quality improvement in teaching and learning. A significant amount of work including the holding of workshops in all Irish universities and the holding of a national conference had already taken place, coordinated by the IUQB in collaboration with the seven Irish universities. An Interim Report on the outcomes of the project was launched at this conference and the paper presented on the Report makes very interesting reading. The drive for quality improvement in the understanding of teaching and learning is coming from many different stakeholders and the support for the developments is growing all the time.

The conference brought together experts from the UK, from North America and from Europe and the following papers detail the content of their presentations to the delegates. Lively discussions and interactive question and answer sessions followed each presentation, all of which can be viewed as podcasts on the National Academy web site (http://www.nairtl.ie). Time was allowed for consideration of the posters presented on many aspects of the scholarship of teaching and learning and these posters are also published here in these proceedings of the conference.

The conference was attended by both academic staff and students from institutions all over Ireland and from many overseas institutions also. Much of the discussions focussed on the overt and hidden links to research in our teaching and approaches to introduction of the concepts of research at all levels of the undergraduate experience. Many innovative examples of how this might be achieved across many disciplines and the importance of this approach were presented and discussed. There was unanimity among the delegates that this approach, including interrogation by teachers of their own experiences and practices, is the way forward in a modern third level curriculum. Reflection on the experiences of teaching in one’s disciplinary area and on how the learning experience can be improved was deemed to be a cornerstone for the development of good practice in teaching and learning.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
This publication is the outcome of the Annual Conference of the National Academy for the Integration of Research & Teaching & Learning (NAIRTL), entitled *International Perspectives on Teaching & Learning in Higher Education*, held in University College Cork in November 2007. The conference was organised by NAIRTL and focussed on national and international developments in teaching and learning in higher education.

Particular thanks must go to Professor Áine Hyland for her leadership in the development of the support for teaching and learning in UCC over the past number of years and whose work led to the development of the proposal for the establishment of NAIRTL. The models of support identified and put into practice here in UCC under Áine’s leadership have been recognised both in Ireland and internationally. Áine was invaluable for her support of this conference *inter alia* and I am very appreciative of everything she has done in this regard.

I am very grateful to the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB) for their engagement with the conference and for their financial support. IUQB are coordinating a national project on improving quality in teaching and learning and the conference was used as an opportunity to launch their Interim Report on the outcomes of this project. Professor Áine Hyland led the work on the project and drafted the Interim Report which was presented at the conference and the IUQB wishes to express its acknowledgement and appreciation for all her efforts on their behalf.

The International Advisory Board, established to guide the National Academy in its policies and activities, held its inaugural meeting immediately prior to the conference and I wish to express my gratitude to all members for their support, their willingness to become involved and their engagement with the Academy. The establishment of any national entity is a major undertaking and the input of such an eminent group of internationally distinguished experts in the field is very much appreciated by all the partners involved in the National Academy.

A very big thank you to all those who prepared and presented posters which were considered and discussed at the conference. The topics for the posters were all focussed on some aspect of teaching and learning and many focussed on the *Teaching for Understanding* approach referred to in a number of the papers presented at the plenary sessions. The posters acted as a focus for discussion at the breaks and indeed in the plenary session as well and greatly enhanced the quality of the event. It was wonderful to see so much engagement by so many from so many higher education institutions.

On behalf of all those who attended at the conference I wish to thank all the speakers and poster presenters. The ideas put forward and the discussions encouraged formed a central focus for the two days and ensured that all went home brimming with new ideas and concepts. I thank them all for their efforts and willingness to share their ideas and opinions with us.

To Lucette Murray, our conference organiser, and to Jennifer Murphy, Project Manager, NAIRTL, I wish to say how much the professionalism of both and the efficiency with which they cooperated and ensured the smooth and seamless running of the conference meant to Áine Hyland and myself, and of course to all the delegates at the conference who benefited from the excellence of their organisation of the event. Their support was invaluable from the beginning to the end.
And finally we must not forget our sponsors. NAIRTL is a new adventure for us here in Ireland and I am very grateful to the Higher Education Authority for funding received under the Strategic Innovation Fund Cycle 1, funded under the National Development Plan 2006 – 2013, which enabled the launch of the National Academy in 2007 and facilitated all the activities that have taken place to date, and, in particular, this conference.

Dr Norma Ryan
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INTRODUCTION

Dr Michael Murphy, President, University College Cork

Dear Lord Mayor, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. It is for me a great pleasure to add a few words of welcome to the second conference of the National Academy for Integration of Research and Teaching and Learning (NAIRTL).

There are, I understand, more than 200 delegates registered for the conference from all parts of Ireland, and I believe, this is not alphabetical, but includes Athlone, Dublin, Dun Laoghaire, Carlow, Sligo, Limerick, Belfast and Waterford and so on. Equally important, and perhaps ethnically more important, can I say a special Céad Mile Fáilte, a hundred thousand welcomes, to those who have travelled from the UK, France, Hungary and from various parts of the United States, because very clearly we have many representatives of higher education institutes and educational organisations, and it is a terrific opportunity to exchange ideas and to debate all that is happening in the world of teaching and learning and its integration with research.

NAIRTL, for those who may not know of it, was founded earlier this year in May. It is a collaborative project funded by the Irish government under a programme called the Strategic Innovation Fund to support higher education. The project is led by UCC but it involves very important partners, locally the Institute of Technology here in Cork, National University of Ireland Galway, Trinity College Dublin and Waterford Institute of Technology. These are the partners in the Academy. It is designed, as most of you will know, to support graduate students, researchers and academic staff generally in advancing more effective research-informed teaching and learning practices.

On this occasion there is joint sponsorship with the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB), making it a promising event for professional educators. I would like to express my thanks to them for their sponsorship.

Looking through the programme, there is clearly a dominance of professional educators among the speakers but there is a very welcome contribution from the student sector and that is a perspective which must inform what we are about. There will be publications emerging and videos, and I understand that very prestigious websites across Europe, the United States and Australia have signalled that this conference is taking place so. We are nowadays in the business of thinking globally while acting locally, I am glad to see that that slogan is being met here as well.

NAIRTL has already done some important things. For example it has distributed Dr Declan Kennedy’s book on Learning Outcomes to more than 6000 professionals nationally and internationally and I welcome that initiative and also of course I am proud of the UCC connection, our contribution therein. It underlines our commitment to a student-centered approach, and the achievement of the desired learning outcomes for learners. Declan’s book has been found very helpful by teachers who are committed to the implementation of the Bologna objectives for European higher education.

So, I have said a few words, and few they are, I hope. Can I wish that you enjoy the conference, that you enjoy the social programme, and as an avid conference-goer myself in my past life, can I wish you the usual happy experiences during coffee breaks and tea-breaks where in fact the most valuable discourse often takes place. So enjoy your visit to UCC, and to the conference, enjoy your visit to Cork. Go raibh mile maith agaibh.
Councillor Donal Counihan, Lord Mayor of Cork

I am very happy indeed and honoured to have been invited along here to open your conference and express the wish that you will have a very pleasant and interactive time here at this National Academy for the Integration of Research and Teaching and Learning, which I gather is a first for the country, and it is delightful to me that UCC is the lead partner, along with CIT, NUIG, TCD and WIT.

I am very happy on this occasion to welcome those from abroad, particularly from the United States and Europe. I know that the objectives of the National Academy are to enhance the scholarship of teaching and learning and to integrate it with, as I understand, a two-way process with the linking of research and teaching.

So through the Academy we will see expansion of professional development programmes in teaching and learning, across the third and fourth level sectors of education. So with even fewer words than the President, I am delighted and honoured to welcome you to Cork and to wish those who are visiting us from abroad a very pleasant time.

You are in Cork. They say that there are only two kinds of people, those that are native born Cork people like myself, and those who wish that they were from Cork. So I hope that your turn will come to wish to be from Cork and that you will enjoy your time here. I am very delighted and honoured to be able to welcome you here. Thank you.
It is a great honour and a pleasure for me to be here to present this report on behalf of the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB). It was, of course, a joint effort. There are seven universities in the Republic of Ireland. I will briefly discuss how we approached working on producing this report, something that we worked on over a period of time with our colleagues in the other universities.

To set the scene, I will briefly consider what the Irish Universities Quality Board is. The Board was established in 2002 and performs the following core activities in relation to quality assurance in the Irish university sector:

- the conduct of regular external reviews of Irish universities establishing good practice and publishing national guidelines
- Applying agreed European standards and guidelines
- Co-operating with national and international organisations
- Disseminating information to stakeholders.

As part of the IUQB’s sectoral quality improvement proposal to the Higher Education Authority (HEA) under the Strategic Initiatives Fund, one of the initiatives funded under the Strategic Initiatives Fund was a sectoral initiative on quality improvement in teaching and learning. The funding body in Ireland for the university sector is known as the HEA, and over the last five or six years there have been various individual initiatives funded by them. This is very useful because it would be very difficult for universities to find money for this out of the core funding. Core funding is usually earmarked well in advance and the availability of various types of strategic initiatives funding which this small project was funded from and the major Strategic Innovation Fund, which the National Academy for the Integration of Research & Teaching & Learning has been funded from, have been very important.

The terms of reference of the IUQB study on quality improvement in teaching and learning, included that, in the context of quality improvement recommendations and peer review group reports, and taking account of international practice, this measure is a process to
examine developments in universities aimed at improving teaching and learning and to explore possibilities for inter-university co-operation in developing best practice.

We were very well placed here to draw on the international practice on both sides of the Atlantic, and here with us today we have a number of people from the United States, and we are delighted to welcome them all. They include members of the Carnegie CASTL Graduate Education Network, a network of universities which University College Cork co-ordinates, and we are learning much from our involvement with the CASTL and other networks.

We are also very fortunate to have Professor Jean Brihault, who is a member of the EUA institutional evaluation group and a former rector, whom many of you will know from the University of Rennes 2 in Brittany, and a good friend of UCC.

We also have with us a number of people from the United Kingdom, and I would particularly like to welcome Professor Mick Healey who has been most helpful to us. We have learned so much from Mick here in UCC, and I will be drawing from his work and that of others, including that of Professor Andrea Nolan from Scotland, in examining international practice.

I am not going to re-iterate the issues of the Bologna Declaration. We have had many discussions on these before, but I would like to remind you that, as a university within the EU, Ireland has signed up to the Bologna and subsequent declarations and that has implications for us particularly in the area of teaching and learning. Issues such as international mobility of students and staff, student participation, centrality of student involvement and participation in university government, social cohesion and life-long learning all form the foci of the Bologna Declaration. The tendency is to move away from the old elitist model of university education towards mass education, and a more inclusive system of university education which UCC is very proud to be part of, and has as part of our core philosophy.

And so, we are being asked to focus on the kinds of emphases coming from the Bologna agreement, and other influences. We will see later on that in our work with the various universities, these issues are also coming up from the ground from students and from staff. Student-centred learning, delivered in a new way nowadays through the redefinition of courses and syllabi in terms of learning outcomes, is a primary focus for us, and Dr. Declan Kennedy’s work in support of this aim has been extremely valuable.
Looking across the Atlantic, approximately ten years ago, one of the things which was an “a-ha!” moment for me was when I first read Ernest Boyer’s work and his re-conceptualisation of our role as academics in universities. I found the phrase that we should “break out of the tired old teaching versus research base”, very helpful, as well as his setting out the four forms of scholarship in the academy: the scholarship of discovery, the scholarship of integration, the scholarship of application and the scholarship of teaching.

Looking at teaching as a form of scholarship resonated very strongly with many of us who had a strong commitment to our mission and our vocation as teacher within the university and yet realised that there was a history and a tradition of emphasizing perhaps research rather more than teaching. I do not have to discuss the scholarship of teaching but it is worth looking at in the context of the National Academy. We have had a very good discussion, helped and injected into by the International Advisory Board, on the integration of the experience of teaching with the scholarship of research, and that is quite a broad definition. It is the ongoing and cumulative intellectual enquiry through systematic observations and ongoing investigation by faculty into the nature of learning and the impact of teaching upon it.

But of course in a university like this and like most of our Irish universities, which have a very wide range of disciplines, it also had a very specific meaning in my view in terms of disciplinary-led teaching as well. Ernest Boyer’s (1997) statement is: “Education is a seamless web”, and if we are to have centres of excellence in research, we must have excellence in the classroom. It is the scholarship of teaching that keeps the overall flame of scholarship alive, and as Professor Mick Healey said this morning, perhaps we should not use the word research, simply because “scholarship” is the key word that engages all of us and unifies us all. This is a quote from an extract of Professor Healey’s work: “Research and teaching are essential and intertwined characteristics of a university”.

It is becoming clearer that those students who are not learning in a higher education environment that is informed by research and in which it is not possible to access research-related resources are at a disadvantage compared to those who are. Developments in some other countries which are identifying separately research universities and teaching universities are not developments I personally would be happy to see here in Ireland.

In a very recent statement from the Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education in England, it was said: “We want all students to access the benefits of exposure to teaching informed by research that that can bring. We are doing this because we believe that an understanding of the research process, asking the right questions in the right way, conducting experiments and collating and evaluating information must be a key part of any undergraduate curriculum”.

I think it is so important that we do not associate research and research-led teaching only with graduate education, but that we recognise that research is also very important in the
undergraduate curriculum and experience. There may be a danger of forgetting that, and it seems to me that we should guard against this because to me these are the distinctive features of higher education as opposed to education before that.

We must consider what we are trying to develop. Critical understanding, informed by current developments in the subject, is absolutely essential. We have discussed graduate education in former Soviet Union countries, and the fundamental differences in these countries with regard to how much enquiry do countries which were not egalitarian countries engage in? What were the fundamental differences? Do such countries wish for real enquiry? These are big questions for all of us individually, not just states and countries, but we must be sure that we are encouraging our students to ask the hard questions, even when those questions fundamentally rock what we believe in.

One of the things I sometimes have difficulty with is the very old Platonic, Socratic notions of Truth, Beauty and Wisdom, because capital T’s for those coming from a Catholic country means one Truth, and of course the whole notion to me of higher education is that there is not just one truth, there are so many truths. It is all about questioning and I think research-led teaching leads us to develop this questioning and the habit of critical enquiry in our students. The big challenge of course, as we write learning outcomes, is to make sure we do not predefine the outcomes in such a way that we inadvertently deaden that spirit of enquiry.

I will now discuss the IUQB report on teaching and learning which you have before you and I would like to pay tribute and thank Dr Padraig Walsh and particularly Dr Teresa Lee, of IUQB, for putting it together. I carried out some of the background work in collaboration with a number of colleagues from the other universities who are recognised and named in the report and I brought it to a semi-finished state. Teresa very kindly put it together and finished it over the last few weeks when I was not available.

So basically the kind of issues we examined included, first of all, the EUA review of Irish universities in 2005. This comprised both institutional and national reviews and consisted of a major review of the Irish university sector in 2005. The kind of issues that were highlighted by the EUA, including the need to emphasise student learning and to encourage self-directed learning, formed a focus for us for subsequent actions. We were strong on the tradition of teaching but perhaps not strong enough on the concept of student learning. That refocusing was very important and is of course at the centre of a learning outcomes approach.

There is a need to address interdisciplinary learning. We have had a lot of discussions within the universities about that issue and the fact that, in theory we encourage it, but in practice our structures very often strongly discourage interdisciplinary learning. That would be much more true in Ireland, for example, than it would be in the US, and possibly truer here than in other parts of Europe. We have a long tradition of disciplinary learning and while of course

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Generic Skills and attributes appropriate for undergraduates (Scottish QAA)

- An understanding of the need for a high level of professional conduct.
- Familiarity with advanced techniques and skills.
- Originality and creativity in formulating, evaluating and applying evidence-based solutions and arguments.
- An ability to apply a systematic and critical assessment of complex problems and issues.
- Critical understanding, informed by current developments in the subject.
- An awareness of the provisional nature of knowledge, how knowledge is created, advanced and renewed, and the excitement of changing knowledge.
- The ability to identify and analyse problems and issues and to formulate, evaluate and apply evidence-based solutions and arguments.
one needs the foundations of the disciplines, there is a point at which inter-disciplinary learning is not just useful but where the new knowledge will probably come from.

The EUA also felt that there was a limited level of student involvement in teaching evaluations. This was reflected in this quotation from the EUA report: “the EUA teams were unanimously surprised that students have almost no formal input into monitoring or evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in Irish universities”.

To our US colleagues it would be very surprising that we have not had a systematic tradition of asking our students’ views about courses and teaching. Only since the quality reviews have come in, in the last six or seven years, has that become part of the routine, but it is still not an annual routine, but happens primarily when preparation for the quality reviews are being undertaken.

There was some criticism in the EUA Review Report of an over-traditional reliance on the lecture format, although a recognition was made that this was beginning to change. Issues of modularisation were raised – not just modularising our course, which again is a relatively new concept here – but making the best use of the flexibility that modularisation makes available, and perhaps in our universities we have not fully addressed that issue.

Using the European Credit Transfer System, the ECTS, sixty credits per annum is a year of student work – a European Higher Education year. There should be a relationship between student learning hours and ECTS. Sometimes this is not coherent or consistent. There are issues associated with modularisation and the whole question of teaching and learning support which, thanks to the HEA’s strategic funding, has developed in all of our higher education institutions but has not perhaps yet met the needs of all staff within the universities.

Then we held a series of workshops and focus groups of students in all of our universities. I was very impressed by the sophistication of the student comments. The students referred to the fact that the assessment and examination system has sometimes not kept pace with curricular and pedagogical developments. This is something we all have to be conscious of. If we make changes to our curriculum, we really should ensure that our assessment and examinations are congruent with the curriculum aims and objectives or learning outcomes. So there can be a lack of congruence there and it is something that students notice.

Assessment criteria are not always transparent and that was very true in the old Irish university system. I always make the distinction as to whether you think of your assessment in your examinations as hurdles and obstacle races, or do you think of them as opportunities for the students to demonstrate what they know and understand? I certainly make no apologies for falling into the latter category but there has been a long tradition of seeing them as hurdles and obstacle races. Additionally there is sometimes a disjuncture between lectures and the support tutorials. In the past there has been a lack of training of tutors and clearly then if there is that disjuncture, particularly in the arts and humanities areas, where a lot of the tutorials are led and facilitated by graduate students, we need to ensure the appropriate supports are put in place.

Since the publication of the EUA report some of these issues have to some extent been addressed but we still have a long way to go. We had some very good discussions with our US colleagues in this regard where they are a long way ahead of us there.
There is a need for balance between taught delivery and independent learning on the part of students. I like that because we, probably when we were beginning to change in line with the requests of the European and particularly the Bologna agendas, put more emphasis on student learning. The students welcome this, but request we do not put all the emphasis on student learning, and that they need some elements of taught delivery and that we need to get the balance right. Like so many other things, it is all a question of balance.

Introducing very dramatically different methods of teaching and learning such as problem-based learning and task-based learning is something that has sometimes been introduced without adequate staff training and this is something we all do need to be aware of. These are quite different forms of teaching and learning and we need to think very carefully how we are introducing them and where the content is coming from and so on. We do not wish the students to reinvent every wheel or we will end up with lots and lots of square wheels and all the difficulties that go with that!

We must recognise that there is a lack of both time and opportunity for staff to develop teaching skills. The rapid developments in the whole area of e-learning and blended learning generate a need to ensure that our staff are kept in touch in that regard.

With regard to our students, there is a need for them to have clear information about all aspects of their course before starting the course. This concept is very obvious and very simple, but sometimes we do not always deliver on this. We need adequate feedback systems and mechanisms to take account of student concerns. Standardised workloads for modules need to be recognised and put in place. There is a lot of repetition here, because the issues raised by the EUA, the issues raised by quality reviews, and the issues raised individual student workshops and staff workshops are all coming up with very similar points.

Assessment should be fit for purpose and should be evenly spaced throughout the academic year. Resources should not be a privilege – they should be a right.

I think a good thing was that the staff workshops and focus groups highlighted very similar issues, so you did not get a ‘them and us’ kind of an approach. The staff agreed that students should be treated as full partners, as Bologna requires, and that we should have mechanisms to make sure we are hearing and listening to them and responding to what they say. We should perhaps work a bit more with students on generic skills such as evaluating their own learning, recognising their strengths as learners, helping them to identify their learning and not spoon-feeding them as much as we did.

With respect to teaching approaches, this is the same issue of making sure that there is a congruence between the aims of the syllabus and the methodologies and the assessment. Obviously there is a need for diversity of learning approaches. This cannot be said strongly enough, and particularly in a higher education university environment, there is a need to recognise the different disciplinary approaches that are appropriate in the different disciplines, while at the same time recognising the strength of sharing expertise. In relation to generic skills, we have had a lot of debate in this country about generic skills and this also applies to graduate studies. There is a general agreement across our academic staff that, within undergraduate education in particular, generic skills should be embedded rather than taught as separate units.
Thus it is clear we need to focus on helping students to develop the skills to become lifelong learners. We need to see research as part of teaching and teaching as an expression of research activity. This is the key issue that the National Academy is focusing on. The need for universities to recognize teaching on a par with research with all that that entails, so that there is recognition in terms of appointments, in terms of promotion, in terms of awards between those who focus more on research and those who focus more on teaching.

Credit-based systems for staff development have begun to be introduced in our higher education institutions. Arising out of all of this, we need to consider what kind of suggestions we should be making in regard to quality improvement in teaching and learning.

Students should be seen as full partners in the decisions made in relation to teaching and learning. That is something that perhaps we have not thought very much about until now. Our centers of teaching and learning should ask how can we have a good student input into these decisions. Student evaluation of teaching should be regular and systematic and the concerns of students acted upon.

Bologna and subsequent agreements should be implemented and we should be proactive in doing so. Even in the last three years the EUA Trends V document highlighted the extent to which there has been huge movement across Europe in implementing the Bologna Declaration.

A variety of teaching approaches should be recognized and supported. There is no one size that fits all approach to teaching and learning. This is, perhaps, a very obvious sentence but there were concerns, when we started working here on setting up a centre for supporting teaching and learning and a team to support teaching and learning. There was a lot of suspicion and concern that there would be a group of experts who would tell everybody what to do, and that there is only one right way to teach. Even though someone has had a great relationship with their students over the last twenty years, there was a fear that s/he would be told ‘that was the wrong way to do it and you have to do it the right way’.

I think it was very important that those of us who were involved and continue to be involved in the teaching and learning support effort have huge respect for our colleagues and what they have done, no matter how unusual or how different, and learn from what works for different people in different disciplinary areas and so on.

Support for teaching and learning obviously should take account of diversity of students and of student learning. The issues of diversity are a strand within the project led by the Centre for the Integration of Research and Teaching and Learning which is based in the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and I think we also have to consider that. What suits a learner? I do not like the question because I am very committed to the concept that different people learn differently, the concept of multiple intelligences, etc.. However, most people would see very clearly that what might necessarily suit a school leaver might not at all suit a mature student learning through a distance learning approach, although again, our experience would be that the strengths of teaching and learning cross all kinds of boundaries.

Using the expertise of academic staff from different disciplines has been hugely enriching for us. Academics from the Medical School, and academics from the College of Science working with teachers from the arts, humanities, social science, commerce, legal education, etc. is a very, very enriching experience.
Courses and support structures within universities and higher education should emphasize the link between research and teaching and ensure that there is no disjuncture between them, and very happily I think, in the last couple of years, and increasingly in the restructuring of the universities, we are seeing a post of vice-president of teaching and learning being established in quite a few of the universities, paralleling the vice-presidency for research. That is one structural way of recognising the parity of esteem between teaching and research.

Academic staff should be encouraged to carry out research on teaching in their own disciplinary areas, and of course the whole literature on the scholarship of teaching, and all the initiatives that we would have here all emphasize a scholarship of teaching approach in one's disciplinary area.

In structures affecting the parity of esteem, teaching and learning should be given the same recognition as research in awards and coherence. What I am referring to here is that if you have, for example, a President’s Award for Excellence in Teaching scheme, or grants to support innovation or research into teaching, they should tie in with the promotion scheme and with the academic appointments scheme, so you do not have different groups of people setting different groups of criteria for different aspects of university life, all of which have one fundamental aim and that is to provide an excellent service to our students.

There is an issue of faculty and staff having access to teaching and learning support in their first year, and we feel that staff should be encouraged to take a certificated course within the first three years of their appointment. Now, in the UK this is almost a requirement, but it has never been a requirement here in Ireland and not all of our universities have moved to providing certification courses. Where we have done so it has been hugely successful and very exciting and is not at all seen as punitive or negative and I would hope that is the way it will develop elsewhere.

Using blended learning and e-learning, we should share with each other what works well. This is an area where things are moving very fast and we should know when one of our colleagues in another university has made great inroads and strides in a new area, and try to build on those and keep the whole debate and discussion moving.

There is an informal network of educational developers called EDIN here in Ireland. We are suggesting that it should be formalised within the Irish Universities Association. The association of seven university presidents is a very important organisation because it influences government policy; it is very strong, the whole issue of graduate education, increasing grants for doctors’ studies, all of that was very much led by the IUA. Within the IUA, the quality officers have a network, access officers have a network, admissions officers have a network. I would suggest that the teaching and learning centres should be a formal network because it is a very good system, and means you feed not just into the national policy in a formal way but you also feed into your own senior people.
To conclude I would just quote something from Lee Schulman: “We all recognise that at a time of change, and very rapid change, it’s the cultural change we want to achieve, not just surface, pretend changes”. To change academic culture he says, will not be easy but colleges and universities have always taken justifiable pride in their commitment to enquiry and criticism in all fields, even those where dogma and habit make grave scrutiny uncomfortable. Now we must turn this tough scrutiny on our own practices, traditions and cultures. Only by doing so will we make teaching really central to higher education. From a faculty/staff point of view we have to be open to that criticism.

From a student perspective reflection, meta-cognition, in other words, knowing how we know, learning how to learn, whatever the language or lineage, the idea of making students more intentional, self-aware and purposeful about their studies is a powerful one. Such processes are the key to deeper, more integrative learning and to motivation so that we are not just teaching them their disciplinary knowledge or their inter-disciplinary knowledge, we are also teaching them to be learners. In an era which I hope will be ever-lasting lifelong learning – the most important thing is that the students leave this university and our care as curious and enquiry focussed young or not-so-young people intent on learning and continuing to learn for the rest of their lives.

Thank you all very much. Go raibh mile maith agaibh.
When I was here at UCC last February, I talked about this theme of linking teaching and research. I want to take a slightly different aspect this time, and you will see my subtitle is “Mainstreaming undergraduate research and inquiry”. I particularly draw your attention to the quotation at the bottom of that first slide from the foundation of the University of Berlin in 1810. I think it is a wonderful quote which still stands the test of time, and indeed I think it should be on every Vice-Chancellor’s desk to remind them what higher education is about. The university should treat learning as not yet wholly-solved problems and hence always in research mode. I think that is what distinguishes higher education from other forms of education.

I am Director of the Centre for Active Learning at the University of Gloucestershire. We are very proud of our building, and the Centre tries to encourage undergraduates to become involved in research and enquiry. We were showing round a gentleman from UNESCO a couple of weeks ago and we had been talking about various aspects of things we do in the university. When we took him around the building, he suddenly came alive when he saw all these people working together. He asked “How do you get them working together?” This is what we do in the Centre for Active Learning. We get people involved in collaborative enquiry.

I will be doing an interactive session with you using quite an extensive handout (which is available at http://www.nairtl.ie/index.php?pageID=22).
I take the point about Boyer, and the quotation of “needing to break down the barriers, get the key to that door and open it up, knock down that wall”. In dealing with part of that discourse, the discussion we had this morning at the International Research and Teaching Advisory Group was not to talk about linking but to talk about academic work, intellectual work and bringing the whole of the activities that colleagues are involved in together.

I want to begin with three quotations. The first one comes from Peter Scott, Vice-Chancellor at the University of Kingston, arguing that research is a graduate attribute. We will be hearing about the Scottish initiatives tomorrow, and about their emphasis that by the time our students graduate from higher education they ought to have the skills to be “researchers”, to be able to critically assess information and to present it to different audiences. All those skills are things our students ought to have gained from higher education.

The second one is a quotation from Angela Brew talking about the Australian context. She argues that one of the most effective ways of linking research and teaching is to get the students doing the work and doing the enquiry. In other words, get them to be producers of knowledge rather than the consumers of knowledge. That is a theme I will certainly be pursuing this afternoon.

To continue the international theme, we go to the United States now, to David Hodge from the University of Miami, Oxford-Ohio. He has created what he calls the “student-as-scholar” model. He is arguing that the students need to be engaged in this right through the curriculum, and that it must be embedded in the curriculum, emphasising the theme of mainstreaming that is the title of this presentation. This is what they are doing at University of Miami.

Usually, when you ask colleagues about linking research and teaching they say, “Well of course I link my research and teaching. In my final year course I actually talk about things I am researching”. They may actually involve students in some of that research as well in the knowledge aspect of it. But that is only one way of linking research and teaching. We also do it when we talk about the research methods, the research techniques, getting our students to think like geographers, like lawyers, like engineers. That is almost a definition of a graduate outcome that we want for our students, particularly in the single disciplines.

The third point is actually getting the students involved in doing the research themselves as a method of teaching. I have just looked at the conference posters presented here, much of
that “Teaching for Understanding” comes from Marion McCarthy’s ideas. It is a concept which underpins our Centre for Active Learning.

The fourth way of linking research and teaching is pedagogic research, or the scholarship of teaching and learning, to give a variety of labels. This is where we start enquiring and reflecting on our own learning and teaching. I think that is a rather different activity than the first three, and it does cause some confusion when we just talk about the research-teaching axis. Some people tend to talk about the last one, which is subtle, some talk about linking discipline-based teaching and research. They are both important and I think it is great that NAIRTL has both elements in its remit. But I think we do need to be clear what we are talking about, and when.

I will make things clear. I am largely going to talk about the first three. Dr Barbara Cambridge, on the other hand, is going to be largely talking about the last one, the subtle element.

This is the one slide which people tend to take away from my talks. It is a way of conceptualising in a diagrammatic form the different ways in which we link research and teaching. What I have done there is to take some ideas which have been around for some time and put them in a diagrammatic form. There are two axes. Students as participants compared to students as audience forms the north-south axis. Emphasis on research content, compared to emphasis on research processes and problems, is represented on the west-east, left-to-right axis. Most websites at universities claim to be all these things, and indeed many more, in terms of what is used.

Ron Griffiths has suggested we ought to be a little more systematic in how we use some of the language. He has suggested we ought to use the term “research-led” when we are largely talking about the content of the research, the ideas, and the knowledge side of it. I have put that in the bottom half of the diagram, because probably the most common way our students get that is in a lecture mode, which is a relatively passive activity, which is why it is in the bottom left quadrant.

Research-oriented is when we start talking about teaching methods and techniques, and the variety of ways in which you can teach the students. Many of us do give lectures on that. So I have left that in the bottom of the diagram, the bottom right quadrant of the diagram.

Research-based is when we get the students involved in some sort of enquiry, for example problem-based learning, enquiry-based learning, project-based learning. A variety of terms may be used there. Clearly the students are very much participants, and we tend to emphasise the problems of doing that research, so I have put it on the right hand side in the top right quadrant of the diagram.

Then I had a blank in the top left. I suggested the term research-tutored, really thinking of the sort of Oxford and Cambridge model. Many of you may have seen this model demonstrated in the film “Educating Rita”, with the supervisor and the students in the room and the one-to-one relationship. Nowadays, of course, it is one member of staff and two or three students, as even Oxford and Cambridge have had increases in student numbers. What
is happening in these universities is students having a dialogue with a member of staff, and conversations in a small group situation, usually about knowledge, and constructing knowledge through that discourse. I think that is very much students as participants and so the emphasis is in the upper left quadrant of the diagram.

What we have got there is simply a classification. I think people have found it useful as simply saying “Ah, I can identify, at various points, which box I am predominantly in with my students”. Some people have used it as an audit tool. I have visited the University of Leiden where they have used it as an audit right across the university, as a way of thinking about research-teaching links. They have come up with slightly different definitions, which is great.

I often argue for discipline-based approaches, not only because I think the way we construct knowledge and the way we research methods differ between groups of disciplines, but also pragmatically, most of our colleagues get their identity from their discipline. If you ask most people in higher education, they say “I am a lecturer in Geography”, even before they say which institution they work in.

I think an idea which underpins all the case studies in the handout is learning by doing. It is about getting students involved in doing some sort of project, enquiry, or activity, in nearly all the examples you have been looking at. Even though many of these things are transferable, the ease with which you can link teaching and research, and the opportunity to do so, does vary by discipline group. The usual argument is that it is easier for the arts and humanities subjects to link the content than for some of the sciences. The construction of knowledge in the sciences tends to be more linear, so you have got to have previous knowledge before you can understand the next stage. In the arts and humanities it is a rather more diffuse argument.

On the other hand, when you look at the social processes of construction of knowledge it almost reverses, particularly when you talk about the laboratory sciences. If you look at the number of names on publications that come out of laboratory sciences, you often find many names on them, and it is quite possible to have a student working in a laboratory for a few weeks over the summer, or as part of their course, doing something very specific that warrants having their name on a publication. It would be unusual, on the other hand, in history to have a student going into the archives with you. Indeed some eyebrows might be raised about what you were doing if you took that course of action. But it is not impossible and there are examples of it.

If you are in a professional discipline, another constraint is the relevant accreditation by your professional body. We often use the professional body as an excuse for things we cannot do. That is a statement you often hear. Sometimes this is true and sometimes the professional body is much more open.

Our colleague Chris Webster talks about curriculum creep and the tendency for professional bodies to always want the latest knowledge included, but at the same time being reluctant to throw out some of the old knowledge. As I am getting older, I also realise that tension in looking at my lectures. One thing you need, if you are going to get involved in
undergraduate research and undergraduate enquiry, is space. You need some time in the curriculum for the students to do that. Something has to be traded off in order to get students involved. I think it is a benefit but it does cause tension in certain cases.

Moving on to undergraduate research and enquiry; we have been fortunate to get a national teaching fellowship project looking at undergraduate research in the new university sector in the UK, and as part of that we are looking at practice elsewhere. First of all, what is it? Here are just three definitions from North America where it tends to be rather more developed. You will see they differ somewhat. The Centre for Undergraduate Research takes a definition involving undergraduate students in making original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline.

That theme of original work comes from the University of Central Florida where they discuss it in collaboration with the faculty mentor. The University of Alberta has a much simpler definition of discovery learning. I think I rather like that definition, as it is rather more inclusive. I think you have to choose definitions which work in your own institutional contexts.

In our Centre, our working definition goes back to Boyer and his ideas of scholarship. We have tried to create a definition which is very inclusive. We are a new university, and not all our staff are involved in discovery research. Many others are working in professional areas, some are in community-based issues, and some are in consultancy, in what we term knowledge exchange. We have tried to come up with a definition which is inclusive, but for all of them, it is getting students engaged in that broader definition of research. That works in the new university sector, but it does not necessarily work as well, perhaps, in some of the research-intensive institutions.

We are also involved with a Carnegie Academy Scholarship of Teaching and Learning project on undergraduate research. Some of the work by that group has been published in a paper, by Beckham and Hensall. Here we have modified some of their ideas, looking at dimensions of undergraduate research. I think this is quite useful, because it emphasises some of the variation. You can think of each one being a continuum, and you can think of each one being along a continuum. However, the idea of a continuum does not always work.

So, is the emphasis on what the student does and what the student is learning? Or is the emphasis more on outcome, perhaps the product, the research they are going to do, the publication they might get? Different emphases may be placed there.

- Is the project initiated by the students or is it a faculty member who initiates the project?
• Is it largely for the honours students, the students near their capstone course, at the end of their project, or is it for all students?
• Is it very much integrated into the curriculum, or is it sometimes on top of the curriculum? For example, that you get a fellowship to go and work in a lab for six weeks or work with a member of faculty?
• Is it collaborative work or is it individual work?
• Is it original to the student or original to the discipline?
• Is it necessarily discovery work discovering new knowledge, or is it the student discovering knowledge that is new to them? I think that causes quite a debate.
• Is it multi-disciplinary or discipline based?
• Is the audience largely for people within the university or within the community, or is it more professional, discipline-based?
• Is it capstone, final year, or is it something that starts in Year 1?
• Is it something that pervades the curriculum or is it actually focussed on particular elements?

You can map different activities and those dimensions are quite useful for conceptualising things.

Some of the case studies on the handout are resource-dependent, while others can be done without any resources. It varies, and becomes almost, from a strategic point of view, a prioritisation issue. If you believe in this and think it is important, then extra resources might be allocated and resources redistributed accordingly.

I think there are one or two institutions that I have deliberately put in because they have gone onto this as a whole institution. They are relatively rare and tend to be relatively small institutions. Roskilde is one, and New Hampshire would be another in the USA. There are resource implications. It is difficult for a very large institution to go down that route wholly. But there are ideas there that can be implemented to an extent.

I visited Roskilde about two years ago. It was developed as a new university in the Seventies, after the heat of the student revolutions of the sixties. They wanted to be different and were set up to be that. Fifty per cent of the curriculum is based on project work. Students are involved from First Year right up to Fifth Year, which is their Master’s course. Half of their degree-assessable marks are from project work. They start off inter-disciplinary, in group work and they get gradually more disciplinary-based and more individual. The whole geography of the campus is oriented around that. When you go down this route, you see everything else has got to align it, including the design of the buildings.

At Roskilde they have what they call student houses. These are semester-long projects, and the students work in groups. They have a large open area for discussions, they have break-out rooms for individual projects which they take ownership of, and bring in fridges, and put posters up for their little group space. Significantly, one or two members of staff who facilitate that process during the semester move their office into that house for that semester so that they are on hand. The whole organisation is different than what we traditionally find. It is more radical but I think it comes up with some interesting ideas.

Griffin’s University in Brisbane, Australia, has probably used a more, I hesitate to say rigorous, but a clearer definition of what it means in their context. For every course module, Griffin’s state the extent to which it meets their definition of “research-informed”. That
information goes up on the website in the system, so it is very clear to students whether a particular course that they are going to do meets that requirement. I think that is valuable whether you agree with their definition or not.

A different variant can be seen at the University of Sydney. At the institutional level, they have various performance indicators which actually measure the extent to which staff are engaged in research-informed teaching. From a management point of view, that is seen as a useful way to try to measure and monitor it. There is a lot of debate about performance indicators, whether they are good or bad, and whether they channel behaviour in certain directions. However, they are a way of steering institutions. Heads of department realise they may get some money as a result of this. Sydney top-slices budgets and redistributes according to performance on these indicators. It begins to change the behaviours of departments. There is now research evidence showing it changes behaviour, published in a book that was launched at the ISSOTL conference in Sydney.

There are a number of issues that emerge, and some of these have already come up in discussion. I will come back to the first one in just a moment, but I think there are issues about opportunities we provide for students to actually present, publish and celebrate their research. We are not good at this. Academics in North America tend to be more open to that celebration. Some have undergraduate research journals, many have conferences that undergraduates get involved in, and they even have prizes for them. Our undergraduates do a lot of project work and sometimes the only people who see it are themselves and their teachers.

We have already discussed whether research enquiry is primarily for honours and graduate students. My own interest is when we get it for all students, rather than a select number. At the University of Warwick they have the “Re-invention Centre”, which is doing some great work, and has set up an undergraduate research journal. University of Warwick is already research intensive. About thirty students a year have an opportunity to have a funded placement in a laboratory or with a member of staff. They become the faculty of the future, and the PhD students of the future. This is only suitable for some people and I am more interested in the scenario where we can mainstream it and get all our students potentially involved in the research enquiry.

There are lots of issues about how we prepare students for undertaking research and enquiry and that comes down to the half glass empty, half glass full debate – a lot of people say you cannot do it until you get towards the final year, as the students have not got enough knowledge. Others turn round and say, well, in fact you gain that knowledge by doing that research and this is how you create the understanding!

Coming back to the first point, concerning students’ perceptions of research and looking at it from the student angle, we at the University of Gloucestershire did a piece of work a few years ago looking at the understanding of our final year students, and our taught Masters’ students. Our questionnaire has been picked up by quite a lot of universities around the world. Two of them, the University of Alberta and Royal Holloway College, have used it, and we have recently shared our findings from that exercise, and put them together to look at
We found that, in all three institutions, students agreed that they liked being involved in research activities. They liked the fact that staff were involved in it, and they saw about three or four times as many advantages as disadvantages, but they did see some disadvantages. Rather worryingly, the students did not perceive that they had developed many research skills. Yet in all three institutions almost all our students had compulsory courses on research techniques methods.

Their take on it was that they had not become at least competent in them. It may be a language issue, which is why I have a third point about the language we use. The term research is rather an exclusive word and our students do not necessarily feel that they are researchers. Maybe if we had used the word enquiry we would have got a greater buy-in to that. There is an issue there about getting students involved in the research community as against the teaching and learning community. I think we are not that good necessarily at getting them involved in the teaching and learning community, but certainly most students feel they are excluded from the research community.

Given that we were comparing three institutions, one of our hypotheses was that we would get slightly different responses from students in the three institutions. We would expect the more research-intensive institutions to have students who were more aware of research, more involved in research. Probably about three-quarters of our findings went along with that. University of Gloucester is the least research-intensive at one end of the spectrum, and either Holloway or Alberta at the other end. But we also found, when it came to experiences of actually doing research, as many students in our own institution were involved in research, as in the other two institutions. There was no significant difference there. That was measured before we set up centres of active learning or began to really push active learning as an institutional mantra. We have even got “active learning” in our vision statement of the university, so we are beginning to position the university. This is quite exciting.

The point is, regardless of the institution, there is a perception amongst students that learning in enquiry or research-based mode is beneficial. It is not for every student, and is a learning styles issue. Some like it, some do not, but the majority were talking in beneficial terms. Going back to my quadrant diagram, I tend to argue that too much of higher education is in the bottom half of that diagram where the students are passive, and not enough in the top half, but I would not want everybody to be in the top half. I want variety there.
By way of conclusion I think if we want to get students to produce knowledge rather than just consuming it, then we need to find ways of re-linking teaching and research. The challenge is to mainstream undergraduate research so that all students potentially can benefit. That is easier if you are prepared to accept a broader definition of what counts as “research”. Boyers’ definition would be one way of going down that route. But if you really take this seriously, you have to begin to reconceptualise the nature of higher education, the nature of the institution.

Angela Brew is very good at talking about developing these learning communities, the scholarly knowledge-building communities; academic communities of practice is a term that she uses. I think if you really go down that route radically, it actually changes the nature of the relationship between staff and students, it challenges some of those power relationships. Many of us in this room here, would probably welcome that, and many of you probably do that in your formal teaching already. But for a whole institution to do that can be quite challenging, and not all of our colleagues would necessarily welcome going down that route.

So in conclusion I think there is a need to do a bit of thinking “outside the box”, but not everyone thinks it is a good idea.
I would like to invite you to both relax at the end of the day and to consider what Professor Healey has just said concerning the need to ‘think outside the box’.

I am going to invite you to think along with me and also to think beyond me. I am going to talk for about twenty-five minutes and then we will engage with each other and debate in small groups for a few minutes before widening the debate again.

I am also going to consider this topic a little bit differently, and I am going to look at a very large context for what we are talking about in the course of this conference. I have been considering context a lot lately:

- about the effect of our settings on what we choose to do,
- about how we do that work, and
- about how the work achieves some sort of impact in our worlds.

Many of us are familiar with the 2005 book by Thomas Friedman called The World is Flat – A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century. In fact it is almost obligatory to mention Friedman’s description of this flat world in any talk that includes a consideration of global issues. I am going to fulfil that obligation here. Friedman names ten forces that he says have flattened the world. Without trying to remember all ten, just listen for the context and sense of these forces.

- Computers in a widened market economy
- Digitalisation
- Virtual offices
- Intellectual commons movement with self-organising collaborative communities
- E-commerce
- Off-shoring in which whole companies move from country to country
- Supply chaining with horizontal collaboration amongst suppliers, retailers and customers
• In-sourcing in which companies use other larger companies to provide sales and distribution
• Informing with personal supply chains for information and entertainment
• Connectivity that, in Friedman’s words, “is incredibly fast and can be achieved anywhere at any time by anyone”.

These forces mean that the circumstances or contexts of our individual and global lives are changing more rapidly than we can keep pace with. We must therefore continuously pay attention to them. Friedman’s analysis, however, focuses on a market-based economy.

It seems to me that those of us who care about student learning and the application of that learning in our societies must think beyond the economy. As Lionel Jospin has said, “we are not against market-based economy, but market-based society”. Howard Gardner and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and William Damon are also concerned about how we define society in other than an exclusively market-value way. In a book called *Good work: when excellence and ethics meet*, these three authors help us think about our society in terms of what they define as “Good work”. One meaning of good work can be the common one that we use when we applaud something someone has done. We might say to a student who has written a particularly good argument “Good work”. We might say to a colleague who has succeeded in getting more parking spaces on a campus “Good work”. But there is another definition of good work that we can apply to our profession. To consider this other definition we must look at three basic issues: mission, standards and identity.

• Mission is the defining feature of the profession in which we are engaged.
• Standards are the established best practices of a profession; and
• Identity is our personal integrity and values.

According to Gardner, Csikszentmihalyi and Damon, every realm of work has a central mission which reflects a basic societal need, in which the practitioner feels committed to realising the mission and is part of what draws a practitioner to a chosen profession and remains as a sustenance.

All practitioners should be able to state the core traditional mission of their own field. A good way of clarifying this sense of mission is to ask: why should society care about and reward the kind of work that I do? This question points to the value of the work for the society.

Each profession also has a set of standards of performance – some permanent and some that change with time and place. Professionals should be able to employ as a standards test the question: which people in the profession best realise the calling of our profession and why? This question leads us to consider impact of the best work in our field.

The third issue of identity is complex. The background traits and values of a person add up to a holistic sense of identity that comprises the deeply felt convictions about who a person is and what matters most to her/his existence as a professional, a member of a society and an individual human being. Identity includes moral norms, personality traits, motivations, intellectual strengths and weaknesses, and personal likes and dislikes. The authors of *Good work: when excellence and ethics meet* suggest that a universal test of identity as related to the sense of good work in our profession is to ask: what would it be like to live in a world if everyone were to behave in the way that I do?
This question requires us to consider the community to which we want to belong as professionals. Let us first consider mission.

The question that might help us clarify the mission of the scholarship of teaching and learning is: why should the greater community care about and reward this kind of work? Certainly, many of us have been making the case for the value of the scholarship of teaching and learning for years. Yet it is important to revisit the origins of the need for this scholarly activity. The first and foremost need is to improve and increase student learning. Studies in many of our countries have tracked the influence of education on the lives of people, including their personal satisfaction as an individual, their involvement in civic life and their ability to earn a living for themselves and their families.

From another perspective, within our various disciplines, we know how important it is to discover how novices enter our fields of study and how they have progressed to become acculturated and accomplished in the practice of the discipline. Understanding how students learn is particularly important because of the diversity of students and the global societies in which they will increasingly move. For example in the Bologna process, there is an effort to change higher education by introducing a stronger student focus with the implementation of personalised learning paths and facilitation of greater mobility across countries. Because students come from such diverse backgrounds and are bound to be mobile in the kind of economy which Friedman describes, our global society must care about the ways in which students and all of us learn over a lifetime.

If society cares about the learning of all citizens and we assert that the scholarship of teaching and learning generates knowledge about learning, then we can answer the question about why the greater community should care about our work as scholars of teaching and learning. But of course, assertion is not enough. We must be able to demonstrate the impact of the scholarship of teaching and learning. In my view this is the current threshold of the field.

The Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) is a ten year-old multinational effort to develop and support what has now become a movement in higher education. In the latest issue of the newsletter of an organisation that grew out of CASTL, the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISSOTL) Pat Hutchings, Vice-President of the Carnegie Foundation and involved since the beginning in the development of CASTL, has written: “the CASTL community, and I would say the larger community, has the opportunity and the responsibility to document what we are learning about the impact of the scholarship of teaching and learning. This will mean developing appropriate categories and indicators for tracking the varieties and levels of impacts. One might, for instance, look at impact at the classroom level, in terms of student learning, impact on campus culture and the capacity for institutional learning and impact on policy, whether at the campus level or beyond”. Pat Hutchings accurately lists the multiple sites for determining impact, in the classroom, in the institution and in the society at large where policy is set.

Since the establishment of CASTL I have been involved in looking at impact at the institutional level, and I would like to focus on that for a moment. In order to learn from pioneer campuses, that is, institutions who worked early on to change their cultures and to nurture the scholarship of teaching and learning, CASTL asked interested campuses in the
programme to identify features of an institution that need to be included in a culture that provides this nurture.

Many campuses helped us generate a list of features which became the basis for our process for mapping progress, undertaken by over fifty campuses who volunteered to study themselves. These institutions examined six features which campuses said were absolutely essential that an institution must pay attention to if the institution is going to support the scholarship of teaching and learning. These features are as follows:

- Mission infrastructure and integration
- Participation on campus and this includes students, staff, managers, administrators
- CAM support including both time and money
- Faculty or staff evaluation
- Collaboration including across and beyond the campus
- Use of technology both on and beyond the campus.

CASTL will be revisiting the features that impact on institutions and that institutions now identify as being crucial for attention. They may be the same; there may be new ones. We will also look at the impact on classrooms and on the scholars who carry out this kind of designed enquiry.

The call for proposals for last year’s ISSOTL conference in 2006 included the following statements which I think are pertinent in thinking about these kinds of inter-textuality and intra-institutional features.

*Increasing the vitality of the scholarship of teaching and learning depends on the strength of its linkages with larger systems of change. These linkages matter in reciprocal ways: the influence of systems on individual choices of enquiry into teaching and learning, and the ways in which those enquiries add impact beyond individual practice. If you are a scholar of teaching and learning or if you decided now that you wanted to do this kind of scholarly work, or if you were in a position to support those who are such scholars, this sense of linkage, that has impact beyond the individual work, is important to consider.*

Fortunately we now have evidence of the impact of institutional change at universities in several different countries. For instance, Professor Healey mentioned a new book which he reviewed for ISSOTL in a recent newsletter, and you will find that review, The Transforming University: The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Practice by the University of Sydney, is a really good example. I would like to talk just a little bit about that example as that of an institution that is recording for public use the impact of the scholarship of teaching and learning at the full institutional level. This is a 2007 publication, edited by Angela Brew. Professor Healey just showed us a quote providing an account of the transformation of the University of Sydney into a world leader in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

There are four key initiatives that contributed to that transformation. Professor Healey referred to performance-based funding for teaching, strategic projects, availability of training and promotion, and reward possibilities. The chapters in the book which include research findings from over forty-four members of the staff are divided into five sections. Consider for a moment what you would assume those five sections would probably be and what would be needed to transform the University?
• Researching the understandings and experiences of students.
• Researching student assessment.
• Researching the preparedness of students for university study and developing graduate attributes.
• The cycles of research and curriculum change.
• The challenges and triumphs of transformation.

More studies, like this case at the University of Sydney, that link individual and collaborative scholarship with institutional change, are needed. As the results of such studies become available, it will become possible to describe and assess impact, enabling us to identify a continuum of accomplishment.

The third issue in considering good work is identity. For approximately eight years CASTL selected faculty members from many disciplines for funding to develop projects as scholars in their own disciplines. Indeed there are a number of Carnegie scholars present. The faculty members in the very first group discovered quickly that engaging in the scholarship of teaching and learning was altering their identities. Like many faculty members during the previous parts of their careers they had called themselves simply chemists, philosophers, historians and so on.

The joyous discovery in the group was that they were still these disciplinary-based persons but they had acquired a new identity of being disciplinary-based scholars of teaching and learning, who found they had something in common with scholars of teaching and learning in other disciplines. They were amazed by the realisation that a part of their identity had been suppressed by the single description of their own disciplines. The inter-disciplinary interactions brought forth something they cared about and wanted as part of their professional lives within their disciplines. Until all our disciplines regard the scholarship of teaching and learning as integral to the definition of the discipline, however, the interdisciplinary recognition necessarily continues as a path to fuller identify, as a scholar in a discipline that cares about student learning.

In scholarly work on teaching and learning we can support similar discoveries or affirmations of identities within our students. I have been very glad to listen today to a number of people talk about the importance of students in this work. One of the most revelatory sessions for me at the 2007 ISSOTL conference in Sydney, Australia, was a session entitled “Indigenous perspectives on knowledge and epistemologies”. Native peoples in Australia are currently in danger of losing advances that the government has previously supported in education and in other realms of their lives. That circumstance looms large. But the point of this presentation at the conference was that educators can contribute to the retention of other identities as new ones are added.

Two examples from my work with the International Coalition for Electronic Portfolio Research illustrate this point. Kapi‘olani College in Hawaii has structured the electronic portfolio that students create there around four traditional Hawaiian values. Each of the learning outcomes set for students – such familiar outcomes as written communication and critical thinking – are framed in terms of these four Hawaiian values. Students are vastly encouraged to retain the value of their heritage by increasing their ability to function in other cultures including that of the Academy.
In another example, La Guardia Community College in the US asks incoming students to do a mini-ethnography of their neighbourhoods before they come to campus. The students describe, as you might imagine, food, family traditions, religion and other cultural components of their lives. When the students arrive on campus they are then asked to describe these same categories in their new culture. Students begin to see that they do not have to give up their current identities as they add to their experience new acquaintances, new ways of thinking and expanding horizons.

Gardner, Csikszentmihalyi and Damon state, as social scientists, they are interested in their study of good work to look inside the head of engaged professionals. As they put it, they are interested not only in how people make sense of their situations, but also which plans and actions they ultimately pursue and why. Adopting this perspective enables us to understand what we see as essential on a personal level for ourselves and everyone else. In our view all of us need to take stock of our own situations, weigh the various alternatives in the light of our own values and goals and make decisions that are optimal under the circumstances and that we can live with in the long run.

I like the fact that the authors apply their perspective in looking at themselves as well as at others. This willingness to examine their own professional identities keeps them from feeling superior to other professionals who are examining their own identities. The power relationship that sometimes exists in research that places the researcher somehow above the persons being researched is subverted in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

As President Murphy, Professor Hyland and Professor Healey all have alluded to, students whose learning is being studied can become co-enquirers into that learning. In the United States, Hellene University was one of the first institutions in CASTL to realise that faculty members could do their scholarly work on teaching and learning much more effectively if the students were involved in asking the questions, seeking the evidence and analysing and interpreting the findings. Another university in the US, Washington University, has led a cluster of universities for a number of years promoting the place of students in the scholarship of teaching and learning and hosts a conference called “The Student Voice”. I was pleased to see that this conference culminates with a presentation by a student.

One administrator on a US campus said to me a number of years ago, “Do you realise how radical the scholarship of teaching and learning is? It changes the power relationships between faculty members and students.” “Yes,” I smiled, “It truly does and rightly so”.

The context of missions, standards and identities played out in different locales that exist in a globalised society is central to our understanding and practice of the scholarship of teaching and learning. I am going to ask you now to talk with one other person. Please talk to someone you did not talk to when you were working with Mick’s exercises.

Participants are invited to consider their own context at local, regional, national, and international aspects, considering something that helps promote the scholarship of teaching and learning. The questions the participants were asked to consider were:

- What about the context can contribute to the scholarship of teaching and learning? And you might think about it from something related to mission.
- What contributes to your ability to carry out your work?
You might describe something that has to do with impact. You may have evidence of impact of a scholarly approach to teaching and learning, a course you teach or something in your institutional life or something at the international level, or you might describe something related to identity.

- Where have you discovered community – a group of people who see something that you see when you look in the mirror?

So consider mission, impact, identity – but something in your setting, in your context, that fosters the scholarship of teaching and learning.

**Comments made by participants:**
Participant: *We were talking here about the experience of something I didn’t anticipate, somebody who’s employed as a researcher, and what we were talking about this morning, someone who came to this university as one of six hundred full time researchers, but having been asked to contribute to the teaching just in a fairly small way, suddenly she realised there was a whole new community of learners that she didn’t realise and a whole new world which is scholarship of teaching.*

Speaker: That’s a sense of identity isn’t it? Her own identity before being “I am a researcher” versus “I am a member of a community of people who care about teaching and learning”. And it isn’t excluding one from another, it’s adding another element of one’s identity and discovering that and un-embedding it so that it’s something you can identify in yourself and you can work with.

Participant: *The thing that I felt I identified with was NAIRTL as well. This is the open space created by both the Quality Promotion Unit and the Department of Education for support for teaching and learning which operates on several different levels: on scholarship of teaching, in developing teaching portfolios, in running the present accredited courses now available for people who are involved in that forum. I think that the thing that was most important for me was that it was such an open space. It went out as an invitation, it just appears there, this is happening, so it becomes like a magnet for those who are interested. They know they have a place they know where they can go where there are other people who are interested.*

Participant: *But it is also working through models that we might apply to the design of our courses or the development of our teaching portfolios. It gave us a vocabulary and a language across disciplines. It is an interdisciplinary forum, it’s non-hierarchical, it is totally inclusive for whoever wishes to come. It helps new people who are coming to the University to integrate into the teaching community and I think it has really allowed us to identify ourselves as scholars in the development of teaching and learning in the University and I love the fact that it is not compulsory – it’s totally a magnet for those who are interested, and those who are not interested do not even see it. So I think it is an excellent identity place and forum and a discourse community and a kind of community of practice.*

Speaker: You will remember that one of Friedman’s comments about society in the 21st century is that there are communities of practice that evolve. Communities of practice can have their origins in different places. They can have it in a call, a welcome, an invitation. They can have it among a group of people who want to think outside the box in a certain way. It can come about from people within a discipline who feel that their discipline as yet doesn’t understand completely the possibilities of a scholarship of teaching and learning and
so they convene themselves around that topic. In the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, we have affiliate groups and we have interest groups and we have several groups who are disciplinary-specific who have said we need the international community to do this because we do not have enough within our disciplinary group in our particular country, or at least at my particular university, and we need that community of practice that is international, that is bigger.

So it can come from a lot of different places, but that kind of impulse and that kind of ability because now we have the technology to do it – is it something that is certainly a characteristic of learners of the future. Students do it all the time. They have communities that are absolutely amazing, with quick feedback to new ideas, with a sense of being able to ask a question and get an answer from a body of people who will care enough to put an answer forward, and that is a characteristic of learning if you read a lot about the millennial generation, for instance. But it also can be a characteristic of learning for all of us, that is, this kind of community of practice where we are again sharing what we’re doing and benefitting from what others are doing.

Participant: I was speaking with others and I think we reached agreement that there were three aspects that were important: Our personal interest in teaching and learning which came from our backgrounds; the institutional support which was available either through centres for teaching and learning; and champions for teaching and learning in various places, and specific roles.

We have agreed that the roles of leadership in quality issues and leadership in, for example, as chair of the teaching committee in a department, are important in championing teaching and learning.

Speaker: I just want to pick up on that last role, and that is that some of us who care about the scholarship of teaching and learning, who care about research-based teaching have to be willing to go into roles where we can have some influence on that at the institutional level. There are examples of people who have done this. People who are heads of teaching and learning centres are often excellent candidates for going into other roles in the institution where they may even have more influence over more resources, and perhaps including going into a group that is working at the national level to determine such things as what gets valued, whether it be by funding or simply by valuing in another way, and that we have to be willing to do that. We have to be willing to go into those roles.

Sometimes it means staying in the role for a while and being able to go back and take on another role. Sometimes it means staying in that role because cultural change takes time, but unless we are willing to do that kind of role, this will not advance as quickly as we hope it will advance. So I think it is very important for people to go into the roles and then for those of us who are not in those roles to support those people who are going to be operating in conditions that often are not optimum, because they are a minority voice, they are a voice who’s just thinking out of the box for the first time, and it is hard sometimes to be in a hierarchical setting in which you are doing that kind of work. I really appreciate your comment about roles because I think that’s something we have to take into consideration. We have to think about what we are going to do to contribute to that kind of cultural change that is going to be necessary to value students and student learning in the way we want to.
Participant: I think we also we have to get students themselves to think out of the box. When they come to our universities, we have got to teach them that they must not come to our institutions expecting only to be taught. I had a tremendous experience taking first year students to the defence of a doctoral dissertation. In the French system we have a systematic defence and these first year students were absolutely riveted by what was taking place, and then they were asking questions about the methods, etc. etc. It changed our attitude to work in common for the whole year. But if they go through that type of experience they produce different demands towards us and they impose this new attitude on us if we tend to forget about it.

Speaker: Good. I think one of the ways too that we can engage change, that is that we can help the students who want to demand change, to demand it, and put them in circumstances. I'll give a personal example. I used to work with the Board of Trustees for Indiana University because I was an Associate Dean of the faculties on my campus, and every time they asked me to give a report to the Board of Trustees, I took students so that they had the ear of people who made important decisions about the ability to offer certain types of curricula in different institutions. In addition this meant the Board of Trustees could not generalise about students. They are guilty of it, we are all guilty of it often, as those of us who are staff members and faculty members talk about “the students”. You cannot do that when you have a student group in the room who reminds you how diverse they are, who reminds you that they do care about things that we often say they do not care about. So I think that having students very vocal and as part of this is extremely important and it is important not only around the scholarship of teaching and learning for higher education itself. I think it is important for how we are defining our societies. What do we want our societies to look like? We want the voices of people who care and people who have not had a chance to express their voices to be a part of it.

Participant: What I want to do is to talk about impact and evidence, and I think we have a wonderful example at the conference of impact of the scholarship of teaching and learning. I wish to compliment over thirty of my colleagues who have spent the past year and a half working on “Teaching for Understanding” (TfU) as a way of documenting the scholarship of teaching and learning. And you will see evidence of this in the posters.

One of the great advantages of TfU is that it names the parts of pedagogy, and this is a way for people to begin to name their practice and then to develop and to review modules that they were actually designing and teaching in the light of that. It was a great moment today to see the fruition of that work. This is an excellent opportunity to showcase that work.

It is fascinating to see how the centrality of student learning in the planning which teaching for understanding brings to the fore, that you have to be focussed on ongoing assessment and on the student as learner and I think as well relating to mission we have a wonderful motto in this university which is: “Where Finbarr taught, let Munster learn”. I don’t know of any other university in the country which has that symbiotic link between teaching and learning in its motto. I think the scholarship of teaching and learning comes down to the notion of teaching – in the teaching is the learning, and if there is no learning going on, whatever you are doing, you are not teaching. I think the scholarship of teaching and learning comes down to that baseline, and so, in that sense, in the light of mission as well, we have to look at the whole infrastructure and at the culture of our universities at a local level to see what hidden messages there are.
Almost every podium in this university reads “where Finbarr taught, let Munster learn”. You stand as a lecturer behind this podium, to that message, where Finbarr taught... I think that is a huge thing, in terms of developing scholarship and research here. When you stand behind that podium, the question is: are you focussed on yourself as teacher or on the students in front of you? The mission says “Where Finbarr taught, let Munster learn”, which is why we in UCC have named our teaching and learning centre, Ionad Bairre. In terms of all of us trying to identify with who we are. I think we have to look for the hidden messages that sometimes subvert what we are trying to do. There are some very good images positioned around the University that really support the notion of scholarship in teaching and learning. That link in this university between the two has always been there.

Participant: As I was listening to your talk I was realising my identity is somewhat diversified and at some times I was thinking about my identity as a physician and a doctor and at other times of my identity as an educator. I have been a participant in this course in teaching and learning that was referred to earlier. That is something that has been very much a personal change for me. This affects other disciplines but particularly when you belong to a profession it becomes a very integral part of your identity and belongs to professions. There is no doubt about it, that the medical profession is the one that dominated for most of my professional life, even though for most of my professional life I have also been an educator and just in the last few years focussing on that part of my identity has brought forward elements of a dual identity. Now I see myself as having that dual identity and both are more in balance than they ever were before.

Speaker: Wonderful. And how do we answer when someone says what do you do? What is it that we say we do? I hope you say ‘I am a doctor and I am an educator’ because you are both of those and maybe some day by saying ‘I am a doctor’ will automatically mean ‘I am an educator’.

Gardner, Csikszentmihalyi and Damon state at the end of their book: “It is difficult to look in the mirror and like what we see unless we can combine in our lives and in our work the full development of individual potentials with commitment to a greater whole.” Through the scholarship of teaching and learning I wish for all of us, teacher scholars and student scholars, the full development of our individual potentials for the benefit of the greater global whole. I say let us all do good work.

Thank you.
I am very pleased to be here in Cork today. It has been a pleasure to be associated with NAIRTL at its inception and what has impressed me is how much work has been done to date. I am interested from a perspective in learning, in teaching, and in what I can learn here and bring back to my own institution. I chair one of the Scottish sectors enhancement themes, which I will tell you a little more about later on, which is focused on research-teaching linkages from a slightly different aspect. It is about how we use these linkages to enhance graduate attributes, and a real interest for me in all that is going on so far.

I have been asked to talk to you about the environment and the culture that we are moving towards in Scottish Higher Education. Scottish Higher Education is different from that in England and we in Scotland get a bit irritated when we are lumped together with the UK in terms of higher education. I will discuss how we have moved from an audit and assurance culture towards an enhancement culture, the bones of which is our quality enhancement framework which has five strands. What I hope to do is use my institution, the University of Glasgow, as a case study to show you the impact of the enhancement framework on my institution.

And then, because we are undergoing yet another review for quality dimension and framework, the challenges for how we will be developing into the future will be discussed. This highlights that we are different from the UK – basically we have a different education system; our school system is different; we have different qualifications that enter students into our universities; we have the Scottish Highers which are not unlike the Leaving Certificate in Ireland, and we also have Advanced Highers, which are like A-levels and we take about 70% of students currently from Scotland.

We have a separate funding council, so all twenty higher education institutions in Scotland, are funded by the Scottish Funding Council and about two years ago, the Funding Council merged its funding and its dealings with further education and higher education, and that
has had a huge impact so far. We believe it is going to have quite significant consequences for both sectors in the future because there is a drive to converging these.

In the University of Glasgow, we are a research-intensive institution, and we would get about 40-45% of our annual income direct from the Funding Council, so the majority of our income we earn from outside the Funding Council. We have got a four-year undergraduate degree, a one to two year Master’s degree, and the PhD system is much like here, it takes three to four years of higher education.

Now, if we look at the context in which we are operating for our higher education – for teaching and learning, in the nineties, there was a big emphasis on quality assurance across the UK. It was based on external assessment of our subject-based provision, so we had the teaching quality assessments which morphed into subject review, and during that period, 39 of our subjects were reviewed in the University of Glasgow. I was in the vet school at that time. In 1994 we had our subject review, and we did not have anything since. That is to say, we obviously have professional reviews in many of our disciplines. We also had external audits during the nineties of the effectiveness of institutional systems for managing quality assurance. We were audited in 1992, and again in 1994, but our 1994 audit was only based on collaborative provision because we are the validating institution for two other HEIs in Scotland, Glasgow School of Art, and the Scottish Agricultural Colleges.

Effectively the institution had not been looked at since 1992 in its entirety. That was the era of tick-boxes, of stress, and of compliance.

They did a big review of higher education in Scotland and produced what they felt was a vision for the way we should be moving forward, and I have highlighted in bold the aspects and the features of this environment that I felt meant something to me and when looking at it with our colleagues in the institution meant something to all of us. It was about the needs of the learners, so it was to be student centred. Economy and society – we were producing graduates who were going to contribute to the sustainable economic development of our country but also to its social and cultural development. There is a focus on stimulating learners to participate, motivating students to take responsibility, promoting employability, highly regarded learning and teaching when well-resourced, and a culture of continuous enhancement of quality, and at that point the international dimension was creeping in very strongly.

So we now have an outward-looking international dimension. That is a vision that not only could I live with, I actually liked, and it encouraged people and inspired people to think that we were all agreed on that, and so we moved forward. They reviewed what had been happening in the nineties, and what the Funding Council recognised in their own publication was that in general in this review, higher education institutions take a responsible approach to the maintenance of quality and standards; so they concluded really all our institutions are taking a responsible approach. They felt that there was institutional ownership of quality and standards, so we did own it, it was not just about complying.

They agreed that institutions in Scotland were committed to enhancing quality and that we all had an understanding if not absolutely in practice, at least we had an understanding that
students should have a major involvement in our quality processes. We understood that we should involve them in what we do and how we do it, and not just inform them but also bring them into the process of how we actually tell people about what we do.

That was a watershed time for us. So I felt that what they had recognised was a good platform on which to build higher education in Scotland. And we, with this vision, had a very clear sense of where we want to be and I have put a diagram around that of basically calm waters. It was risk-free. That is not to say there were not challenges, but that generally and absolutely the standards in our institutions were pretty good. And in that kind of environment what we as institutions were seeking was a stable framework, because chop and change is something that is very difficult to deal with particularly as governments change and agendas change.

We wanted a stable framework in which we could plan and develop. We wanted our funding council to recognise that there are twenty institutions in Scotland – there are about five million people in Scotland, and so we are a diverse group of institutions. Whatever systems were in place, they need to recognise that, and what we wanted from them were not details but key planks along which we could develop and we would all agree to and commit to.

We were four bodies who were brought together to actually build on this and devise an enhancement system which we could work with. The Scottish Funding Council – it has since merged FE and HE, QA Scotland, and the National Union of Students in Scotland. The students are at the heart of it, and the bottom of the logo which is a little bit blurred, Universities Scotland, which is the body which represents the twenty higher education institutions in Scotland (comprising the Presidents).

We were given the quality enhancement framework. In 2003 this was instigated, and the five features of the enhancement framework were first of all, enhancement-led institutional review, or ELIR. Secondly, institutional subject review was something that we were responsible for doing, taking ownership of, much improved public information about the quality of our programmes and how we maintain quality, so that anybody dropping in to the University of Glasgow would actually say, “Oh, they have got these systems that are clear, I know what they are about, I know how they are monitoring their quality and improving it”.

One thing I meant to highlight, in case we were in any doubt as to what enhancement meant – it was defined for us. It was about taking deliberate steps to bring about continuous improvement in the effectiveness of the learning experience of students. So it is about deliberate action planned.
I am going to use my own institution as a case study to show you the impact and I will just describe it for you. It has got about 24,000 students and about 5,500 staff. We have nine faculties spanning a range of disciplines, vets, medics, dentists, education, the arts, the humanities, social science, physical sciences, the usual medical school etc. They vary in size and complexity, so the faculty that I was Dean of was the smallest faculty, with about 600 students, to our very large arts and humanities faculty. Highly devolved financial management structures, very, very devolved. Very different priorities amongst the faculties and what can be sometimes seen as an issue, if you are dealing with learning and teaching in a research-intensive university.

You may wonder why I have got a picture of a man with two dogs. Well, many people when they put a brand up for the University of Glasgow, put up a tower of our institution, but that is one of my heroes – that is Alf White, alias James Herriot, who was a graduate of Glasgow vet school, so slightly different icon for me.

What about enhancement-led institutional review? Well, in 2004, we were one of the first institutions to be reviewed with the new methodology. It was based around a self-evaluation report which we produced and a visit by a panel over a week. The panel having student representatives and a mixture of our peers. The report by the panel is published with a commentary on the effectiveness of how we monitor and maintain our standards and our quality, how we publish information about the quality of our provision, and how we do that in a managed way, not in a haphazard way. Our approaches, are they good enough to promoting an effective student learning experience? They look at the effectiveness of our policies and our practices, and a heavy focus on the implementation of strategy for quality enhancement.

There are three possible confidence outcomes, broad confidence, limited confidence and no confidence, and it is on a four-year cycle of review. The outcome for Glasgow was that we got the stunning award of broad confidence, but they identified that there were areas we needed to work on. Quality enhancement of management at faculty level – we work in very highly devolved management structures – and getting everyone to move with a baseline level of process around how they manage the enhancement of quality was an issue for us.

Research teaching axis – that was why I agreed to be chair of the research teaching theme. Because they said to us, “So tell me, what is the added value for students learning in the research-intensive institution?” And we said, “Well, superstars on the bench, the honours projects”, and then we stopped, and there was a kind of haphazard lots of really good examples, but we did not really have a systematic answer, or the confidence that we could give that.

They also raised the issue of the perceived dominance of research, which many people may have in these types of institutions,. The research is where the institution gets its kudos from, people identify with it, and is teaching actually less valued?
These were two reasonable questions which, next time the reviewers visit, we are going to be able to answer! They looked at all our student feedback forms, and monitoring forms, which are very focussed on teaching, and not a reflection on “How much did you learn?, How was your learning experience?, etc.” So we need to shift, and that is down in the action plan as my responsibility, to shift the focus from teaching to learning.

Another issue was provision of better public information, which we have dealt with. Public information was not very good at that time, and they wanted to see more evidence of student-university partnership. I thought we had pretty good evidence there, but they said, “No, we do not think it is good enough, we want more student involvement in quality, university-student connections to be better, and better emphasis on student feedback”.

So, what did we do? We undertook a strategic review a year later in 2005-6. We did that across the institution, and those area reports came very strongly into our learning and teaching strategy development. The process was aligned to a culture of enhancement. We had extensive consultation – it took me six months personally, visiting on many occasions faculties, departments, students working. In terms of relationship with Vice-Presidents for Research, the Vice-Principal for Research and I did it together. We did overlap questions on our consultation; we worked together to look at our strategy.

We worked from the basis of recognising the enhancement agenda: Look at what you do that is good. Let us not talk about all the problems and all the things we cannot do, which are generally related to things we cannot change anyway. Let us look at what we do that is good and build on that, and on very strong engagement with students. So we started bringing the students much more closely in.

What we have now, which is on our website, is a learning and teaching strategy, which we believe is a framework for enhancement. It goes beyond quality enhancement – it has many other areas of it and it is a very very challenging agenda. What enhancement has done, and the way the Funding Council has approached institutional review, has allowed us to be ambitious. I do not mind when they come to our institution next year even if we have not completed everything. It does not bother me, because the environment is reflective. It is about what we have done that is good, and the things that we have not worked on, or maybe by now, they are not even relevant any more, because things have changed so quickly. I believe ELIA has helped us enormously.

What about institutional subject review? Well, the deliberate steps we have taken, which is what enhancement is about, is to revise completely our internal review programmes just after the quality enhancement framework was introduced. We moved to a six-year cycle, and we had a four-year cycle. And you may say, “Hmm, it’s a little bit long”. I was a little bit cautious about doing this. The positive engagement of departments as a consequence of that move and other changes we made, to me has made it really worthwhile.

We modelled the internal review exactly in the same way as the ELIA reflective process, we have a balance of assurance and enhancement, and we use it as an opportunity to celebrate the department’s achievement. We have a systematic method in place of capturing good practice, and our dissemination methods are still not great, because we have not quite
cracked that. But what departments see from this, is I get my name in lights, and when I go to our university governing body on a yearly basis on how we are getting on, that department’s going to be named with little snippets of the things that they do well, so it is seen very much as a more positive approach than previously. And although we do not have a requirement to, all our reports on our departmental reviews are published for open access on our website.

It is very helpful for identifying emerging themes and problems and challenges within the institution. When I reviewed three years recently some things came out that I have known to be problems that I now have the evidence to think about in a more structured way.

The feedback from departments has been extremely positive, as positive as they can be. It was very stressful at the time, and it was a lot of work, but we learned a lot and we have moved forward. So I think the enhancement agenda has allowed us to do that phenomenally. In terms of deliberate steps internally and the process of organisational development, we have changed our annual monitoring processes away from “how many students got firsts, how many got two-ones?”, to “how many progressed, how many failed?”, to inculcating much more reflection about the things that one did that were good. We encourage, “Just tell us even little things that you might not think were important”. It brings out a much more positive approach to reviewing their programmes over the year.

We include enhancement hot topics, we set an agenda. We have a particular hotspot at the moment on the first year and on assessment and feedback, and departments will be asked to tell us about the things they have done that are positive.

Our planning process has been revised – this may be in place in all institutions, but our faculty plans were heavily weighted to financial performance, our operational planning every year having financial performance as the bottom line. We have structured learning and teaching plans in place now, and a very much more academic discussion rather than it all being associated with funding.

Because of this general principle there is now a positive feel towards teaching and learning – I am not going to be punished, or the institution is going to be punished – we have managed to convince the senior management group (the Deans and the Vice-Principals), to put money into teaching and learning. This year we have £700,000 put aside from the university’s own budget to support teaching and learning, and that is a phenomenal shift from four or five years ago. I believe the enhancement agenda has allowed this. It has not been the sole contributor, but it has been a major contributor to releasing that funding.

We have brought established learning and teaching to the centre. We have brought together our academic development unit, our effective student learning advisors, our media team and our e-learning team, to give a more structured support around the enhancement agenda. We restructured committees and leadership, defined leadership roles, job duties, recognition, honorariums, all of that kind of thing for our teaching and learning. This supported a culture change away from compliance to one of development.
Improved public information about quality and a greater voice for students. Our public information is still not perfect but we have Funding Council requirements to produce that, and what we have done, along with all other institutions in Scotland and possibly the rest of the UK, is developed around programme specifications. They are there to provide factual information to prospective students and to students on the course etc.

We decided not just to publish them, but they are also designed to be a core framework for programme development. So if I want to set up a new degree programme, I sit down with the structure of my programme specification asking, “What are BAs?”, “What are the intent of learning outcomes?”, “How am I going to do it?”, “How am I going to assess it?”. These are relatively short documents but they have done a lot to get a more reliable consistent approach to developing new degree programmes.

I was just at the Education Committee last week, complimenting all of the staff and our departments because in those two years they have produced the specifications for in excess of 420 degree programmes out of about 450 that we have. Some of them represent a couple of degrees, but I think they have done a tremendous job and all of these are now published on various websites.

What is the impact on students? Is it better for students? I do not know. I do not know how many students actually look at the official website to look at programme specifications. I have my doubts. Where I see the benefit is in a more structured approach that staff are talking about how they are defining a typical degree programme.

This I think has been the biggest advance in the quality enhancement framework. You may all have students present on all your committees. But, having students present, and having them participate, is, in my view, very different. We have had a lot of committees with students present, but I have seen a dramatic change in student participation, because we all know the rules of a framework. The rule is, we want to involve students, and we also have to involve students.

I meet with the students on a regular basis. Earlier this year we talked to the students and they said, “We really want personal development planning, we really want to do it”. Because they said that, they produced their paper, they discussed it at our education committee, they went to Senate and said, “This is what we want from personal development planning, this is how we would like you to do it, please do it”. So from October of this year, all students in our institution, 24,000 of them, are being offered free personal development planning. There is no way I could have done that on my own, so the student voice has really been very, very powerful.

I will be doing a feedback presentation at Senate next month about student feedback that we have and it will be a joint presentation with students. I think the student body have empowered tremendous change in learning and teaching within Glasgow and we have extremely good student officers, we have had for the last three years.
We have developed much more structure around our staff-student liaison committees, so they are not talking about how many bicycle stops there are outside the department building – which is important – but they also have other things on their agenda. Student representative roles are recognised on their transcripts now, there is much better training, introduced in 2004. You can see the growth in the number of student representatives through structured training. In 2005 we trained 220, we are now up to 500 and we still have another round to go this year, so large numbers of students are trained in a small way, but trained how to use their voice effectively in the university government structures.

We are reviewing our student feedback mechanisms – we feed back to DEFRA at a course level, and we are just looking at if that is appropriate. We took a big step, and some people may agree or disagree with capturing student voice in a more systematic manner. In England and Wales, the National Student Survey was introduced about three years ago. The Funding Council did not introduce this in Scotland, but two years ago, we agreed as a senior management group that we would participate voluntarily, so we have joined in the National Student Survey, which means 60% of our final year students have responded, approximately 2000 students.

We introduced our own first-year experience questionnaire. We have sampled our international students in a very large international study, the International Student Barometer, and the feedback from was transformational. There has been a lot of criticism about the National Student Survey in England because it is not really a great survey. In a sense, it is about satisfaction, but the bottom line is it has made a phenomenal difference to us, and enabled us to listen to our students.

This year, the Principal and the Dean of every faculty wrote out to every student saying, “We have heard what you are saying, thank you for your feedback, this is what we are going to do about it”. So, as I speak, there are student focus groups going on across every faculty to say, “Right, how can we fix this?”. I have said to the staff, prompt feedback is not a pedagogic issue, it is something that we can do for our students. It might be time management, it might be lack of resources, it might be other things, but it is not a pedagogic issue. That transformation, which is happening as we speak, is because we have captured the student voice, in, I believe, a very effective way.

Our first years, and our international students, the two big other surveys that we did, said the same thing. So our final years were not alone when they said, “You are not very good at giving us feedback”. That has been a tremendous development for us, and it is driving change within the institution.

Finally, the National Programme of Enhancement Themes. Enhancement themes were introduced as a fifth plank in the quality enhancement framework and their purpose is to enhance the student learning experience. Everything is focussed across the student learning experience. Scotland is small enough, it is probably like Ireland, five million people, twenty institutions, that we can all get together, come around a table and actually say, what are the real issues for us in education in Scotland? We get together to try and identify specific areas for development. So
outcomes should allow us to share good practice, and they should also be focussed to
generate ideas and new models for innovation. The work is directed by the Scottish Higher
Education Enhancement Committee, SHEEC, and it is funded by, or it is a partnership with
the four bodies I mentioned previously, and also the Higher Education Academy, which
services the whole of the UK.

It has an international perspective, all our themes engage with international experts and
groups around the world, and that is what makes it so important for us engaging with
NAIRTL here, because we are overlapping on the work we are doing. The current themes we
are running are the research teaching linkages, enhancing graduate attributes, and the first
year experience is just coming to an end.

Previous themes have included flexibility, assessment, responding to student needs and
employability. There were too many of them. We have learned our lesson. We started in
2003, this is our seventh theme, far too much, nobody can cope with the amount of output
we have. So a lesson learned is: we are going to take it much slower and not actually try to
do too much too quickly.

I will just tell you a little bit about the research teaching
linkages theme, enhancing graduate attributes. The
purpose of the theme is to identify how best to support
the achievement of the high level graduate attributes
through utilising research. We have taken Boyers’
definition of research, and we have said research is
much more than the type of research that gets admitted
to the UK Research Evaluation-style assessment, which
dominates the research agenda in the UK. It could be
creative, it could be professional practice, it could be scholarly work or performance work if
you are in the arts or whatever, and it can be about how those inform the curriculum,
teaching and learning and the learning environment.

So we have taken the research-teaching linkages, and we have said, we want to narrow those
down a bit. We want to say how those linkages are developing graduate attributes that we
believe are important for the Scottish economy, because, unlike England and Wales, we have
a very highly-skilled workforce. We have a higher level of skills at all levels than England and
Wales, but we have lower productivity, and that is an issue in Scotland. We believe that the
type of skills we need to generate that additional productivity are the research-type skills
and the innovation and the creativity. Áine Hyland highlighted some of the attributes and
skills, research-type attributes we were considering, problem solving, provisional nature of
knowledge, all those types of attributes. And they were not just randomly plucked out of the
blue. We got that list from trawling through our subject benchmark statements, which for all
our subject areas identify skills, knowledge, understanding, and we said, “What attributes do
they all have in common?”. Even though they are all disciplinary-based, there is agreement
over the attributes graduates should have in these disciplines.

We have approached it in two ways. We have an institutional strand of work and a discipline-
based strand. The talks yesterday highlighted for me the importance of discipline-based work
when we are doing big things in higher education, because of identity as Barbara Cambridge
mentioned yesterday, and also we can talk to people in a language and a context that they
can understand. We have institutional contacts in all our institutions, and we have nine
discipline-based projects which group together cognate disciplines, and this work is ongoing at the moment.

The desired outcomes from that particular theme are to identify research-type attributes on a discipline basis, to touch base, to say “Have we got them right?” “Is this what you’re trying to do?”. Identifying the necessary building blocks needed to enable research-teaching linkages to support graduate attribute achievement. In other words, when a student comes in at first year, is there a considered approach to how these attributes are developed, particularly with modularisation. We have gone heavily into modularisation. Things become very easily disconnected, with our students going across faculties. We have three general faculties and students can be studying in all three faculties at the same time. How consistent is it for these students? We need a considered approach rather than everyone doing their own thing.

How do these linkages support the development? We want accessible and useful resources from the theme, we want to convince our external stakeholders of our considered approach, so when the ELIA team come back to Glasgow next year, I want to be able to say to them, “Do you remember those two questions you asked me? Well look, this is what we are doing about it, and this is how we plan to develop.”

We want a creative climate in the sector for adaptation, and on Thursday we believe we started to do that, because every institution came and was represented and that is something in itself. Everybody felt it was important enough that they should be at the table talking about this.

We also want to report on incentives, disincentives, drivers, constraints, benefits etc. and create links to our other quality enhancement themes. For example, we have a lot of information about assessment from the output of one of our previous themes. How we assess the development of these attributes is very important to convince people that we have a considered approach. So we make those bridges for people, because for lecturers, if I remember myself teaching in veterinary pharmacology, I did not want to read five different sets of outputs, heavily detailed about different approaches. I trust the people who are delivering these outputs, and what I want is integration so that when I come to make a change in my course, there is material there that helps me do it effectively. The whole focus of all these themes is to improve the student experience, and our student representatives on our groups and committees have been a tremendous bonus and have had tremendous input, actually.

Is it working? Well, evaluation which is done formally, indicates that it has had an input at sectoral level, probably at my level and down, at Dean level, and we have to drive that further throughout the institutions. My experience would suggest that it is working in the sense that no, we have not done all the things we need to do, and there are lots of challenges ahead, but the environment is a much more enabling environment than the previous environment. It has promoted partnership working with QAA in particular, and with the Funding Council.
But the challenges are very real. You need a lot of time for complex change. Extending the reach amongst staff has been, is and will be a real issue. How we asked our staff to engage with the outputs, the first set of outputs was very substantial. No coal-face practitioner is going to sit and wade through that amount of output on one aspect of learning and teaching – well, not if you are a veterinary pharmacologist – we need to crack that in a more efficient way.

Sustaining and growing practice, and student participation: yes, we have wonderful student bodies etc, and our student representatives have been fantastic at helping us change. However, we think it is a wonderful turnout when 12% of our students vote in our SRC representative - so are we actually getting to the whole student body? Probably not at this point, but the only way we can get to them is at department level, and in chat rooms.

What I do believe is that we must keep focussing on allowing people room for failure. I do not know if it is failure, but it is taking risks, and them not working out, or them working out not very well. That is extremely important in my view, and it is a real challenge because not everybody likes to acknowledge that.

The future – we are now going through another review, unfortunately, and I say unfortunately because this type of enhancement framework has taken and will take time to embed completely. The Funding Council, which is now the Scottish Funding Council, wants more international engagement, and I am very supportive of that. Our institutional-led review is UK-wide, but I do believe we can learn a lot from international people and I would like to see much more of that. We want to grow student engagement. The question is how you make that meaningful, to represent the student body?

An area of concern for me is a real focus now on developing performance indicators for enhancement. Because our University Court at Glasgow (that is our governing body), likes performance indicators, I did try with our groups of learning and teaching people in the institution, we looked at developing performance indicators for our teaching strategy, and we have got some, but as I explained to the Court, how do you make a performance indicator for the small incremental improvements that most people make every year or every two or three years, when they are thinking about changing a small aspect of their lecturing. I think it is incredibly difficult, and so we backed off that, and our University Court said “That’s ok, just tell us what you think that you do well!”.

So I have some concern there. We have a more in-depth reporting requirement to the Funding Council, and a greater role for governing bodies in the management of quality. I think we will be carrying on in a similar vein as before. My only concern is whether the PI-driven agenda will take us back to a compliance model rather than the more developmental approach.

Thank you very much for your attention.
To address this question of ‘teaching and learning in higher education’ from a European perspective I shall bank on various personal experiences which I want to list so that you may be aware of my limitations and biases.

Of course, like all of us, as an academic and all the more so an academic working on foreign cultures and literatures, I have been involved in a permanent reflection on this important question. The French context, however, was for me a context in which this type of reflection was a rather solitary one. It was only (and I am still speaking of the French side of my experience) when I became involved in the political leadership of my university (I do not like the term administration very much) that I was given the opportunity to get involved in a real collective reflection. As Vice President of my university with responsibility for teaching and learning, I was able to get involved in national talks at a time when we were simultaneously questioning the French model and defending it without always knowing what it was.

As President of my University and Vice President of the Conference of French University Presidents at the time of the Sorbonne declaration and then the Bologna declaration, I had the privilege to work with my colleagues and the then Minister for Higher Education (Claude Allègre) on a long term perspective that was no longer a local one or a national one. I was then asked by Claude Allègre’s successor, Jack Lang, to write a report (together with my colleague Cornu) on the education and training of primary and secondary school teachers in France.

It may be useful here for me to give you my impressions on this dialogue with various partners as we made a fundamental mistake that reveals the difficulties we may be confronted with when we try to change attitudes to teaching.

The Minister had asked us to phase our work. The idea was that we should

- write a pre-report that we would submit to him,
- on the basis of this pre-report meet the main teachers’ unions and associations,
produce our final report and officially hand it in.

The second phase of the process is the one I rapidly want to go into with you here. Our basis in the report was that teaching in itself is an activity which requires of course competence, but also training and where the essential factor in assessing the performance is what has been received and not what has been offered, what has been learnt, not what has been taught. To our amazement, we observed the following:

- a majority of the teachers we met had not read the actual report but comments that had been produced about the report,
- political significance was given to every aspect of our approach,
- but, most important, was the attitude that ‘my knowledge is my competence’. This position was strongly defended by various academics who, very often, were the leaders of the various discipline-based groups that we met.

I consider that this last factor is even more a characteristic of higher education than of primary or secondary education, at least in my country and in many of those whose systems I have been able to observe and analyse.

The last two personal experiences that I wish to mention in this introduction are my function as expert for the European University Association and my deep involvement in the running of European sport.

As expert for the European University Association I participate in the evaluation of individual institutions of research and higher education on the basis of a methodology which has been devised with great care on the principles of the Bologna declaration and the seminars that have been held since and which I find very useful for the time being. However, it is my feeling that such an approach, necessary and useful as it is at the moment, inevitably introduces the risk of becoming doctrinal.

The last factor which I think has helped me build up my vision of research and higher education in Europe is my permanent travelling through our continent for sport reasons and the approach it gives me of the concept of ‘training’ all over this territory. Top level performance in sport means that effective teaching and training methods have to be designed in order to prepare coaches, players and officials. This responsibility also brings me in contact with EU Commissioner Jan Figel’s staff and allows me to observe their global attitude which may have an impact on the future of research and higher education in Europe.

What I would like to do now is analyse the main trends of the Lisbon Declaration which should contribute to the shaping of research and higher education in Europe beyond 2010. It is my intention, therefore, to abundantly use the EUA’s Contribution to the Bologna Ministerial Meeting of London.

The motto for this declaration as presented by the EUA documents is ‘Diversity with a common purpose’. I consider this very appropriate. The various measures introduced in Europe, more particularly since the Bologna Declaration, have concentrated on harmonisation; it is of prime necessity that this should combine with the concept of diversity.
The Lisbon Declaration insists on the need for strong universities to meet the challenges of the twenty first century. It postulates that ‘modern societies, much more than the agricultural and manufacturing societies of past centuries, depend on the application of knowledge, high-level skills, entrepreneurial acumen and the exploitation of communications and information technology’. It seems to me that both the definition of the challenges of the twenty first century (defined in the EUA document as ‘climate change, energy issues, increasing longevity, the rapid pace of technological change, growing global interdependence end rising economic inequality both within Europe and between Europe and other continents’), and of the competences required to confront them is a bit hasty.

The issues defined are certainly real, their mental representations, however, probably play a much more important role than their reality. What is probably significant is the fact that we are shifting from a context where the scientific experts and those democratically elected are losing their monopoly over the control of events and evolutions. On the other hand, I am not so certain that, at the moment, Universities across Europe are really a place where ‘entrepreneurial acumen’ is fostered.

The Declaration certainly touches on an essential point when it mentions ‘moving from an elite to a mass system’ and this, according to the document, implies ‘a system of academic institutions with highly diversified profiles, based on equality of esteem for different missions’. This approach, in a way constitutes one form of answer to the question I was earlier asking about Universities as a place to foster ‘entrepreneurial acumen’. Entire new sectors and approaches may appear and constitute an appropriate response to the needs that have been identified. The difficulty, as I see it, pertains more to the symbolic than to the field of hard realities. The document itself touches on this aspect when it mentions the concept of ‘equality of esteem for different missions’. This constitutes a clear signal that this ‘equality of esteem’ is certainly not yet a reality in most academic institutions in Europe. We, academics, essentially respect and admire the type of activity and mission in which we are personally involved. I took part in the course of the past academic year in the evaluation of the Portuguese Military Academy. I was impressed by the contrasting attitudes of the two groups of teachers in the institution. On the one hand our academic colleagues were producing a type of discourse that we are likely to hear in any European institution of higher education. On the other hand the military staff had a level of academic qualification that compared quite favourably with that of the official academic staff, most of them were involved, as students in programmes of higher education on a very high level. They had chosen to be evaluated by the EUA because this gave them a guarantee that their academic weaknesses would thus be more certainly identified and, last but not least, we could observe their permanent efforts in renewing their syllabi, their teaching methods and implementing a genuine quality policy in their institution.

I hope you will pardon what may seem like a digression. What I mean by this rapid evocation of a personal experience is that we all need from time to time to check the number of stripes on our shoulder. The military staff were wearing uniforms and their institutional status was clear to them. Therefore they felt quite comfortable adopting a critical approach to their teaching responsibilities. The civilian academics, like any of us here, only had a mental representation of these stripes on their shoulders and, very clearly, the closer they were to tradition, the more stripes they thought they were wearing.

It is my opinion that, throughout Europe (meaning the European continent), this academic conservatism is a major handicap for a successful and modern system of higher education.
And I suppose that it is precisely at this juncture that I have to go into the notions of teaching and learning, to establish the difference between what is delivered and what is received or, perhaps, what is passed on and what is built together. ‘Equality of esteem’ means that an academic’s competence should be measured more against his/her ability to enter into an educational relation than against the stock of knowledge which he/she carries, what Seamus Heaney likes to call ‘baggage’ after the French. Allow me, for one brief moment, to take my own country as an example or rather a counter-example. In my field of specialisation (foreign languages, literatures and cultures) a debate has been raging for years to know if we should accept to teach students a language without, at the same time, teaching them the culture of a country. The majority of my colleagues and of institutions answer this question in the negative. We therefore hire specific teachers to teach the language to non-specialist students as we consider this mission to be far below the ‘competence’ or ‘qualification’ of genuine academics. The last straw is that no sooner are these colleagues hired than they try to integrate the more ‘aristocratic’ tasks and fight all they can to be allowed to teach culture and literature. All of this tends to prove that esteem in our institutions is based on clichés and that ‘le savant’ is also ‘le sachant’ in most of our contexts.

What is true of individuals is also true of institutions or sectors inside institutions. So, the question we have to ask ourselves is how can we overcome this difficulty linked to self-perception? This is a difficulty that we must collectively address if we want to put the emphasis a little more on learning and a little less on teaching.

The notions I have so far presented constitute the introduction of the EUA document which also refers to the autonomy of universities and the duty of universities and states to ensure access for as many as possible to higher education.

The first section of the document is entitled ‘building the European Higher Education Area’. It opens with a strong invitation to Universities and governments ‘to ensure that a stronger student focus, employability, mobility, attractiveness and social inclusion are firmly embedded as characteristics of the emerging European Higher Education Area’.

The concept of ‘stronger student focus’ means a shift towards student-centred learning. This in turn means new teaching methods and a higher level of student involvement. At this point we need to go back in time and reflect upon teaching practices in the sixties. Those were the days when minimal input was expected from teachers and when students were expected to accomplish most of the work themselves. This was possibly a good or even an excellent system for those students who were prepared for this kind of demand. The drop out rate was extremely high but those who did survive acquired a genuine culture and above all an acute critical sense and the ability to locate information, to organise it and to exploit it for whatever purpose. This merciless system was ideal for those Bourdieu calls ‘the heirs’ but was most of the time fatal to those who did not belong to this category. If many more students could have access to higher education, not so many were placed in a position to take full advantage of the new situation.

The reaction to this situation was to try and compensate the absence of preparation of the students by giving them more classes, more contact periods by making sure that they would more and more be placed under the guidance of their teachers. The result as we observe it now is an emphasis on teaching and not sufficiently on learning.
The challenge today is to correct the current situation without going back to the old one. The remarkable efforts often accomplished by those involved in distance education could constitute a source of inspiration for the more traditional forms of teacher-student relationship: accompanied personal work, individual assignments, remedial work, etc. are approaches that are constructive of a student-centred paradigm. This kind of approach requires a better coordination between all those involved in the process, teachers as well as students. My observation is that academics tend to work in a rather isolated way. Concertation and consultation take place when we set the syllabi and at the time of examinations when we have to assess the students. I have never observed any meeting in my or any other university concerning the workload of the students and the global phasing of their productions in time.

This notion of workload, quite logically, takes us to ECTS. ECTS is not only the Euro of the European academic world, enabling students to travel from country to country without calling at the Bureau de Change. It can also play a major role in structuring learning processes. Its external function has been clear since its inception; its internal potential still has to be fully exploited.

The learning environment of the students is of paramount importance if we are to implement student-centred learning. This environment, if favourable, is probably the key to the integration of students with widely differing cultural background, personal lifestyles, working methods, etc. It is clear that the resource thus made available must also be made accessible to those who most need it. What I mean is that more and more we shall need specialists to mediate between the individual student and the learning environment of which he/she is supposed to take advantage.

The Lisbon Declaration lists employability as one of the preoccupations that Universities should care about. Concerning this point I would like to mention an operation that was undertaken in my university and which met with great success. Various surveys lead us to the conclusion that our regional employers were not in position to fully assess the capacities hidden behind our various diplomas. Even the type of diploma supplement which we had tried to introduce even before Bologna was not much help. We then spent a whole year, with representatives of MEDEF (which is the French employers’ Union) to express in their own terms, the competences that our students were guaranteed to master when they had obtained a given qualification. The result was a booklet with pages covered in drawings, very much resembling cobwebs, which was eminently legible and understandable by potential employers. Our mission, in this regard, is therefore, not only to set up career guidance, though this is absolutely necessary, but also to be involved in a permanent dialogue with those who need to know what our highly codified language means so as to be able to employ our former students.

This dialogue must also concern life-long learning which is globally not a success in European universities. It is a paradox that the fantastic resource that we represent in terms of competence cannot be harnessed in order to take demand into account. “Whose demand?” is the question one may ask. The employer? The worker? The society? It is my feeling that we always tend to make the issue so complex that only the demands that we ourselves define are acceptable. This form of academic arrogance constitutes a major obstacle in most cases to a successful dialogue with our environment. Maybe we should sometimes be reminded that though we certainly are experts, we are neither the owners of the system nor those best
positioned to propose ready-made answers if we do not enter into a dialogue with various partners.

Internationalisation is the object of the third chapter of the Lisbon document. I find this the weakest part of the document. Though it expresses an enthusiasm that I can, in some regards share, I have great reservations concerning ‘internationalisation’ as I observe it in Europe at the moment. Internationalisation certainly is a great success as far as academics are concerned. International cooperation has considerably increased between universities, laboratories, individuals and this is certainly something that we must be happy about. Similarly post-graduate students’ mobility has been a great improvement. What I have reservations about is undergraduate mobility.

My first reservation is that this mobility is far more physical than intellectual. The notion of ‘immersion’ in a different culture, in a different language, very seldom applies. Mobile phones, emails, etc. make sure this does not happen. Therefore the system of reference which the students have left behind can never be questioned, which means that the development of their critical sense, and their ability to distance themselves from their traditional values, do not increase or improve.

My second reservation does not concern ‘mobility’ in itself but our attitude as academics to mobility. Our perspective, globally, is certainly much more teaching than learning centred. I suppose we all acknowledge the value of a significantly long stay abroad but because we have not invented tools to assess this value we feel at a loss. The only thing that can be assessed is the strictly academic performance of our students in the host system of higher education. In this regard, it is interesting to note that most of our colleagues, when they are in charge of students going abroad, make sure that in the host system the teaching that they receive will be as close as possible to that which they would have received had they stayed at home.

In other terms, I think that international mobility, though it has become essential to students today, still requires a lot of thinking about if we want to make the best of it.

The link between teaching, learning and research is traditionally considered as one of the characteristics of the European systems of higher education. It is my opinion that this research orientation could and should constitute a means of ensuring that long term stays abroad for our students are really significant in the educational process. Why not imagine an approach which would encourage them to produce a document where their stay abroad would be the object of a critical assessment and where the main differences with their own systems would be analysed in a critical way? We would then focus more on learning than on teaching though the methodologies and principles that characterise the education we try to give to our students would be present.

This is all the more to be envisaged as, in the Lisbon declaration, the EUA, speaking on behalf of all European universities, considers that ‘Institutions offering research-based education should ensure that a research component is included and developed in all cycles’. The text goes on stating that ‘This also applies in relation to the acquisition of a broad range of transferable skills that should be included not only at doctoral level but in curricula at all levels, thus promoting a new generation of leaders able to integrate multiple perspectives and be responsive to the needs of rapidly changing labour markets’.
The relationship that we are so proud of, and justifiably so, between higher education and research, needs to be reassessed from time to time. It cannot be limited to the postgraduate level where it is so obvious that there is no need to comment upon it. The question we must ask ourselves is “how does my research activity make my teaching activity better and richer at undergraduate level?” My answer would tend to be something like: “because it changes my whole approach to learning, because it daily shows me that learning is not only about the transfer of knowledge from one individual to another, even through the medium of books and more modern media, because a competence that you build yourself is far more durable than one that you have been taught”. In other terms, I consider that, at undergraduate level, our daily involvement in research produces an attitude which helps us focus on learning. This can only be valid if our personal research activity is truly original. I sometimes hear colleagues argue that when they are preparing their lectures they are involved in a form of research. This is something I totally disagree with. Acquiring knowledge that has been produced by others cannot be considered as a form of research, not only because it does not correspond to our usually agreed definition of this activity, but mostly (as far as we are concerned to day) because it does not, in our teaching, produce this learning-oriented attitude which I was mentioning earlier.

I shall not discuss here research as defined by the Lisbon declaration, as this is not the object of this conference. There is, however, in the part of the document devoted to research, one item which I find also applies to teaching and learning: it is ‘University-enterprise collaboration’. The attitude of institutions of research and higher education varies greatly in Europe, not only from country to country, but also between types of institutions. Basically, we can say that all our institutions send students out to places of work when we consider that the level of their theoretical competences makes it possible for them to acquire practical experience in a critical perspective. Or at least this is the way it should be.

My observation is that institutes of technology tend to do this in a structured and learning-oriented way. I admire (and I think that in this regard I belong to a very tiny minority among the ‘true’ academics of my country who of course belong to ‘real’ Universities) the manner in which these institutions focus on learning in this process. In this kind of learning situation, I think the key to success is that a professional teacher and a tutor appointed by the enterprise have to cooperate with the student in the building of his/her competences. Moreover, the new competences to be acquired combine the theoretical and the practical, demand critical distance and, simultaneously, concrete involvement and concrete action. Only the student him/herself can merge these demands and produce the appropriate answer. He/she is the locus where competence is produced and is also the main producer of this competence on the basis of what he/she has been supplied with by his/her professor and tutor.

This is an approach and a strategy that I seldom observe in the more traditional sectors of universities, though we would gain greatly if we could transpose this teaching approach to other sectors of activity.

The informal assessment that I have been conducting since the beginning of this lecture has long been part of the academic tradition. The EUA has endeavoured to produce tools likely to promote a quality culture in European institutions of research and higher education.

Quality assurance always presents the risk of being normative. Such an approach would be in total contradiction with the approach the EUA is trying to foster, that of ‘diversity with a
common purpose’. The purpose of the EUA is to encourage ‘creativity, knowledge creation and innovation’. It insists on the importance of ‘complementing an internal quality culture with external accountability processes’. This country and this university (and I have no doubt the other Irish universities as well) have fully integrated this quality culture and the efforts produced are remarkable in most regards. In my own country a national quality assurance system was set up in the early eighties and has been developing ever since. What I find interesting in the French system is that quality monitoring combines with the allocation for the next development contract of each university. The advantage of this approach is that inside an ongoing system, it supplies all those involved with both a schedule and a visible reward-punishment system. This however has its risks. In my university, for example, where the quality culture has been greatly neglected for the past few years, each important stage in the procedure constitutes a phase of tension and anxiety and is approached in an extremely bureaucratic way. Quality assurance, in particular in the field of teaching and learning, should be perceived as a handrail, not as a threat. In the field of teaching and learning, I would personally like to see this quality approach applied to international mobility for the reasons that I have mentioned previously when I was dealing with internationalisation.

Quality assurance can only work if it combines with responsibility and responsibility can only exist if Universities enjoy autonomy. The situation in this regard varies greatly from European country to European country. The British system is characteristic a very high level of autonomy, many others (Turkey, Slovakia, France) are extremely centralised. The paradox in the movement towards greater autonomy is the opposition it often generates among students and teachers. This is a major debate in my country at the moment.

It is my opinion that the rejection of this administrative and financial autonomy, to a very large extent, matches the rejection of autonomy in the educational process. Our culture is one where top-down is the order of the day and has been so for a long time. It is the case in the field of administration where, to a very large extent, the Ministry of research and higher education determine the organisation and strategy of every university through an extremely rigid system of attribution of State monies. This is the case in research, a field in which CNRS has become a self-centred monster, more a place of power than a place of intellectual stimulation and an institution consuming most of its money just to finance its own bureaucracy. And of course, it is the approach in the teacher-student relationship where one is the supplier and the other the client.

The last aspect to be taken into consideration in this overview of teaching and learning across Europe is funding. It is clear that an emphasis on learning generates costs, and it is also clear that quality monitoring must result in developments that may be costly though this is not necessarily the case. No complete study of funding Europe-wide is available yet. The EUA is working on this question and hopes to soon be able to publish initial results. These should be extremely useful to us all, provided the analysis is not only a quantitative one.

**Conclusion**

The European University Association regularly monitors the developments that are taking place in Europe largely under its influence. The latest report shows that European universities are increasingly taking responsibility for the emerging European Higher Education Area. The focus (in the terms of the document) has shifted from governmental actions, including legislation, to implementation of reforms within institutions, with broad support for the broad idea of a more student-centred and problem based learning. The three cycle
organisation is now implemented by eighty-two percent of the respondents. Important questions remain with regard to different national interpretations of the nature and purposes of the three cycles’.

Employability has become a high priority for most institutions. The EUA has come to the conclusion that one of the main challenges for Universities is to ‘strengthen dialogue with employers and other external stakeholders’.

The most interesting observation for this conference concerns ‘student-centred learning’. ‘Although new degree structures are still commonly perceived as the main Bologna goal, there is increasing awareness that the most significant legacy of the process will be a change of educational paradigm across the continent. Institutions are slowly moving away from a system of teacher-driven provision, and towards a student-centred concept of higher education. Thus the reforms are laying the foundations for a system adapted to respond to a growing variety of student needs. Institutions and their staff are still at the early stages of realising the potential of reforms for these purposes’.

It is interesting to note that the implementation of the Diploma Supplement is not a great success. Less than fifty per cent of the respondents to the latest survey say that it is implemented in their institutions. I consider that this reveals the difficulty we are confronted with when we have to shift from what we have taught to what our students have learnt, and, even more difficult, when we have to express this in a language that will be understandable by non-academics.

The developments concerning quality and student mobility reveal an improvement, although this assessment is not based on totally reliable data. Concerning quality, the main question is to assess the impact that the work of the quality units has on the development and evolution of the teaching and learning processes. With respect to student mobility, more precise definitions are needed in most cases.

Finally, one of the ambitions of the Bologna Process was to make Europe more attractive for non-European students. I must say that, in this regard, the aggressive and often xenophobic policies of such governments as that of my country tend to annihilate the constant efforts produced by academics. Until we show Asians and Africans, that we respect them and that we are eager to cooperate with them, I cannot see any improvement in our intake of non-European students.

Once again I want to underline that this survey was based on the most recent EUA publications and I hope that it may offer some interest.
I would like to offer a slightly different perspective on teaching and learning to those views offered previously. I am a student and probably the youngest person here and I am certainly the youngest person talking. At twenty-three I am a new graduate. I said that for the first time the other day and it felt a little weird to hear that coming out of my own voice.

I am an international student, born in Waterford. My parents live in the Isle of Man so I am not really very international, but at the same time I am not very Irish either. I attended a traditional grammar school. It is reputed to be the oldest grammar school but I have yet to prove that. It is a UK-based system, so I did the A-levels, and then returned to Ireland. It has given me a slightly different view of things, and hopefully it has also aided me a little bit. It has certainly pushed me into getting more involved in things, getting involved in analysing how the education system works, and it is probably the main reason I am here, so I am going to draw on that a little bit.

I suppose the big thing is, coming from the Isle of Man, or at least living in the Isle of Man, all of my friends fractured and went to many different institutions, so while I am going to talk about UCC a little bit, I will be making broader assumptions that you are all coming from different institutions and have different kinds of experiences. Very often the best experiences I had were in other institutions because of the comparison factor.

I have been around a long time. Last night was the long service awards ceremony for UCC and as an undergraduate of three years, I am claiming my own long service award. I am just keen to stick around a little while. The roles I have had are very different and very varied, but one of the things they have done is to give me the ability to speak to a lot of different students and I am going to draw on that experience as well.

The SU Education Officer, Diarmuid Angland, is pretty much my go-to guy for all the academic issues. If he was not abroad at the moment, he would probably be the one talking to you.

The reason I bring this up is because, even between myself and Diarmuid, we had very different perspectives on teaching and learning. One of the things I noticed about student unions and student representatives, is that they start to talk out of both sides of their
mouth. They begin to appreciate and accept, in many respects, the academic perspective, and they talk about that a lot more than they talk about the student perspective. So while I was a little apprehensive about the title I am really quite delighted that I just get to be a student for a little bit.

The idea is that there is a lot going on and a lot changing and it is a case of taking stock sometimes. As a student union representative I find that there are two sides to my role and my function. There is this kind of thing {presenting at conferences}, and then there are the sort of things I was doing this morning. We launched, with Fáilte Ireland, courses on how to be good barpersons and good waiters. It is a two-day course. I am pretty sure that while you might not agree with it or approve of it, I am probably going to get a lot more stock from the student body by doing that than I am going to be by presenting here. It is always a kind of combative relationship in the Students’ Union. One has to keep students happy and keep them involved, and then one has to have the perspective on the most boring of academic issues that students really do not care or have an opinion about. They certainly did not elect me on the back of it.

So, broadly speaking, congratulations! It appears as though I am speaking to the converted in many respects. You are the people – you’ve been here since 9.00 am – who have already demonstrated an interest in teaching and learning, and I think that is probably one of the most significant steps really. I talked to someone yesterday who said that in any debate twenty percent of people will be with you, twenty percent will always be against you and then it’s a case of fighting for the sixty percent in the middle. I think that is certainly true with teaching, learning and research, and the relationship of these from the student perspective, because you are probably representative of the twenty percent that have already bought into it. Most of our time in the Students Union is spent trying to argue with the sixty percent and fighting with the twenty percent that really do not care what students want.

Hopefully while I am talking, you will leave with something that has made you think, or brought something away that you can talk to another academic about or another academic in your field. It really is very important that we reach the other sixty percent and that it is academics that are much more important in many respects than students in fighting that battle because it is a big sixty percent and it is crucial to the student body.

I was told a story about a beach with fish on it. The fish had died and they were washed up on the beach, and a little girl comes along and she was throwing the fish back into the water when the parents come up and say, “What are you doing that for? There are loads more fish all around and you are never going to get to all of them”. It is all about that this one fish actually matters. When you are talking to academics and you convince them of the virtues of teaching and learning, you are affecting many more than just one fish.

Moving on to address the topic at hand: Like any good humanities student, one is supposed to take apart the question. So we have students’ issues, and teaching and learning perspectives. There are many types of students with many different perspectives. I have a number of perspectives of my own and in my role as president of the Students Union here in UCC, I have been lucky to meet so many other students. Personally I do not have strong views on whether it is referred to as learning and teaching or teaching and learning. I would have a small preference towards learning being the priority there.
In my view research is fundamental for students. We really need to see undergraduate students particularly, as starting out as researchers, because eventually there is a little bit of a circle of life where undergraduates become postgraduates and become academics.

One of the most important things from a student perspective is to have expert teachers. The good teacher is most concerned with learning that takes place in the classroom as opposed to teaching the class. Ireland’s Higher Education Authority terms students as ‘consumers’. I really do not like that terminology. The Higher Education Authority used this phrase because it felt that if education is regarded as a service then those who use the service are consumers. This is wrong. Students are clients, and should be treated as such. Importantly, students do not consume the same service twice.

Consumption implies a very short term approach. Instead we should be regarded as clients because there a relationship should be built up. There should be a relationship between the university and the student based on trust, on excellence, and on mutual benefit. Students are clients of educational institutions as they are now part of a life-long learning journey of continual up-skilling and involvement in education. To treat students as consumers and to narrow the view of the role of students in this way results in a narrow goal. Treating students as clients broadens this, with an emphasis on more than just the product, it encompasses the entirety of their time with the Higher Education Institution, before the Higher Education Institution and after the Higher Education Institution, and ranges from student involvement in planning and shaping the academic experience through to the support for students who follow them.

This is fundamental to what is now a growing interest for universities: the role of alumni. Universities increasingly look to graduates as a funding source and I will return to this later. Before we go too far, I am going to refer to the University of Durham and the student experience. Very often when we think about the student experience, we do not include the academic aspects, but rather it is all about GAA, and soccer, and debating and drinking often. There is more to the quality of the student experience in university, and just to emphasise this we have here in UCC a new appointed Vice-President for the Student Experience. This role does not include the academic field of things, and as far as I am concerned this is a limited outlook.

There is no question that the student experience is dynamic. Today’s student experience is very different, and they have a very different view of the campus life than their predecessors. It is not just about the social aspects of universities that have changed. There is a cultural shift. The world of academia being forced to adjust, with staff and students alike having to reconsider the way assessment is conducted and classes are delivered. Students no longer have the luxury of attending classes and lazing with their peers, with little else to distract them. Very often fulltime students will also have a considerable community requirements, family commitments, travelling home and very often working, especially at weekends. Many students also hold positions as volunteers, and, hopefully, more and more will hold positions in clubs and societies.

The rising cost of education is being directly reflected in the increased pressures on students. There are increasing numbers of hours that students spend in employment and subsequently decreasing hours they spend actually studying. This is obviously going to affect experiences on the campus, and it will continue to do this. It is a case of “what do we do about it?” The students of today are no longer just students and no longer view the
university as the sole part of their life. There is a lot more to the students and very often this is not reflected in the way that the university deals with them. Flexibility becomes infinitely more important, especially where access and assessment are concerned.

That is one of the reasons why the ‘twenty-four seven’ idea of the university becomes an important concept. Access to facilities such as laboratories and to parking become all the more important because students are not ‘nine to five’, ‘Monday to Friday’, users of the facilities. Some students are ‘nine to five’, Wednesday to Sunday. Times are different and it is one of the big issues that concerns me.

We in Ireland are increasingly looking to engagement with non-traditional students as well, and that is also going to alter the way the University will be dealing with students. We heard references earlier to elitism and contrasting this to mass delivery of education. Students are going to effect and affect the way in which we deal with issues in the University, but should that be to the detriment of others? When there are resource allocation questions, should it only be a particular subset of students that are considered?

Flexibility of entry into programmes in university can be a wonderful thing, but what is really important after that is what happens when one is accepted. Academic support services become essential, as do student support services. Ever since universities moved away from affluent families there has been a trend towards increasing external demands on students, demands that compete with their studies. What are universities going to do to help with these challenges and ultimately, who is going to pay for it?

Perhaps we should prescribe study hours and clearly indicate, in advance, the workload that may be required to successfully complete a course. In that situation, students would be more informed, when they enter university, as to the expectations and demands. Some students have very demanding timetables, with little time for studying and also working in order to survive.

There are many issues. For example, we argue that full presentation notes from classes probably should not be put online. But then what happens to the dyslexic student who can not take notes? I know there are support services, but are they always available and are they always going to be used? What about the international student who has not quite picked up that Cork accent yet and does not know what is going on? What about the blind student who cannot see the flashy graphics during the lecture? There is a huge need for ample support services to be provided for all these students.

Dealing with large and diverse classes, which they are now, brings a lot of new challenges. Like all things, funding is obviously a massive concern.

The perspective of students should not always be seen to be in conflict with lecturers as I do kind of assess that it often is. Students obviously have a vested interest in the best of their education. Every student wants the best teaching, the best teachers and the best supports. Students do want to aid in the improving of their teaching. Students want to be inspired and want to feel passionate about their studies. The days of learning by rote really should be
gone. Students may have kneejerk reactions of anger when the standard is not as high as it should be.

As a student union representative, very often one of my main roles is directing that frustration into something more productive, such as recommending that students become student representatives and participate in departmental committees. It is important that the outcomes of the departmental committees or programme committees are listened to. This does not always happen as much as we would like it to.

A good learning experience is a relevant learning experience, especially in times when the world is changing at an ever-increasing pace. It is important for teachers to highlight the relationship between theory and practice. Students need to learn the relevancy for their study. Teaching and learning is very much a collaborative journey for both the teacher and the learner.

The use of the Blackboard facility (UCC’s virtual learning environment) is often one of the first things that is blamed for falling attendances at lectures and classes. There are many reasons why students do not always attend, including less than excellent teaching and other conflicting demands on their time. Good lecturers always have good attendance, and students always know who the good lecturers are. Often attending lectures is a relatively passive experience, with students sitting and taking notes, but rarely fully engaged with the process of learning. There is often a heavy reliance by the lecturer on just reading things out. I have had lecturers who stood at the front of the room and read A4 books of paper. I really wanted to just steal it and photocopy it for everyone!

The lecturer is supposed to be challenging and engaging with students. Most people can recall their favourite teacher. Frequently the reason is that the lecturer genuinely cared about students and/or that they genuinely cared about their topic. The best lecturer I ever had, Professor Joseph Lee, could talk for the fifty minutes, without slides, without PowerPoint, and completely engage with the students. He facilitated engagement and an appreciation of what the people in the room thought. He brought his research and the ideas that he had developed into the classroom and I am hopeful that sometimes he went away at the end of the lecture with one or two nice ideas that he could develop later.

Students want lecturers who are leaders in their field. I imagine that the best lecturers coming in and teaching to undergraduate First Years is likely to be the element that is going to engage them, and ultimately that is what students want. Student expectations are raised when they have an experts in their field teaching them. I think it is important to remember that academics have a dual role as teachers and as researchers. Some lecturers do not always see their role as being teachers and consider themselves to be primarily researchers. Others see teaching as a fundamental part of their being in the universities. I believe that the best developments in the standards of teaching and learning will come with assessment of abilities to teach. In UCC we have developed a module to help our postgraduates in teaching. We have developed, for staff, a Postgraduate Certificate and a Postgraduate Diploma for Teaching & Learning in Higher Education. These are perhaps the most important developments in the support of teaching.
In the appointment of academic staff by universities consideration needs to be given to all three aspects: research, teaching and learning. We need our staff to be expert in all three. In UCC we talk about being a research-led institution so we should really be taking advantage of what we are good at. In France, America and other places, leading academics do teach first year. It is considered an honour and a privilege very often, particularly in America. We need our best researchers to also be our best teachers.

New technologies, such as Bebo, Facebook, U-tube, podcasts, chat rooms, virtual meetings, etc., are changing the way in which teaching is conducted and in which learning takes place. We all need to become familiar with them. However learning styles are very different and we need to consider all of them. We also have to consider the learner and the particular circumstances they find themselves in, for example, the students who are blind, or deaf, or disabled, or non-English speaking, etc. There now appears to be an assumption that all students can use the new technologies, but this is not always the case and training in the use of technologies needs to be provided to all students who need it. Should all students be required to complete the ECDL?

Academics also need to be provided with support and training in the use of the new technologies. It is difficult for students who are dealing in different ways with different academics. While I accept or acknowledge that there is a valid argument from some academics that they do not wish to use technology such as Blackboard for intellectual reasons, I genuinely cannot imagine why reading lists, contact details of the lecturer, contact details of class reps, and even submission dates for essays, etc. cannot be placed on a facility like Blackboard.

The other major issue in relation to use of new technologies is the provision of access. Students cannot always afford their own laptop/desktop and adequate access to facilities needed to be ensured for all.

Designing content for education should be driven by sound principles of learning and not simply available technology. To me, technology is about supporting learning. Distance learning is a growing field and an interesting one, and it does provide a lot of challenges for higher education institutions. It is necessary to ensure that distance students are treated equally to students on campus. Otherwise students run the risk of being isolated from the university and the university services. They do not have good or easy access to the library and other facilities such as academic bookshops, counselling and careers services.

Concerns also have to be raised about the quality of teaching and learning in distance education. Where are the guarantees of quality? The other aspect – I’m dealing with Open University, so not to offend anyone. The Open University student might appreciate their degree but they also might feel it is not the same type of student experience. Rarely has it ever been shown that distance learners feel part of the institution. There is a need to engage with the students and the support services to ensure that distance education students have the best possible service.
Another concern I have is a perception that we give students degrees but we do not develop all their skills, including areas such as public speaking, debating, team skills, ICT, etc. Universities must provide the scaffolding or support to help learners to build and develop. Ultimately not everyone is going to become an academic and it is often the valuable generic-type skills that they will need in the workplace.

What is important is assessment and not the long debates on re-structuring within the University? When restructuring schools, faculties and colleges, there is a requirement to put in place safeguards for students so that their learning will really be protected. There is always a debate around assessment and quality, and one of the things I am suggesting is a kind of OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills). This is a UK-based system where schools are inspected. The inspectors sit in the back of classrooms and judge the teachers. It is really productive because the reports that emerge on individual lecturers become essential. We talked earlier about an audit of learning. I am all in favour.

One of the common phrases that is thrown around about learning is “You learn as much outside of the class as you do inside”. Student activities are one of the areas where I personally felt I learned a lot, and there are talks about the possibility of accrediting these activities. So it’s a case of what are we going to do with this. It is something we need to think about and structure, because of the issue of how it relates to academic learning.

One final point: it might be a nice idea to form graduate panels where, two years after graduation, graduates are invited back to UCC and offered an opportunity to address questions such as:

- Did your university open your mind and challenge you?
- Did you genuinely enjoy the student experience?
- Given the choice again would you go to the same institution?

If two years down the line a student does not come back and say about your department that you genuinely made a difference, and “I grossly benefitted” then we all have to worry about this, because it is one of the great challenges we face.

Thank you very much.
POSTER PRESENTATIONS
INTRODUCTION TO POSTER PRESENTATIONS

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Biographical Notes

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Conference participants were invited to submit poster presentations highlighting their teaching and learning research. Fifty conference delegates from seven institutions presented thirty-eight posters at the NAIRTL conference.

The poster session fulfilled several important objectives of the National Academy for the Integration of Research and Teaching and Learning. It allowed some conference participants to make their research public to an international audience, given that there was not sufficient time in the schedule for everyone to make an oral presentation. It gave others an opportunity to present emerging ideas, and use the poster as the focus of their discussion with colleagues during the conference. It allowed us all to share in the initiatives and approaches of colleagues from our own and from other disciplines. It was a forum for disciplinary colleagues to further share the traditional as well as the emerging ‘language’ of teaching and learning. It proved a very effective way to spark off new ideas and initiatives. From this National Academy for the Integration of Research and Teaching and Learning poster session, several ideas for future collaboration emerged.

For some disciplinary colleagues the production and presentation of the research poster was the first positive step along the road to ‘going public’ with their work on teaching and learning. For example colleagues undertaking the Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education in University College Cork were assigned to produce posters on the theme of ‘Teaching for Understanding’ (TfU). These contributors were invited to write on the theme of Teaching for Understanding, through documenting and researching their own teaching with a view to developing a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). Teaching for Understanding can provide lecturers with a vocabulary, a way to open up and interrogate practice. The Teaching for Understanding process can help lecturers to document practice and hence move them in the direction of teaching as research, in short, towards a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. These Posters provide evidence that Teaching for Understanding is a useful theoretical and practical framework in mapping out the journey towards the development of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

A leading authority on Teaching for Understanding, Wiske¹ is confident of the positive influence of this approach:

In the years since the TfU project published its findings and framework, this educational model has served as a structure for designing educational materials and activities in a wide variety of locations and types of settings throughout the United States and around the world: preschools, elementary and secondary schools, universities and professional development programs.

In some disciplines the vehicle of poster presentation is not used for dissemination of research. One presenter said “producing a poster was a huge learning curve for me. It was my first time undertaking such a project, as posters are not usually used as a form of presentation in my discipline”. In recent years, research poster presentations have become common practice at teaching and learning conferences, particularly those focussing on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

The NAIRTL poster session was an important forum for presenters’ self assessment and review. On reflection contributors commented that “it brought home to me that a picture can paint a thousand words” and that “just by viewing my own creation it became immediately clear to me that I should consider…” and “the poster planning made me consider the major aspects... relate them to... and summarise.”.

Peer review and peer learning were evident. Two presenters commented “the experience of composing and critiquing was a huge learning event” and “I learned a good deal from viewing posters of others”. By viewing work of colleagues, participants internalise the elements of a good poster. This is important for staff development. Viewing the posters also highlighted the difference between a conference research poster and a poster advertising the benefits of something. Some posters tried to achieve both.

The presentation of research in poster form allowed creativity. The majority of contributors expressed their research in pictorial form, and one commented that this is “infinitely more effective than a narrative that might span numerous pages”. Some contributors reflected on the nature of their audience, and concluded that they would have explained their terms differently with hindsight.

One delegate summed up the importance of the opportunity that a conference poster session provides with a quote from Confucius (450BC) “Tell me and I will forget. Show me, and I may remember. Involve me and I will understand”.
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