



Teaching Matters

Teaching and Learning Centre

Issue 11, May 2003

In this issue

- Developing a research agenda on teaching and learning at the LSE (p. 1.)
- Pros and cons of using course packs – print and electronic (p.3.)
- A case study of innovation in seminar design to get the best from on-line and 'live' sessions (p.4.)
- Results from a survey of LSE Contract Research Staff (p.8.)
- Dates of induction events for new academic staff and occasional teachers (p.10.)

Teaching Prizes

Over the past six years, LSE has rewarded a select group of **Major Review candidates** with teaching prizes. This year six of the 19 candidates received prizes.

Congratulations to: Dr Cecile Fabre, Government; Dr Clare Hemmings, Gender Institute; Dr Tim Leunig, Economic History; Dr Sunil Kumar, Social Policy; Dr Eric Neumayer, Geography and Environment; Dr Jeremy Penzer, Statistics. Winners' profiles were detailed in a Teaching and Learning News and Views Special in March. If you did not see it and would like a copy please contact Rebecca Trumble.

Congratulations also to the following **Occasional Teachers** who have been awarded prizes by their departments for the **2002-03** session: -

Jonathan Lunn, DESTIN; Karen Throsby, Gender Institute; Stuart Astill, Government; Daniel Linsker, Government; Valentina Mele, IIM; Konstantinos Tzioumis, IIM; Tatyana Chambers, Language Centre; Claudia Geithner, Language Centre; Christophe Millart, Language Centre; Jesse Elvin, Law; Tatiana Flessas, Law; Enrico Milano, Law; Tamara Relis, Law; Stephen Tully, Law; Ruth Kattumuri, Methodology Institute; Roli Asthana, Social Policy; Shireen Kanji, Social Policy; Tomas Chamorro Premuzic, Social Psychology; Barry Rogers, Social Psychology.

Nominations for OT prizes are still awaited from some Departments.

SARS Guidance to Academic Staff and Conveners

Alison Johns, Personnel Director, 29 April 2003

Conveners and members of the academic staff will be aware of the guidance issued to staff and students via a Briefing on line mail out on 28 April 2003.

There is understandable concern about SARS but the medical advice is that the risk of contracting the disease is very small. On current evidence, there is no danger of contracting the infection by contact in the period before a

person with SARS falls unwell. There is also unlikely to be any risk from casual contact in classes or halls during early stages of the illness.

In the light of this information, the School does not plan to make any general changes to teaching or examination arrangements. But at the discretion of the teaching staff, and the students concerned, special arrangements for some seminars and classes may be made on an exceptional medical basis, such as the teacher having a history of respiratory disease or poor immune system.

If you wish to make such arrangements, you should seek the agreement of your convener, who should discuss the request with Ray Richardson. All tuition and seminar obligations to students will have to be met. If it is subsequently agreed that you may make alternative arrangements, you should contact your students to explain how you plan to proceed. Discussions are presently taking place about the possibility of establishing course related on line discussion groups via the Centre for Learning Technology as an alternative to face-to-face teaching.

Please address any queries to Alison Johns: email: a.johns@lse.ac.uk, tel: 020 7849 4664

New Developments

The LSE PhD Conference 16 – 20 June 2003

TLC, the Language Centre and Careers are joining forces to pilot a week-long series of events for LSE PhD students to include work on conference presentation skills, self-marketing and career exploration. This "conference week" follows on from and builds on the very popular and successful Methodology Institute course on "Authoring a PhD" run by Professor Patrick Dunleavy and Professor George Gaskell in the Lent Term. The week will culminate in a day at which LSE PhD students will be invited to present papers in a student conference aimed at improving networking for PhD students across the School. There will also be plenty of time for more social networking with an opening lunch and closing reception. Academic colleagues are most welcome to join us in any aspect of running the event, and we also hope you will promote the week to your PhD students, as the more participants there are, the more interesting the week will be. Contact Liz Barnett in the first instance.

Developing a Research Agenda for the Teaching and Learning Centre

Part of the most recent "quality enhancement" funding from HEFCE is to be used to undertake institutional research and development work within the LSE. TLC will be

coordinating this work and will manage three types of projects.

The first type of project is essentially one of internal information gathering, supported by some investigation of practice in other HEIs (particularly our main comparators), and the published HE literature. The first study we are proposing will look at practice across the School with regards PhD programmes. It will consider such issues as induction, taught elements, research training, supervision arrangements, the upgrade process, tracking of student progress and completion. The work will contribute to an internal "practice guide", as well as providing useful materials for TLC training and support on PhD supervision.

The second type of project TLC wishes to initiate is small-scale qualitative and quantitative studies of specific aspects of the LSE student learning experience, and their impact on student outcomes. Here, TLC is interested in working with colleagues in academic departments and key central services. Some possible areas of interest include:

- Evaluation of the up-take and impact on student learning of specific elements of on-line learning support (eg: on-line discussion; use of quizzes and other feedback mechanisms)
- How lecturing is used as part of the learning process at LSE, and what students gain (or otherwise) from this key element of the "LSE experience"
- How MSc students manage their learning
- Student interpretation and use of feedback from staff on "formative" written work

Each of the above should provide some practical insights into more and less effective approaches to curriculum design and advice to staff and students on approaches to learning. They also link to policy and strategy issues. TLC welcomes expressions of interest from departments in investigating these issues, and is also open to alternative ideas and proposals.

The third type of project TLC is considering is a larger scale study of the experience of MSc students at the LSE. There has been a wide range of studies, both in the UK and overseas, of the undergraduate learning experience and its impact on outcomes. Researchers at Oxford University are currently undertaking a major study of the

"Oxford" undergraduate experience, and there is another larger ESRC-funded project under the TLRP looking at student learning in specific disciplines (see Education LTSN entry on p.9.). Rather less work has been undertaken on MSc students. This, combined with the importance of MSc programmes at LSE, is part of the motivation for singling out this area for some detailed research.

TLC will be starting up work on (1) and (2) above in the coming three months. The larger project will be developed over the coming year, with the main work scheduled for 2004-2006. Any departments/individuals who would be interested in collaborating in this work, or who may have PhD students interested in "occasional research assistant" contracts to help undertake the work are welcome to contact Liz Barnett, email l.barnett@lse.ac.uk.

Teaching Development

£££££ SENDA Development Projects

As part of special HEFCE funding to improve our base level provision for students with disabilities, we are inviting departments to bid for £1000 towards projects aimed at re-designing courses, curricula, and/or teaching materials and resources in ways which will improve equality for students with disabilities. Departments may wish to consider a "universal approach to curriculum design and delivery".

The starting point for this is to consider:

- what aspects of courses are essential and unchangeable?
- how can those aspects be preserved and made more accessible without lowering academic standards?
- what barriers are there to making the necessary changes to the curriculum and how can these be overcome?

We envisage projects might fall into two types

1. general preparedness for SENDA (The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001) i.e. anticipate needs of future students
2. case study approach in collaboration with a current student in the department with specific needs

Teaching and Learning Centre contacts:

Dr Liz Barnett

Director, TLC
Room H417c, Ext 6623, Email l.barnett@lse.ac.uk

Jean Jameson

Dyslexia Support Tutor and Adviser to Students with Disabilities
Room H417a, Ext 6034, Email j.m.jameson@lse.ac.uk

Dr Peter Levin

Educational Developer (Student Support) and Consultant in Teaching Methods
Room H417b, Ext 7346, Email p.levin@lse.ac.uk
<http://learning.lse.ac.uk>

Dr Kate Exley

Visiting Adviser for Occasional Teachers / LSE Teacher Accreditation Programme
Email k.a.exley@lse.ac.uk

Rebecca Trumble

Administrator, TLC
Room H417, Ext 6624, Email r.j.trumble@lse.ac.uk

Sue Haines

Adviser to Students with Disabilities Administrator and key contact for one-to-one study support bookings
Room H417, Ext 7767, Email s.haines@lse.ac.uk

Steve Ryan

Director, Centre for Learning Technology
Room H417, Ext 6008, Email s.ryan@lse.ac.uk
<http://teaching.lse.ac.uk/tech/>

For further details see the TLC website:
<http://teaching.lse.ac.uk>

If you are interested, contact Jean Jameson for initial discussions and/or further information.

The Great Course Pack Debate: spoon-feeding our students or providing access to core readings?

Dr Jane Secker, Centre for Learning Technology

Course packs, be they printed or electronic, are being used increasingly by lecturers at LSE to provide students with core reading materials. However, some staff remain sceptical and claim that course packs 'spoon-feed' students and don't encourage wider reading. Dr Jane Secker, from the LSE Centre for Learning Technology, is convinced that in an age of increasing student numbers, reduced funding, and increasingly stretched library resources, the course pack provides a vital service for students and staff. Used sensibly the course pack improves access to core readings. It provides a valuable starting point for reading around a topic, and ensures that no student can arrive at a seminar, claiming their required reading was unavailable in the library. However, it is important that when using a course pack, staff ensure that their students develop the necessary information skills to find their own library materials and read more widely around a subject.

What are course packs?

Course packs are a set of readings that have been designated as essential for a particular course. In printed form they are usually bound together to form a booklet, which students buy from the Library. Course packs are not sold for profit, the price covers printing, admin and any copyright fees. The term 'Course pack' comes from the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA), who until December 2002 did not permit copying for course packs under the Higher Education Licence. This is now allowed, however the Library still offer a printed course pack service as there are a number of publishers who are not covered by CLA license, and publications from the United States often need copyright clearance.

For more information about printed course packs please contact Taught Course Support in the Library. (E-mail: library.course.pack@lse.ac.uk)

Electronic course packs

Electronic course packs are a relatively new development and are again a set of readings designated as essential for a particular course, however the readings are scanned and available as PDF files. At the present time all reading must be copyright cleared before they are scanned and the permission fees vary significantly depending on the publisher. The readings are mounted on a secure server, accessible only to LSE staff and students. Access is via an online reading list in the School's online learning environment, WebCT. Since 1999 the Centre for Learning Technology and the Library has offered an electronic course pack service and there is funding available to cover copyright charges.

For more information and advice about electronic course packs, contact Jane Secker in the Centre for Learning Technology. E-mail epacks@lse.ac.uk

Advantages of course packs

Traditionally in higher education in the UK, and in particular at LSE, reading lists have been rather lengthy documents that provide students with scope for reading around a subject. Although there may be one or two key textbooks which students would be encouraged to purchase, in general students are expected to identify which readings are most relevant from a longer list. However, influenced in particular by teaching methods in the United States, many courses now produce a more prescriptive reading list. It is now fairly common for there to be weekly set readings the class are expected to undertake, for discussion during a seminar. Some might argue that this prescriptive approach does little to develop students' research and library skills. In some instances students are even given the library classmark on their reading list and simply need to go to the shelves to locate a book.

The weekly readings also cause problems for the library who are faced with the problem of providing large numbers of students with timely access to core readings. Take for example a key reading for week four of the Lent Term of an undergraduate economics course. It may remain on the shelf for 51 weeks of the year, but for one week in the year almost 500 students may be required to have read chapter three. Obviously purchasing multiple copies of a book is one solution, as are shortened loan periods or providing an off-print. However, the challenge of providing high numbers of students with access to a reading for one week of the year can easily be solved by the course pack – be it electronic or paper format. By providing students with their own copy of a reading, it increases the likelihood of the work being read.

The importance of information skills

The argument remains that by providing readings in course pack format students will be discouraged from reading widely around a topic. Well some lecturers might say that if students only read what is in their course pack then that is an achievement! However, seriously there are a number of ways to counteract this claim, and one of the most important areas is to ensure that all students have the adequate 'information skills' or 'library research skills' to be able to find readings not on their reading list. The students also need to be actively encouraged to do wider reading, by tying this to assessment methods. It should be clearly set out at the outset of a course that students who only read the essential materials in the course pack will pass, but will not achieve high grades in their written work, or in their final exam.

Each term the Library offers a programme of face-to-face classes, which will teach students information skills. Liaison librarians are also prepared to schedule tailored classes for groups of students to introduce them to concepts such as searching the Internet and evaluating the information they find, using specialist databases such as Westlaw or Lexis-Nexis or using a journal index such as the International Bibliography of the Social Sciences. For more information about these services contact your liaison librarian.

In the online environment, WebCT can help to ensure your students do wider reading and teaching information skills can easily be incorporated into your course website. Alongside your electronic course pack you can offer links to various online training courses. 'Discover the Electronic Library' is one online course developed in-house at LSE, however there are many others, such as the range of

Virtual Training Suites, which are subject based introductions to using the internet developed for students by the Resource Discovery Network (RDN). Within WebCT courses it is also possible to link to electronic journals that might be useful to your students, so you can encourage them to browse through recent publications in their subject area. Alternatively you can link straight to a range of electronic library resources from your course website. If you would like more information about WebCT courses please contact the Centre for Learning Technology (E-mail: clt-support@lse.ac.uk).

Conclusion

Course packs and online reading lists are no substitute for having more books in the library, however when there are high numbers of students on a course they solve the problem of providing access to reading materials. If course packs are used sensibly they can ensure that students get hold of essential reading material. And if they are provided along with guidance about further reading, about literature searching and about how to develop information and research skills, they are a valuable learning resource.

For more information see

www.lse.ac.uk/library/tcs/taught_course_support.htm

For more information about the CLT see

<http://teaching.lse.ac.uk/tech>

For the programme see www.infoskills.lse.ac.uk

To find out details of your liaison librarian see

www.lse.ac.uk/library/atozservices.htm

For more information see www.vts.rdn.ac.uk

The Pedagogy of Seminars – Innovation in Teaching and Learning

Dr Sunil Kumar, Social Policy

Notes from an experiment – Lent Term 2003

1. The Traditional Seminar System

The use of seminars to foster learning through presentation and discussion continues to be a feature of learning at the undergraduate and graduate levels at the LSE. However, I have noted a number of shortcomings with the traditional seminar system, especially when:

- The seminar is not preceded by a lecture
- The seminar group comprises of an international body of students whose first language is not English.
- A number of the seminar participants are not experienced in speaking in public

These shortcomings are illustrated in Figure 1 opposite:

1. The quality of the presentation varies from poor to good
2. This in turn has an impact on the quality of the discussion
3. There is little or no contribution from those who are not confident of speaking
4. Excludes those who take time to formulate their thoughts since the discussion has progressed and comment may not appropriate.
5. There may be a tendency for students to rely on the presenter to do most of the work (and the reading) for the class

2. WebCT Mirroring the Traditional Seminar System

There is a need to find alternative and innovative ways of enhancing the learning experience through seminars.

WebCT offers the opportunity for interactive exchanges prior to the seminar and is being used by a number of courses. As far as I am aware, WebCT is being used (especially for seminars) to mirror the traditional seminar process with the exception that the seminar presenter is required to post the presentation on a specified date before the group meets for a face-to-face discussion. Although this helps in overcoming problems 3 and 4 listed above, it does not overcome problems 1 and 2 namely the quality of the initial presentation and subsequent discussion.

3. WebCT And Reversing the Process: Experiment with SA460 Urbanisation and Social Planning

I have experimented with a reversal of this process for SA 460 – Urbanisation and Social Planning - as outlined in Figure 2 opposite. The process entailed participants posting a critical response to a set question using examples from the literature.

The experiment was conducted in two graduated stages. In the first stage (seminar on employment and the urban poor), presenters were asked to prepare their presentations at the same time as the postings were taking place. This was done partly due to the shortage of time between the closure of the postings and the seminar as well as to gradually introduce the group to on-line discussions. I used the postings to initiate and conduct the discussion. The response rate for this stage was (excluding the two presenters in each group):

Seminar Group	Number	Response rate
Group 1A	8	7
Group 1B	6	3
Total	14	10
Group 2A	9	4
Group 2B	8	5
Total	17	9

Posting Opened	Thursday 10 January 2003 (pm)
Posting Closed	Wednesday 22 January 2003 (am)
Days available	13 days
Seminar held on	Thursday 23 January 2003

In the second stage (seminar on housing and the urban poor), the presenters become discussants. They were required to synthesise the postings, add to them, raise questions for discussion and moderate the seminar.

Seminar Group	Number	Response rate
Group 1A	8	7
Group 1B	6	5
Total	14	12
Group 2A	9	6
Group 2B	8	5
Total	17	11

Posting Opened	Tuesday 21 January 2003 (pm)
Posting Closed	Tuesday 12 February 2003 (am)
Days available	22 days
Seminar held on	Thursday 13 February 2003

Figure 1: The traditional seminar process and outcomes

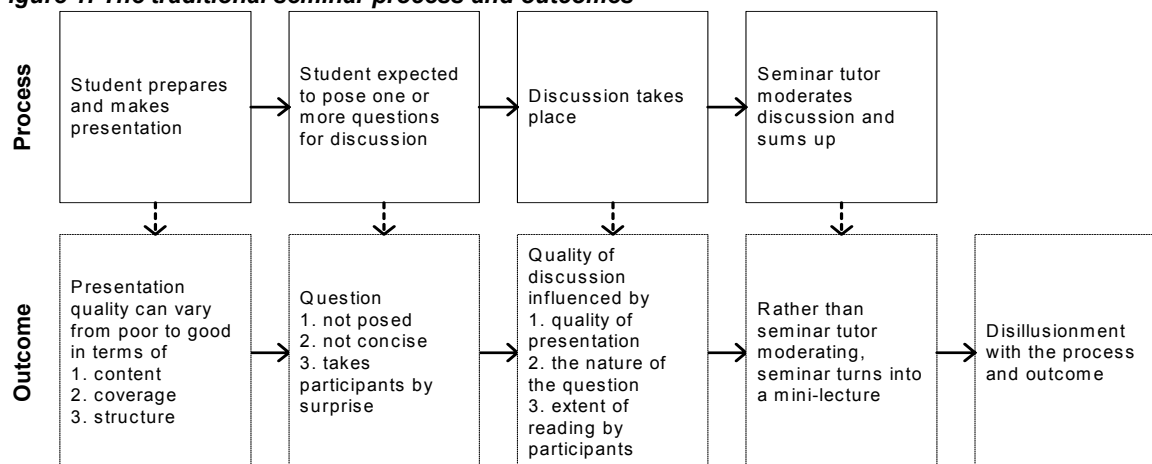


Figure 2: WebCT and reversing the seminar process and outcomes

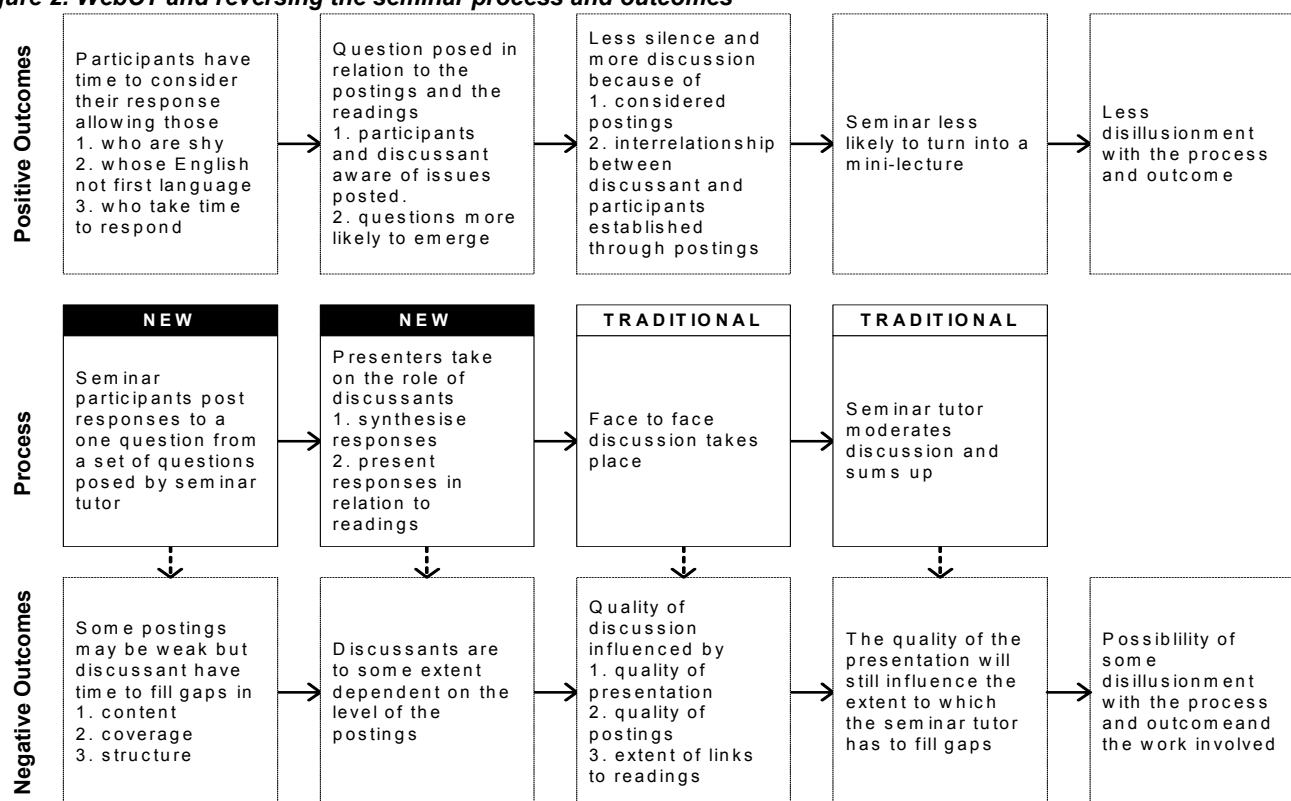


Table 1: Potentially problematic issues to be considered

Potential Problem	Potential Solution
1. Increased the workload for students	Ask only one half of each seminar group to respond for each seminar. This will allow a two-week period between responses (assuming that the seminars take place each week).
2. Increased workload for the seminar tutor	The change of role – from presenter to discussant – will decrease this likelihood
3. Not all students posted their responses and that there will be posting fatigue in the long term.	In the initial stage, the seminar tutor will need to be involved in promoting postings. This role can gradually shift to the discussants. A closure posting - summing up by the seminar tutor that makes reference to specific contributions – could ensure that interest is maintained. Stress can be laid on the role that the postings play in relation to exams. Postings are evidence of participation and can enhance student references.
4. In the first trial of this method, the seminars ran over time	Brief seminar tutors to keep careful watch on time, and if there are still issues remaining at the end of the allotted time which students wish to debate, re-open the on-line discussion and encourage further contributions through that medium following the seminar.

Notes from the experiment

The seminars on housing and the urban poor turned out to be very different from those in the Michaelmas Term (the traditional seminar system)

- There was almost no silence after the presenters finished their presentation.
- The fact that the presenters make reference to some of the postings ensured that the participants were thinking of the specific issue being raised for the discussion.
- The seminar tutor was able to involve all those who posted their responses by one or more of the following: (a) asking them to clarify aspects of their response; (b) asking them how their response related to an issue raised by the presenter; (c) expand upon their response.
- Participants who were responding in class to their postings were being challenged to a much greater degree and were defending their postings more strongly.
- Participants who were normally quiet in class participated to a much greater degree.
- Most of those who did not post a response were very vocal (perhaps to overcome their lack of participation in the posting).

This new approach still has some shortcomings that need to be addressed. Some of these are noted in Table 1 overleaf with possible solutions suggested.

Nonetheless, initial experiments with the process do suggest that more students engage much more actively than is the case with the traditional seminar format.

Teaching Development Funding

A reminder that TLC continues to have funds for teaching development projects. Since CLT was established with its own project funding for technology supported teaching developments. The TLC funds are being kept for 'non-technology' initiatives. Recent examples of projects and proposed projects include:

- development of departmental course guides/resource materials for class teachers
- departmental case study materials in different disciplines
- development of MSc dissertation writing support materials and teaching

Anyone interested in developing an aspect of their teaching is welcome to contact TLC to discuss funding options. Note that several of the Learning and Teaching Support Network subject centres also offer small development grants (see p.9.).

Linking Digital Library Resources to WebCT

Nicole Harris, Library

The Library and Centre for Learning Technology at LSE were recently awarded funding from the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) to investigate issues to do with linking digital library resources with virtual learning environments (such as WebCT).

The project began with a user needs analysis, consulting academics, students and library staff. Academics currently using WebCT were targeted and they provided valuable information about how the link between digital library resources and WebCT might be made easier. The project has focused in on reading (or resource) list presentation

within WebCT and the more general processes of designing course reading lists, assigning readings to lists and making electronic resources available to students.

The project is testing the functionality of a commercial resource list management system to see if the product can be adapted to suit the very specific needs identified during the user needs study. To this end the Project team are working with ReadingListDirect www.readinglistdirect.co.uk who are allowing free access to their system for the duration of the DELIVER project (July 2003). After this point, specific stakeholders will be invited to make decisions concerning further use and funding for the project developments.

The team recognise that the commercial software does not meet all the needs defined by users, and is developing extra tools to address these gaps. The aim is to provide teaching staff with a comprehensive tool for building and maintaining resources lists. These lists can be presented within WebCT using templates designed by the Centre for Learning Technology (and currently applied to e-coursepacks within that environment). All resources included on course lists will be centrally maintained to ensure that links are up-to-date and correct, whether the link is to a library catalogue record, an electronic journal article, an e-coursepack reading or to an external website. This centralised approach will also enable the Library to receive detailed information on new resources recommended by academics, and to use this data to make suitable resource purchase decisions. The advantage to students will be up to date, standardised reading list information, available through their WebCT course. The reading list will link directly to full text electronic journal articles, library catalogues records, e-course pack readings, websites or any other resource that the lecturer specifies.

The project (named DELIVER: Digital Electronic Library Integration within Virtual EnviRonments) is being jointly undertaken with De Montfort University with support of the two institutions library management systems and the software company WebCT. To find out more about these developments, to become involved in pilot testing, or to raise issues concerning the project, please contact the project officer Nicole Harris n.v.harris@lse.ac.uk. If you are interested in WebCT courses please contact the Centre for Learning Technology (clt-support@lse.ac.uk)

TQARO Survey of Class Teachers

Alison Reay, TQARO

Each year TQARO surveys the views of class teachers in the Michaelmas or Lent term. The primary aim of the survey is to pick up on any concerns about course structure and delivery that might need to be addressed urgently. In addition the survey (which is entirely open-ended) asks for feedback on the training and support provided to occasional teachers. This year 45 class teachers responded to the survey. This brief report picks up on some of the issues raised.

Structure/Content of Course

The vast majority of responses on course structure and content were very positive. The handful of constructive criticisms included: the problems for class teachers of

“unbalanced” reading lists which had too many items for some weeks and not enough for others (and the need to be realistic about the number of “required” readings” expected in a week); the need at times to give more class time to a given topic which students find difficult; and a suggestion to start a course with a few introductory classes, not linked to lectures so that students can find out exactly what to expect from their course and to use that time to cover background/basic information. A few class teachers observed improvements on course structures from last year.

Integration of lectures and classes

Again, the picture here was largely positive. However, around one quarter of respondents noted some concern with the relationship between lectures and classes. This was most common for courses where the two contexts operate separately, or where there was a significant time lag between the lecture and the class on the same topic. In some cases, this can be effectively managed, through effective communication between lecturers, class teachers and students. But at times, class teachers felt they were left to give the rationale for the course design to students – yet class teachers themselves have little personal control in this sphere.

Training and Support

Teachers have generally appreciated the training and support offered and made particular mention of the helpfulness of individual lecturers:

“Before the Michaelmas Term, we met for over an hour and discussed the course readings. At this time I was able to ask questions and Dr X was able to highlight the aspects of the course he thought to be most important. We continue to provide feedback on a regular basis.....complemented by a degree of trust and support that allows me to confidently carry out my responsibilities.”

Some who have not had the same level of support from their Departments would welcome it and would no doubt benefit from the extra help. It is worth noting that several departments now arrange briefing sessions for new and experienced class teachers at the start of the year, in addition to planning meetings between class teachers and the teacher responsible for a particular course.

Those who attended the central teaching courses offered by TLC were very positive about the training provided – for example: “Always helpful and available whenever needed”, “Very happy with what’s on offer thank you” and “Lots available!” Some made special mention of the usefulness of the new Language Centre training for teachers who are speakers of English as a Second Language. The only criticisms on training were the lack of training on use of AV equipment, and the lack of subject specificity.

Other Comments

This brought a variety of observations and suggestions, some of which are listed below.

- OTs should be paid for the time spent on preparation, correcting homework, marking essays and attending meetings
- There are too many students in the class which makes discussion difficult. Class sizes should be reduced to improve teaching quality.

- Rooms which are more suitable for discussions (rather than set out as class rooms) are needed for some courses
- On-line registers detract from the personal contact with students.
- All courses should be put ‘on-line’ (there were a number of positive comments about the use of WebCT on courses)
- Appropriate office space for part time staff would be appreciated.

Student Support

Student Support in the Run up to Exams

TLC is offering a range of events this term to support students in the run up to exams, and on dissertation preparation. These include:

7 May, 2.30-4.30pm **Exams preparation: last minute** (two sessions in D209, the first hour for undergraduates, the second for MSc students)

14 May, 2.15-4pm **Quantitative Exams: last minute preparation** H103

2 July, 2.15-4pm **Structuring your MSc dissertation**

In addition, students can contact the office for one-to-one study advice sessions (ask them to email S.Haines@lse.ac.uk for an appointment). Note that we now offer one to one advice both for general issues, including essay writing and exam preparation, and for problems with specific aspects of quantitative subjects.

This year TLC has worked with several MSc programmes on dissertation writing sessions. Any other departments interested in considering such sessions for future years are welcome to get in touch.

Staff may also have noted the “Exams Stress Management” sessions on offer in the coming term through St Philips Health Centre. These are free of charge and open to all students from all departments and years. There is no need to book. The informal sessions begin on Wednesday 7 May and then continue every Wednesday afternoon from 2pm – 3.30pm in room Z225.

Finally, staff tutoring students who require special exam arrangements – please can you make sure they realise this needs to be sorted out in advance! If your students haven’t already made arrangements, they need to contact Jean Jameson (Adviser to Students with Disabilities) immediately.

Mind Mapping at the LSE

Rupert Prudom, IT Services

Mind mapping (or concept mapping) is a process of focussing on a central idea and then linking related ideas to that core idea. This process can be used to plan essays, presentations, projects and even websites. Creating a mind map involves writing down a central idea and thinking up new and related ideas that radiate out from the central idea. By focussing on key ideas written down in your own words, and then looking for branches out and connections between the ideas, you are mapping knowledge in a

manner which will help you understand and remember new information.

The school is now providing Inspiration7 as a computer based concept-mapping tool. The package allows an electronic mind map to be created by either the non-linear mapping sheet on which icons are placed (the icons are fully customisable) and then links between the icons/ideas are created. Audio clips, graphics and web links can also be inserted on the sheet. This sheet can be converted to a number of different formats e.g. web page, graphics file, text/word file and PowerPoint presentation.

You can also toggle in between the mapping sheet and a text based outline – which can also be exported.

The software is currently available on all open access PC's. It can also be installed on any PC within the LSE (please contact your IT cluster team).

LSE Careers Service Summer Term Events

Fiona Sanford, LSE Careers Service

Job Hunting in a Cold Climate

Are any of your final year students still applying for jobs? Or are some of them yet to wake up to the realities of job hunting? If so, then please encourage them to book a place on our Summer Term workshops "Find a Job in Three Hours". These are designed to take the mystique out of job hunting and make the whole process less alarming. Each three-hour session will cover

- how to track down jobs, especially those which are never advertised
- Improving interview technique and what interviewers are really looking for
- how to target effectively CVs and application forms

We will be running three workshops for **final year** undergraduates, and two for postgraduates.

Students need to sign up in the Careers Centre.

Undergraduate workshops:

Thursday 1st May 12pm - 3pm

Tuesday 24th June 1pm – 4pm

Tuesday 1st July 1pm – 4pm

Postgraduate workshops:

Thursday 3rd July 1pm – 4pm

Tuesday 22nd July 1pm – 4pm

Careers in NGOs

Following the success of last term's 'More to Life than Banking' the Careers Service is hosting a lunchtime Forum on "Getting into an NGO". The Forum will be chaired by Professor Margot Light, Convener of International Relations, and will have speakers from four NGOs including Amnesty International and Christian Aid.

Thursday 8 May, 12.30pm – 2pm, New Theatre, East Building

All students and staff welcome. No ticket needed - Just turn up!

European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL)

Amber Miro, IT Training and Development Specialist

The European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) is a world-wide qualification in IT competence, designed for people who wish to gain a basic qualification in computing to help them with their current occupation, develop their IT skills and enhance their career prospects. It certifies that

the holder understands basic concepts of IT, and has the knowledge and skills needed to use the most common computer applications productively and effectively.

Known as the International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL) outside Europe, the qualification is recognised in over 60 countries around the world. In the UK, it has been adopted by organisations in the public and private sectors, including the NHS, Ernst & Young, the Bank of England and all Government departments, as well as over 70 universities or other institutions of higher education.

In 2002, the Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association (UCISA) conducted a survey among 200 senior IT managers and people teaching, supporting and testing IT or ECDL skills in HE. 80% of respondents indicated that for the majority of their students, the ECDL provides the right level of competency assessment, and it has been implemented more often than any other externally-recognised IT qualification.

ECDL at LSE was introduced in February 2003. To date, 20 students and 16 members of staff have expressed an interest in the initiative, of whom 19 people have registered for the qualification. 60 tests have been taken and six students have already obtained their licences.

What people are saying about the ECDL at LSE:

"It is a good opportunity to gain a formal qualification that proves I am able to use computers to a certain standard."

"I signed up to do the ECDL mainly for my own personal satisfaction, and also because there is always something to learn about any subject and this is a good structured way of doing that without too much pressure."

"It'll look good on my CV and even better, it's recognised in so many European countries."

"It is even better than I thought it would be - The true gain is learning about things that you did not know existed and quicker ways to do things."

For further information see:

<http://ittraining.lse.ac.uk/ECDL/default.htm> or contact Amber Miro on ext. 6367, email: a.miro@lse.ac.uk

Academic Staff Development

Are LSE Researchers CROS?

Rebecca Trumble, TLC Administrator

The Contract Research Online Survey, funded by HEFCE and project managed and implemented by the Institute of Learning and Research Technology (ILRT) at the University of Bristol, was undertaken by the LSE for the first time this year. This UK-wide survey aims to encapsulate the views and experiences of Contract Researchers, i.e. "any person employed on a contract with a defined end-date whose primary responsibility is research", (CROS Steering Committee). The survey aims to anonymously gather data about working conditions, career aspirations and career development opportunities.

Survey results will be shared among CROS partner institutions that have agreed to run the survey with the aim

of improving general practise in the employment of CRS. 45 Universities signed an agreement with HEFCE to take part in the CROS project this year and openly share results between participating partners including Cambridge, Manchester, Oxford, Warwick, Leeds, St Andrews and University College London.

The LSE Survey took place from 10 – 28 February and achieved a pleasing response rate of 47%, compared to an average of 29% for all the institutions that took part. An initial scan of the data did not provide any surprising results but a thorough report is currently being prepared. The good news is that 84% of the respondents rate their overall experience of being a Contract Researcher at LSE as either good or very good. However there is clearly work to be done in some areas. One issue identified as a problem is induction with only 35% of respondents receiving formal induction. This is something the TLC hopes to change. Following successful pilots of a workshop entitled, 'Being a Contract Researcher at LSE: career development, staff development and support opportunities', both this year and last, the TLC will hold it twice a year from 2003-04 as a formal induction session for CRS. There will also be a number of staff development workshops specifically for CRS in next year's programme following the success of a few tested this year....so look out for those! For further information and copies of the report please contact Liz Barnett, L.Barnett@lse.ac.uk.

General information about CROS can be found at www.cros.ac.uk

Some Interesting Links in Learning and Teaching Support Network Subject Centre Sites

Business, Management and Accountancy (BEST):

BEST is offering awards of up to £5,000 for teaching development projects. Forthcoming submission dates are: 30 June 2003, 31 October 2003, and 28 February 2004. Visit the home page: www.business.ltsn.ac.uk/ and scroll down to BEST Teaching Research Grants. Under the Publications banner, see a brief overview of plagiarism issues in Management Education.

Economics: See The Handbook for Economics Lecturers: www.economics.ltsn.ac.uk/handbook/, with sections on teaching, assessment, course design and evaluation. (TLC is purchasing a hard copy, which will be available on loan shortly). You may wish to point students to the links to resources: assessment materials, which holds a wide range of problem sets, most of which have accompanying answers. These might provide a useful resource for students in the run up to exams looking for new practice questions in different subjects. www.economics.ltsn.ac.uk/teaching/exams_n.htm

Education: A consortium of UK universities (Edinburgh, Durham and Coventry) are undertaking discipline-based studies of student learning, including **Economics, Media and Communications** and **History**, as part of the ESRC Teaching and Learning Research Programme. The project website provides an overview of the research along with the main study instruments and associated publications. At the same site, see an interesting paper by John Biggs entitled "Demythologising the teaching of international students". www.ed.ac.uk/etl/

Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences are offering grants of £2,000-£4,000 for teaching development projects. Closing date 30 May. GEES is now running an annual workshop for new lecturers in the discipline. This is scheduled for 19/20th May. There is also a GEES annual conference on teaching and learning 30th June/1st July. TLC is happy to cover the (very reasonable) fees if any staff in Geography and Environment wish to attend either of these events.

History: The History LTSN site has an extensive section of practical guides on various aspects of teaching, including several items on running seminars and small group teaching, and a guide for students on essay writing. See <http://hca.ltsn.ac.uk/resources/guides/index.php>

Information and Computer Science is another site with a detailed section on plagiarism, which includes links to a range of the student "cheat" sites, and to detection tools, including those that detect plagiarism in computer programmes.

Law has a number of detailed publications on aspects of legal education. Visit the home page, and use quick links to get to publications: www.ukcle.ac.uk. Some are on specific subjects (e.g.: Teaching Human Rights) others are on generic topics (e.g.: Teaching Legal Research; Learning about Law lecturing)

Maths, Stats and OR Departments may wish to encourage new academic staff to attend the subject specialist induction to teaching workshop, which is scheduled for 18-19 September at the University of Birmingham (though note this clashes with our in-house induction, but arrangements could be made). Two other events which may be of interest are: **Teaching Multivariate Analysis: What are Lectures for?** Dr N R J Fieller, 19 May at the University of Sheffield and **Virtual Learning Environments - Potential and Pitfalls** Dr W Foster, 17 June at the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The publications area of the website <http://ltsn.mathstore.ac.uk/publications/index.shtml> has a number of potentially interesting items, including an overview of what you can expect from students with A/AS level maths.

Philosophical and religious studies: BPS is organising a short workshop prior to their annual conference (17 July 2003, Queen's University Belfast) on critical thinking and writing in philosophy.

Psychology: See www.psychology.ltsn.ac.uk/teaching_tips.html for a range of teaching tips, which you can browse by psychology teaching topic, teaching problem or learning objective. TLC has a hard copy of two recent publications. The first, [Applying psychology disciplinary knowledge to psychology learning and teaching](#) March 2003 reviews the implications of a number of psychological theories which may be applied to teaching and learning in HE. The second, [Small group teaching and learning in Psychology](#) December 2002 breaks down small group teaching into its component parts, and again looks at how psychological research might impact on practice. Both are available on the website at: www.psychology.ltsn.ac.uk/reports.html. This LTSN also produces a monthly newsletter and a journal: Psychology Learning and Teaching.

Sociology, Anthropology and Politics (C-SAP): The Sociology group is organising a workshop on the "Pedagogies of Teaching Race" on May 21st in Manchester. The Anthropology group are organising an event on 25 September 2003 focusing on how academic departments and the Association of Social Anthropologists (ASA) might: a) provide training and skills for postgraduates and professional anthropologists working outside academia, b) develop and maintain formal networks and contacts between academia and applied anthropology. TLC will make arrangements for anyone from LSE interested in attending these events (they are free or low cost).

Social Policy SWAPItsn is offering to facilitate 2-3 hour consultation sessions for schools/departments and/or groups of colleagues to explore [e-learning](#), [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act 2001](#) (SENDA) and [Student-Centred Teaching Skills](#). At each session they aim to: encourage and support staff within their department; help translate theory and personal practice; introduce and exchange practical strategies for improving learning, teaching and assessment; link departments with their own university resources. Contact: [Mary Locke](#), Administrator, SWAPItsn, Department of Social Work Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Southampton, Southampton SO17 1BJ email: m.locke@swap.ac.uk or Tel: 023 8059 7782 to arrange a free consultation.

External Events/Workshops

The TLC may fund members of academic staff interested in following external training courses (please check IN ADVANCE if funding is available). Some that may be of interest are: -

ILTHE Annual Conference 2003

What works? Reviewing good practice for learning and teaching in higher education
The University of Warwick, Coventry, 2-4 July 2003

Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development courses:

- 'Gender issues in HE', Sian Wearing, 10 June 2003, London, Friends House.
- 'Women as successful leaders', Gina Wisker, 17 June 2003, London, Friends House.

If you would like to attend a workshop please contact Rebecca Trumble in the TLC, email: r.j.trumble@lse.ac.uk, ext: 6624.

New Academic Staff Induction 2003-2004

Next years induction for new academics is scheduled for Tuesday 16 September 2003 - Monday 22 September 2003. The induction is compulsory for all new lecturers with less than three years experience. New researchers to the School are invited to attend any of the sessions they are interested in and are encouraged to attend the Deans' Induction. From 2003-04 the TLC will also be running an induction specifically for contract researchers. This will take place twice per year. (Next years dates are provisionally planned for 14 Nov 2003 & 11 May 2004.) Rebecca Trumble will be contacting Departmental Managers in May to check who should be invited to the induction.

Deans Induction to the LSE

16 September 2003

Facing the Media: media skills for academic staff

17 September 2003

Introduction to Teaching and Learning at LSE

18 & 19 September 2003

Working with LSE Student Diversity

Being a Personal Tutor at the LSE: role and responsibilities

LSE Teaching Committees: recent developments, key issues, and procedures for preparing new courses and programmes

Interim/Major Review, Promotions and Appraisal at LSE

22 September 2003

Compulsory Staff Development for Occasional Teachers

The TLC also runs a training programme of events for occasional teachers (OTs). This is compulsory for OTs who are also registered as students at the LSE. Rebecca Trumble will be in contact with Departmental Managers in June to obtain lists of those who will be teaching next year and require training.

The formal programme for OTs is as follows:

Deans' Induction for Occasional Teachers

It is important that occasional teachers who have not taught at LSE before should attend the session in order to get acquainted with the School's rules, routines and expectations of performance which are attached to the role of occasional teacher.

Date: 08 October 2003

Time: 2.00pm - 4.00pm

Presenters: Mr Mark Hoffman, Dean of Undergraduate Studies

A choice of three options is given depending on the type of course you are teaching i.e. quantitative or qualitative and whether or not you already have extensive experience of teaching elsewhere. The programme is delivered by Dr Kate Exley, an external consultant who is an experienced specialist in Higher Education who has worked for over 50 institutions / national bodies.

Option 1: Postgraduates Who Teach: an introduction to teaching and learning in HE

One-day introductory workshop (part 1) plus three half-day workshops later in the term (parts 2, 3 and 4)

This workshop series has six main sections, focused on: student learning; running classes; making presentations; videoed teaching session; marking and giving feedback to students; writing student reports and reviewing your teaching.

Part 1: Introduction to class teaching

Date (1): 24 September 2003

Date (2): 25 September 2003

Date (3): 1 October 2003

Time: 9.45am - 5.00pm

Part 2: Videoed practice teaching sessions

In groups of no more than 6 participants, each participant runs a 5-8 minute session, which is videoed and detailed feedback provided.

Date (1): 2 October 2003

Date (2): 6 October 2003
Date (3): 15 October 2003
Date (4): 21 October 2003

Part 3: Marking and giving students feedback

Date (1): 15 October 2003
Date (2): 16 October 2003
Date (3): 21 October 2003

Part 4: Reviewing your teaching, writing student reports and references, and responding to student feedback about your teaching, followed by an opportunity for teaching staff to meet and compare experience in an informal, social environment.

Date (1): 25 November 2003
Date (2): 26 November 2003
Date (3): 9 December 2003

Option 2: An Introduction to Teaching and Learning: teaching quantitative subjects

One full-day plus two half-day sessions

Special arrangements are made for teachers in Economics, Maths and Statistics. If you are teaching in a predominantly quantitative area and feel these sessions may be more appropriate, please let us know. Participants are expected to attend all 3 parts.

Part 1: Introduction to running problem-set classes and marking class work

Dates to be arranged.

Part 2: Videoed practice teaching exercises

In groups of no more than 6 participants, each participant runs a 5-8 minute session, which is videoed and detailed feedback provided.

Date (1): 9 October 2003
Date (2): 10 October 2003

Part 3: Reviewing your teaching, writing student reports and references, and responding to student feedback about your teaching, followed by an opportunity for teaching staff to meet and compare experience in an informal, social environment.

Date (1): 25 November 2003
Date (2): 26 November 2003
Date (3): 9 December 2003

Option 3: For new OTs to the LSE but with extensive teaching experience and training or for continuing OTs at LSE would like more training.

Special arrangements to be made by request.

Sessions for Government Occasional Teachers

As well as the Deans' Induction (8 Oct 03) and a Departmental Induction for new OTs (20 May 03), Government OTs are expected to attend the following specialised sessions:

Part 1: Introduction to class teaching

Date: 9 July 2003

Part 2: (As for all other OTs) Videoed practice teaching sessions

In groups of no more than 6 participants, each participant runs a 5-8 minute session, which is videoed and detailed feedback provided.

Date (1): 2 October 2003

Date (2): 6 October 2003
Date (3): 15 October 2003
Date (4): 21 October 2003

Part 3: Marking and giving students feedback for Government OTs

Date: 13 November 2003

Part 4: (As for all other OTs). Reviewing your teaching, writing student reports and references, and responding to student feedback about your teaching, followed by an opportunity for teaching staff to meet and compare experience in an informal, social environment.

Date (1): 25 November 2003
Date (2): 26 November 2003
Date (3): 9 December 2003

Forthcoming LSE Teaching and Learning Centre workshops

There are a number of TLC workshops coming up in the Summer Term, of which a selection is listed below. Further details can be found on the TLC website, <http://teaching.lse.ac.uk>. If you would like further information, or to book a place on a session please contact Rebecca Trumble in the TLC, email: r.j.trumble@lse.ac.uk, ext: 6624.

Centre for Learning Technology WebCT Showcases

These lunchtime showcases give academics an opportunity to share with colleagues what they have developed in WebCT. You will be able to see the course and to discuss with the academic concerned what they achieved and raise any issues with them in an informal environment. This year four sessions will be held all from 1pm - 2 pm in S75. All are welcome.

Monday 12th May 2003

Dr Cecile Fabre: WebCT GV473 Contemporary Political Philosophy and the Body and GV408 Contemporary Disputes about Justice

Monday 19th May 2003

Colin Chalmers: ST100 Basic Statistics and ST201 Statistical Models and Data Analysis

Wednesday 21st May 2003

Prof. McGregor Knox: HY202 International History since 1890

Monday 2nd June 2003

Dr Andrew Pratt: GY430 Contemporary Urbanisation

Handling Hot Moments

Teaching can at times become emotionally charged and personally challenging. This might be a consequence of the content that you are working on with your students, personal relationships within a group, or triggered by some unexpected happening or group dynamic. The impact can leave you feeling personally quite vulnerable and exposed. Putting yourself back together again, restoring self-esteem, and being able to continue to work with that group of students again after such an experience can also prove difficult. This session provides a safe environment within which to explore such situations and discuss and experiment with strategies both to avoid them happening, and to work out how to deal with them when they arise.

This half-day workshop is open to anyone involved in teaching across the School. In addition, or alternatively, there is an option for one-to-one discussions with the workshop organiser. (Places for the one-to-ones are limited, but if demand proves significant we will consider arranging further sessions).

Date: Friday 16 May 2003
Time: Workshop 2pm - 5pm
One-to-one discussions by appointment in the morning
Presenter: Jude Carroll (external consultant)

Advanced Voice Training

One-hour individual consultations

Date: 20 May 2003
Time: One-hour slots throughout the day
Presenter: Stewart Theobald (external consultant)

Career Development for Contract Research Staff

An opportunity for contract research staff/research assistants and other research staff on short term contracts to review career plans, and clarify development needs. This session focuses on exploring career possibilities outside the LSE and possibly outside academia. The course is highly participative and includes individual work, small group and plenary sessions.

Date: 28 May 2003
Time: 9.45am - 4.30pm
Presenter: Jenny Harwood (external consultant)

New Staff Lunch and Review

An informal opportunity for teaching staff to meet and compare experience over lunch.

Date: 03 June 2003
Time: 12.50pm - 2.00pm

WebCT Review

This session is aimed at all staff who have been involved in using WebCT over the past year, and staff who are interested in using WebCT in the future. It will be a chance to exchange views and experiences and to find out about planned developments in the CLT over the coming academic year.

Date: 4 June 2003
Time: 12.15pm - 2.00pm
Presenters: Staff from the CLT

Excluded positions in undergraduate classrooms: analysing classroom interactions as examples of discipline, pedagogy and gender

Claudia Lapping presents her research. 'An investigation of how the in/exclusion of student positions is related to the structure of knowledge claims in two disciplines (Politics and English), as enacted in undergraduate teaching sessions'. Claudia videoed and transcribed classes in four university departments and then interviewed the students and tutors about selected extracts from the classes. In analysing the data, she will try to define the way contradictory, or marginalised, student positions can be understood as a product of inherent contradictions between pedagogic, disciplinary and gender relations. The first part of the session will be a relatively formal presentation of the aims, methods, results and implications of research. This will be followed by more wide ranging discussion associated with the interests of those attending the seminar

Date: 5 June 2003
Time: 2pm - 5pm
Presenter: Claudia Lapping

Self-Marketing: promoting yourself effectively on paper and in person

It's not good just being a brilliant researcher. You've got to let people know how good you are in order to further your career development. This course offers advice on how to fine tune your CV, tackle application forms with confidence, impress at interviews and handle a range of assessment techniques from aptitude tests to group discussions.

Date: 11 June 2003
Time: 2pm - 4pm
Presenter: LSE Careers Service

The Bologna Declaration

In 1999 Britain signed up to the "Bologna Declaration". We are now committed to being part of a European Higher Education Area by 2010. In other European countries, from Norway to Macedonia, from Italy to Liechtenstein, the Bologna process has been used as a basis for a radical restructuring of national higher education systems. But in Britain little notice has been taken so far of what Bologna means for us, even though it could entail profound changes in areas such as

- credit rating of programmes and courses;
- the length of our Masters programmes;
- academic curricula; and
- the information we provide about our former students.

In this informal lunchtime session Simeon Underwood will be providing an initial briefing on Bologna, as a basis for discussion of the issues raised by Bologna. It is open to all, and we hope in particular that colleagues with direct experience of other European HE systems will attend so that they can share information with us.

Date: 27 June 2003
Time: 12.30pm - 2pm
Presenter: Simeon Underwood, TQARO

Supervising PhD Students

The purpose of this workshop is to help staff develop effective PhD supervision strategies, to look at School policies, procedures and support related to PhD students, and to consider ways of strengthening research supervision both individually and institutionally.

Date: 30 June 2003
Time: 9.45am - 5.00pm
Presenter: Professor John Wakeford

Contacts: building influential working relationships

It's not "what you know" or "who you know" but how you combine the two that increase your chances in career progression. This workshop includes advice on how to understand the importance of career intelligence gathering, how to identify sources of useful contacts and how to develop an approach for contacting people.

Date: 2 July 2003
Time: 2.00pm - 4.00pm
Presenter: LSE Careers Service

Convener Induction Briefing

A briefing session for new conveners including: planning; finance; personnel issues; health and safety; teaching matters.

Date: 3 July 2003 (provisional)
Time: 10.30am - 3.15pm
Chair: Professor Judith Rees, Deputy Director

NB: All conveners are welcome to attend this briefing. There will be ample opportunity for questions and discussion.