Defining our strengths, focusing our goals, optimising our future:

Curriculum transformation at the University of Tasmania.

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Today’s presentation

1. A brief run through of Curriculum Renewal at UTAS

2. A reflection on the process with reference to the Framework for Managing Change (Warwick University [Hunter, Mills & Donnelly, 2014])

3. A summary of lessons learned (to date)

*Emphasis on the Change Management aspect*
The University of Tasmania

- ‘Sandstone’ university/regional
- Research intensive
- Only university in Tasmania – comprehensive program and diverse cohort
- About 40 000 students/20 000 FTE
- Face to face tradition – growing online
- Multiple campuses (6+)
- Aspiration raising
Where did it start ....

“UTAS will be characterised by its high-quality academic community, its unique island setting and its distinctive student experience. UTAS graduates will be prepared for life and careers in the globalised society of the twenty-first century”.

A renewed curriculum, infused by the UTAS identity and expertly taught – building on our strengths in learning and teaching – will be a drawcard for students.

Open to Talent, 2012
The University of Tasmania’s Strategic Plan
Top down imperative
Where is it now ….

 Degrees of Difference

– New Associate Degrees allow students to develop academic and practical skills through collaborative/laboratory learning and work integrated learning – articulating to Bachelors Degrees (http://www.utas.edu.au/new-associate-degrees)

– Bachelors Degrees incorporate 3 streams of units that work together to meet the Course Learning Outcomes and UTAS Graduate Statement
   
   Discipline Units
   Degree Core Knowledge Units
   Experience and Engagement Units

Explicit inclusion of WIL/Experiential learning; multidisciplinary perspectives and key elements to meet Graduate Statement: Entrepreneurship & Creativity; Ethics; Sustainability; Wellbeing; Literacy (including digital literacy) and Numeracy

– Encouragement of a 4 year embedded Honours degree (with Research or Applied Honours)

– Co-curricular opportunities eg. High Achievers, student leadership, employment

– Emphasis on improving pedagogy and moving to state-wide degrees

– Consolidation of teaching effort – reduction in courses and units

Middle out change
Evaluation - Source of the framework

Learning and Development Centre

Change Framework

The Change Framework presentation

The Change Framework toolkits

The Change Framework refers to 7 toolkits to use at different stages of the process:

1. Change Business Case Template
2. Change Readiness Assessment
3. Scoping Scale of Change
4. Stakeholder Mapping
5. RACI (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed)
6. Emotional Cycle of Change

Useful links

- Manager’s roadmap
- Leadership and management
- Simplify, Collaborate, Deliver; visit the SCD website to see how this approach could benefit your work and that of your department. Click on the
Framework for Managing Change

1. Define the Case for Change
2. Set up the Change Team
3. Scope and Sell the Change
4. Define the Change and Develop the Implementation Plan
5. Manage Communications
6. Implement & Sustain Change
7. Embed the Changes
8. Sustain the Change Effort

Strategy, Values, & Culture

Phase 1 (Preparing for change)

Strategic directive

In step with the sector
• Changes in student expectations and student cohort
• Changes in employer expectations
• Preparing students for a more uncertain future
• Evidence-base for effective L & T
• Value proposition for students

Data to question current practice (e.g. decreasing numbers in core degrees)

Opportunity for the big questions
  The role of HE
  The role of the University in the state of Tasmania

Who is our curriculum for? Are we clear? Setting key questions for consideration.
Phase 1

Recognition that transformational change needs buy-in from across the university (and beyond)

High level sponsorship through the DVC (S & E)

Contribution from key academics across faculties (CRG)

Allowing time for ‘listening’, discussion & workshops

Team with leadership and connection to students

Credibility and influence

Team able to investigate other initiatives, report back and contextualise
Phase 1

Define the Case for Change

Green paper – presentation to interest groups

(University Learning and Teaching; Academic Senate)

Disciplinary consultation with employers

Roadshow to faculties

Draft White paper

Special meeting of Senate
Presentation to Senate
Message for more consultation

Move to project methodology – Actions and Timelines articulated

Approval by Senate with incorporated feedback

Provide time line for aspects of change to Senate
Phase 1 – What did we learn?

Defining the case for change is not difficult – but getting the vision right takes a lot of time

Range of views and experience made for a richer experience – but focus was often difficult

High level sponsorship brought high level buy-in

We can learn a great deal from others, but it must be contextualised – benefit of a good team to ‘test’ ideas

Truly transformative change is pervasive across the institution - and needs to be owned by everyone

Implementation needs to be considered (Selling the vision vs the devil is in the detail)

Need to draw together synergies and related projects – timing (and workload)

How do we communicate with all stakeholders?
Phase 2 (Defining change)

Adoption of project methodology

Rolled into a broader ‘Transformation Project’ with some funding – including a Project Manager

Appointment of Curriculum Change Leads and associated support structure (embedded within Faculties)

Prioritising and documenting implementation – beginning with scheduling approval of new Associate Degrees and renewal and approval of key Bachelor level courses

Supported by renewed business processes for business cases, approval process and documentation
Implementation Structure

Senior Executive

Academic Lead (DVC)

Program manager, Curriculum Renewal

Project Management committee
- Academic Lead
- Curriculum Change Leads
- Program Manager
- Dir Curriculum & Quality
- ED Marketing and Comms
- ED Student Operations
- Dir Student Experience
- Student representative

Curriculum Change Lead
- (Arts, Education, Law)

Curriculum Change Lead
- (SET, AMC, IMAS, TSBE)

Curriculum Change Lead
- (Health, Multidisciplinary)

Associate Deans L & T
Course Coordinators
Phase 2

Communications primarily via the network of Curriculum Change Leaders supported by Academic Lead.

Course Coordinators key people for communicating change to teaching teams

Emphasis on communications around course structure and QA processes and approval

Some communications with students and employers ‘selling the key messages’
Phase 2 – What did we learn?

No matter how thorough you are you haven’t thought of everything. *Genuine transformation is far reaching, a range of people are involved.*

Be flexible – and able to respond to feedback – but firm on non-negotiables.

Communications only go so far – and interpretations vary – need to keep open when implementation is imminent.

Project methodology is great on focus – but can be short on time, and doesn’t take into account vagaries of staffing.

Embedded Faculty staff to facilitate change is very powerful – and their CoP was highly supportive.

Timing of market research vs communication of messages to students.
**Phase 3 (Sustaining and embedding)**

- **Curriculum Change Leads vital in linking the vision to the Faculties**

- **Opportunity for teams to rethink the learning outcomes of our degree courses**

- **How do we meaningfully incorporate aspects of the Graduate Quality Statement (well being, entrepreneurship ….)**

- **Need to revisit traditions of the University – Rule of Awards; Assessment of Honours; the First Year; the place of a major, nomenclature …**

- **Articulation with Associate Degrees**

- **Work Integrated & Authentic Learning**

- **Revision of processes and paperwork required to support renewed curriculum**
Phase 3

Implementation

Scheduling courses for renewal in line with comprehensive course reviews

Upskilling staff to share the load

Moving to the unit level – supporting staff to make changes to pedagogy and assessment

Planning for genuinely state-wide degrees

Looking for teaching efficiency through closer working relationships

Providing central support where needed

Sustain the Change Effort

Embed the Changes
Phase 3

Ensure that the changes are normalised through regular monitoring and review processes

Establishing baseline data

Seeking feedback from students and employers

Reflect the renewed curriculum in policies, procedures, templates and guidelines

Promote ‘Degrees of Difference’
Phase 3 – What did we learn?

Planning and scheduling change can lead to very efficient implementation

Up-skilling staff on curriculum change is highly beneficial for all aspects of the change

- Academic staff for design and QA
- Professional staff to assist with paperwork
- Approval committees to facilitate efficient but quality proposals

Scheduling reviews of courses and review of pedagogy and assessment

Reporting on key aspects of CR in annual reports

Reflecting elements of CR in all templates and through QA and QE processes

And – University systems, policies, and processes need to change (quickly) to reflect the transformation
Overall Lessons learned

Clarity of message – and commitment to the long game
Worth taking time to get the concept right – and accepting embedding change is iterative and not point in time
*Integrated (and articulated) in strategic direction and dovetailed with other initiatives*

Consultation
Attention to who, why and when

Communication, Communication, Communication
*Timing and context of communication*
A consistently *understood* message (nuances become clear with implementation)
*Everyone can see their role in the change*

Attention to detail
How will the change be enacted – who is involved; what needs changing? How can it be embedded in BAU?

Build capacity – and recognise contributors
To continue, and build on, momentum of change (and as future leaders)
References:


Thank you – and Questions