Education, Design and Practice – Understanding skills in a Complex World

• Paper / Proposal Title:
Developing the capabilities of sessional educators

• Author(s) Name:
Dr Alanya Drummond
Dr Dijana Alic

• University or Company Affiliation:
University of New South Wales, Australia

• Abstract (300 words):
All permanent academic staff at The University of New South Wales Built Environment faculty (UNSW BE) are supported by formal training on best practice learning and teaching strategies in higher education. However, as at mid-2018 no such development support existed for UNSW BE sessional educators. This cohort account for a significant percentage of the faculty’s teaching offer; up to 80% both in terms of number of personnel and time spent with students. Whilst many rich resources exist for our sessional educators to access and read voluntarily, such as a handbook and intranet, there is no means of tracking engagement or assessing comprehension. The busy professional lives of our tutors mean that these static resources are not always utilised to their full capacity and therefore the valuable professional knowledge that sessional educators hold is not fully transmitted in the classroom.

In response to this training gap, Dr Alanya Drummond and Dr Dijana Alic have produced a digital capability development resource for sessional educators titled BE UPskilled that explains key teaching and learning concepts. The information is multimodal, including interactive charts and short quizzes, along with custom-developed videos capturing the experiences, tips and advice of current UNSW
Built Environment sessional educators. Progress of each tutor can be tracked, and a series of quizzes and multiple choice questions gauge comprehension and identify knowledge increases.

To date, over 200 sessional educators have completed the program. The proposed presentation and paper will outline the benefits and outcomes of BE UPskilled throughout the past year of implementation, including the results of a pilot version and focus group that led to key updates for 2019. Improvement in student satisfaction metrics will be discussed, as well as the marketing, rollout and incentivisation processes that have been established to ensure the ongoing viability of BE UPskilled.

**Author(s) Biography (200 words each):**

**Dr Alanya Drummond**

Lecturer, Interior Architecture

PhD (UNSW), B IntArch UNSW (Univ Medal, Hons 1)

Alanya is a member of teaching staff for the Interior Architecture program at UNSW BE where she contributes to a range of design practice and critical perspectives courses. Alanya has been an Education Focused academic since 2018 and has also been involved in the training of the faculty’s sessional staff through the development and implementation of the BE UPskilled program.

Alanya graduated from the Interior Architecture program at UNSW in 2003 with the University Medal and returned to the BE to complete her PhD in 2013 on the topic of celebrity architects, focusing on how the phenomenon of fame influences the architectural process.

Alanya’s industry experience spans from Sydney to Paris, where she has worked for a range of high profile studios including the atelier of Pritzker Prize winning architect Christian de Portzamparc, the architectural practice of Alec Tzannes AM, and the Australasian design firm Geyer. Her roles have incorporated interior design, workplace strategy, communications and research.

Alanya’s research focuses on workplace, particularly how the built environment can enhance employee experience and performance. Her publications have contributed to international debates surrounding co-working, activity-based working, knowledge management, future proofing and trust in the workplace.

Alanya is also involved in local government and is a current elected Councillor for North Sydney Council.

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**Dr Dijana Alic**
Faculty Leadership, Associate Dean of Education ADE Unit, Architectural Studies, Architecture, Urban Typologies

PhD (UNSW), MArch (UNSW), BArch (Sarajevo)

Dijana’s key interests are about connecting a city’s built environment to its socio-political context through investigating the impact and influence of cultural and political forces.

This is important because city-making is about the lived experiences of people. By understanding that our built environments are shaped and determined, not just by design forces, but by cultural, political and social forces too, my research contributes to the wider dialogue and debate on the role of the design professions in city making. This enables these professions to consider the past while designing the future.

Through teaching, the supervision of PhD students and collaborations with academics with similar interest areas, Dijana is passionate about evolving the knowledge base on modernity, war, contemporary social forces and political negotiations in architecture and design. Dijana is also interested in the relationship between multiculturalism and city-making, and how migrants are influenced by, and bring influence on, cities.