

[Round table discussion]

TITLE: Finding a balance as a new tutor: spoon feeding versus responsibility

KEY WORDS: Sessional tutoring; Supporting new staff; Personal reflection

ABSTRACT:

The experience of being a new tutor can be both exhilarating and intimidating for many people. Issues arise during the first semester as to 'am I expected to know everything that there is to know about this topic?' and 'how much familiarity is too much?' As a new tutor, I was eager to guide students to value the task at hand and furthermore to develop an enthusiasm for the topic. It became apparent to me that tutoring was not just about delivering the subject matter but developing a closer working relationship with the students in my group.

It is useful and relevant to reflect back on the difficulties and triumphs facing a new tutor in terms of what is expected of that person from students, other tutors and course coordinators. Often there is conflicting advice from those more experienced in small group teaching and ultimately the tutor must find their own balance.

In this round table, these experiences will be presented for discussion. Through discussion of these and other issues it is hoped that tutors, those working with new tutors and those employing new tutors can understand more fully the issues and concerns experienced by many new and inexperienced tutors. This will hopefully guide future policy and practice in terms of supporting those involved in leading small group work at a tertiary level.

NAME OF SESSION PRESENTER(S): Caroline Bulsara

POSITION AND INSTITUTION: Caroline Bulsara, PhD student and research officer, School Population Health /Department General Practice, UWA.

CONTACT DETAILS: Survey Research Centre, School Population Health (M435), University of Western Australia, 35, Stirling Highway, Crawley 6009. Email: cbulsara@dph.uwa.edu.au; Ph:

OTHER PRESENTER: Alison Bunker, Higher Education Development Lecturer, Centre for Staff Development, UWA. Email: abunker@csd.uwa.edu.au; Ph: 9380 6304