Presentation to CAUSE 2011

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We are an Institute of Technology in New Zealand and a member of the International Association of Universities. We are proud of our formal relationships with many overseas institutions.

At Unitec Institute of Technology we educate people for work, in work and through work with a comprehensive portfolio of programmes extending from certificates and diplomas through to degrees and doctorates, across a wide range of professional and vocational areas.

What sets us apart?
Our dual-sector commitment to postgraduate and degree-level study on the one hand, and to vocational education and training on the other, sets us apart from other universities and institutes of technology in New Zealand.

Our focus on real world education provides work-ready graduates with professional and vocational skills that are highly sought after in New Zealand and around the world.
Unitec is establishing a unique position in the educational marketplace. Our angle on learning experiences gives our students the skills to hit the ground running, creating real value for employers and our community.

_Innovation in teaching and learning requires_

- Relook… at what it takes to succeed in the modern environment.
- Rethink… our approach in response to our students’ needs for tomorrow.
- Redesign… and revitalise our learning curricula using inside, outside and worldwide points of view to continuously adapt and improve.

Our **LIVING CURRICULA** solution means that we continuously reframe the nature, context and concept of learning, providing a new educational offer that meets the changing needs of both students and workplace.
Locating a context

Economics and managerialism

>>DEPARTMENT OF PERFORMING AND SCREEN ARTS
Notions of the university as a protected space for unhurried scholarly contemplation with images of ivory towers where time moves at a leisurely pace have long since been rendered obsolete (Anderson, 2006).

The global context of the late 1980s and 1990s saw intense downward pressure on higher education funding (Weber & Weber, 2001). New Zealand higher educational institutions (universities and polytechnics), as in other western democracies, have fared similarly (Rasmussen, 2002).
In light of the severe cutbacks in the private sector and the new global economy, expenditure and program performance in higher education has been placed under increased scrutiny by the general public to ensure more effective utilisation of available funds (Appelbaum & Patton, 2002).

As a response to this altered economic environment and the shifts in broader political, social, and economic trends, universities and polytechnics in New Zealand have experienced widespread, sustained, and transformative change over the last two decades (Curzon-Hobson, 2004).
The rise of managerialism in educational systems has seen an increased emphasis on cost-effectiveness (Pratt & Poole, 1999).

Since the mid-1980s the public sector in New Zealand has undergone radical reform of its management and organisation (Duncan, 1995).

The changes aimed to improve efficiency, effectiveness and accountability of all parts of the public sector, including the university and polytechnic sectors.
Higher educational institutions experience political accountability (for the best use of public funds), and market accountability (answerable to customers, partners and stakeholders).

Higher educational institutions also have a professional accountability for maintaining the highest possible standards of teaching and learning, and a cultural accountability to foster new insights, knowledge and understanding.

These last two factors may be observed in the oppositional culture to managerialism – professionalism – which is based upon a “student-centred pedagogic culture” (Briggs, 2004, p. 587).
The Living Curricula

A student-centred pedagogic culture

>>DEPARTMENT OF PERFORMING AND SCREEN ARTS
• The Living Curricula is both an **Academic Strategy** and an aspiration for a unique **Institutional Culture**.
• It is not so much a **modus operandi** – a manner of operating;
• But rather, it has become our institutional **weltanschauung** – our institutional world view;
• And therefore **our way of doing things!**
Mapping our way through the maze

Institutional aspirations: that are fully resourced and supported
Faculty objectives: that are clearly articulated
Departmental strategies: that are collaborative and holistic
Local solutions: that are innovative and creative
Developing a living curricula involves ‘conversations’ about enquiry, knowledge, practice, learning and teaching approaches which focus on engagement between and among learners, teachers, practitioners, communities, scholars, and with self and texts.

Embedded within a ‘living curricula’ is the concept of Ako, a Maori word which means to learn, study, instruct, teach or advise.
Living Curricula and Ako

>>DEPARTMENT OF PERFORMING AND SCREEN ARTS
The concept of **ako** describes a teaching and learning relationship, where the educator is also learning from the student and where educators’ practices are informed by the latest research and are both deliberate and reflective.

**Ako** is grounded in the principle of reciprocity and also recognises that the learner and **whānau** cannot be separated *(Ka Hikitia, 2009, p. 20).*
The concept of *ako* means both to teach and to learn. It recognises the knowledge that both teachers and learners bring to learning interactions. It acknowledges the way that new knowledge and understandings can grow out of shared learning experiences.

Educational research has shown that when teachers facilitate reciprocal teaching and learning roles in their classrooms, students’ achievement improves (Alton-Lee, 2003).
The principle of **ako** affirms the value of the pair and group learning approaches in which students interact with their peers, teacher, tasks, and resources. In a reciprocal learning relationship teachers are not expected to know everything. Each member of the classroom or learning setting brings knowledge with them from which all are able to learn (Keown, Parker, & Tiakiwai, 2005, p. 12).
Embracing the principle of *ako* enables teachers to build caring and inclusive learning communities where each person feels that their contribution is valued and that they can participate to their full potential.

This is not about people simply getting along socially; it is about building productive relationships, between teacher and students and among students, where everyone is empowered to learn with and from each other (Te Reo Māori – Kura Auraki, 2009)
The Living Curricula

So who is this for?
Who are our students?

No, there are no icons Jimmy. It’s a chalk board!
The first day of learning where everything is new;
The first realisation that learning is hard work and you need to work with us;
The realisation that learning is even harder and you have to work for yourself!
“What do you mean you are not going to give me a bibliography?
What do you mean I can find it for myself on the internet...?”
The inevitable growing pains of partial recognition of cognition –
Or the ‘little knowledge is a dangerous thing’ syndrome
Often translating into ‘I don’t need to know this so why are you wasting my time making me learning it?
We don’t pay to learn, we pay to be taught!
This too hard, I can’t do it anymore, I am worthless, I should go work in a bank!

A slow move towards ......

“oh I get what you mean now”,

“That’s not too difficult really”

And finally the agonisingly slow, yet incredibly satisfying turn from “what’s next”? to “how about this”?
A students’ journey

MULTITASKING

By: [Signature]

>>FACULTY OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES AND BUSINESS >>DEPARTMENT OF PERFORMING AND SCREEN ARTS
Characteristics of a Living Curricula
A Living Curricula is:

about the engagement of learners with the material and with us and others;

about the engagement of the learners with learning itself;

about the added value we can give learners in the way they engage – eg: research, enquiry, autonomy, professionalism, technology, innovation, etc.

We do not intend to change what is learned.
But we do intend to change the way it is learned!
Is defined by a number of characteristics

**Enquiry** - how learners go about asking and answering questions;

**Discipline** - how learners engage with the knowledge that underpins the discipline;

**Autonomy** - how learners increasingly develop their capability and confidence; and

**Conversation** - how learners engage with self and others to develop understandings.
And embedded within, are the key concepts of ako

**Language, identity and culture counts** – knowing where students come from and building on what students bring with them.

**Productive partnerships** – Students, whānau (extended family) and educators sharing knowledge and expertise with each other to produce better outcomes.
The process of enquiry is at the heart of what we do in tertiary study.

It starts with thinking about the world, formulating a question, finding information about the question, interpreting and testing ideas and information, generating and synthesizing ideas, presenting and reflecting on the process.

Ako as wananga (tribal knowledge, lore, learning) informs the curriculum through critical enquiry. The relationship of the learner and the teacher is interdependent and reciprocal for personal and communal good. In this context, the teacher is prepared to learn from the learner.
Discipline can be defined as a community of practice which has a (contested and evolving) body of knowledge and theory, based on particular ways of knowing and practising, which is taught and applied and researched. A discipline has its own literacies and language.

Members of the discipline (faculty, learners, practitioners, scholars, etc) identify with this community of practice and help to induct new members.

Ako as kaupapa (foundation, element), is a process by which the intellect internalises, distinguishes, and creates new knowledge.
Individuals take increasing charge of their own learning.

This may be best achieved through a scaffolded and staged process of learning how to learn, planning, managing and reflecting on the process and products of learning.

**Ako as mana** (authority). Mana binds the authority of learner and teacher with **matauranga** (knowledge). Integrity is developed through a process of **poutama** (scaffold learning).
Conversations about enquiry, knowledge, practice, learning and teaching are significant for engagement between and among learners, teachers, practitioners, communities, scholars, and with self and texts.

Conversation develops beyond chat or discussion and becomes true dialogue that involves analysis, synthesis, critical thinking and reflection.

**Ako as puawaitanga** (the flowering of knowledge), acknowledges that curriculum development derives from diverse forms of intercultural communication.
Therefore involves complex conversations:

- with (and among) teachers
- among students – face-to-face and online – with class peers and with others
- with practitioners
- with partners – whānau, industry, employers, the world
- with texts – what is the text saying?
- what do we have to say about the text?
- with self – critical self-reflection
Living Curricula

- are curiosity/inquiry led, and stimulating
- are practice-focussed – educating students ‘for work, in work, through work’
- are socially constructed – self-sufficiency and collaboration
- are equally valued, and together they help nurture resourcefulness and resilience
- blend face-to-face and web-based learning
- are research-informed
- have a discipline base, and are also interdisciplinary
- develop literacies for life-long learning
- include embedded assessment
- encourage active and responsive interaction with industry, professional and community groups to shape content, curricula and delivery modes
Department of Performing and Screen Arts

Our journey in a Living Curricula
Certificate in Music (Introductory)
Certificate in Communication and Media Arts
Diploma in Contemporary Music
Diploma in Performance Technology
Bachelor of Performing and Screen Arts
Graduate Diploma in Creative Practice
Master of Creative Arts*  (* in development)
Our Disciplines

- Music
- Documentary filmmaking
- Art Direction
- Acting
- Theatre sound
- Costume Making
- Screen Sound
- Contemporary Music
- Contemporary Dance
- Stage Management
- Theatre Design
- Film Editing
- Choreography
- Stage Lighting
- Contemporary Music
- Costume Design
- Screen Production
- Script writing
- Directing
- Camera
- Props making
- Scenic painting
- Production Management
Our courses are opportunities to expose students to situations of ambiguity, such as cultural diversity and intercultural awareness, so that understanding of how to respond to uncertainty is sharpened.

This is particularly important in “creative arts” departments such as Performing and Screen Arts.
Desire for knowledge is the catalyst for enquiry to be conceptualised and articulated. The consequence of this are complex relationships where critical consciousness and student engagement evolve through pedagogical practice.

The autonomy and potential of the learner is attained through the teacher/learner relationship using diverse forms of intercultural communication.

This lifts the mana (authority) of the knowledge and the integrity of the institutional environment.
What sets the trajectory for this journey?

The Programme Aims?

The Graduate Profile?

And if they do, then how do we approach plotting a path for our students?

Is it reverse engineering?
Capable people not only know about their specialisms; they also have the confidence to apply their knowledge and skills within varied and changing situations and to continue to develop their specialist knowledge and skills long after they have left formal education ... Capability embraces competence but is also forward-looking, concerned with the realisation of potential.

(Stephenson, 1998)
Graduates will display the ability and desire to contribute to and advance the performing and screen arts industry

How do we map this outcome back into the curricula and weave it into the fabric of the courses?
Graduates will display the *ability* and desire to *contribute* to and advance the performing and screen arts industry.

How do we map this outcome back into the curricula and weave it into the fabric of the courses?

The *ability* to contribute:

Students acquire the technical and creative skills, and professional practices associated with the discipline.
The ability and desire to contribute: Students acquire the technical and creative skills, and professional practices associated with the discipline in an environment of enquiry where they are required to actively seek the answers to a range of industrial questions.
The ability and the desire to contribute and to advance:

Students acquire the technical and creative skills, and professional practices associated with the discipline in an environment of enquiry where they are required to actively seek the answers to a range of industrial questions, and to pose new questions which are as yet unanswered.

The Living Curricula
walking with them on the journey

Graduates will display the ability and desire to contribute to and advance the performing and screen arts industry.
Graduates will display the ability and desire to contribute to and advance the performing and screen arts industry

Another ability that they can move towards

The ability and desire to contribute:

Students lead discussion around new knowledge with other students and stakeholders. They pass basic skills to lower level students in mixed teams and model professional practice.
Media Arts
Collaborative Design
The development of short courses in communication and media arts represents collaboration between the Communication Studies and Performing and Screen Arts departments in the Faculty of Creative Industries and Business at Unitec Institute of Technology, and a shared belief in the value of programmes of study in ‘media arts’.
We define media arts as the theory and practical application, or performance, of different media forms, technologies and genres to effectively generate meanings and convey information in a creative and purposive fashion.

In media arts, new media concerns are often derived from the telecommunications, mass media and digital modes of delivery, with practices ranging from conceptual to virtual art, performance to installation.

Therefore creating performance work, or making films, is a media art.
We also include in this area of study and practice the ‘arts’ involved in communication media work, such as presenting to camera, writing for particular audiences, and presenting well-crafted messages in a variety of media contexts.

These capabilities are also routinely called for in the field of professional communication practice such as Media Relations and Public Relations.
Media Arts Courses

Communicating Now
Digital World
Speaking Up
Writing Well

Interpreting Media
Moving Images
Telling Stories
Making Dance
Dance Moves
Behind the Scenes
Collaborative learning

Communicating Now
- Digital World
- Speaking Up
- Writing Well

Interpreting Media
- Moving Images
- Telling Stories
- Making Dance
- Dance Moves
- Behind the Scenes

On-line, Blogs, forums, professional writing

Moodle (LMS)
Shared classes and assessment

Communicating Now
Digital World
Speaking Up
Writing Well

Interpreting Media
Moving Images
Telling Stories
Making Dance
Dance Moves
Behind the Scenes
Digital World  Moving Images

Students produce a digital story in collaborative groups. This involves planning sessions and on-line collaboration through a course blog site.

Students work in collaborative teams to research, pitch, plan, collate, produce and participate in the filming and editing of the project ready for presentation. They develop and upload various completed elements of their work to a range of web sites throughout the course.
Shared classes and assessment

Communicating Now
Digital World
Speaking Up
Writing Well

Interpreting Media
Moving Images
Telling Stories
Making Dance
Dance Moves
Behind the Scenes
Shared classes and assessment

- Communicating Now
- Digital World
- Speaking Up
- Writing Well
- Interpreting Media
- Moving Images
- Telling Stories
- Making Dance
- Dance Moves
- Behind the Scenes
Students create and deliver a “pitch” establishing why it is important for their story to be told using the elements of rhetoric – the art of persuasive speaking – explored in class. The form of the seminar will be a short-form “Pechakucha” – put simply: 10 slides x 20 seconds. That is, 10 prepared image-based slides, spoken about for 20 seconds each.

Students are expected to have utilised the vocal warm-up techniques prior to their presentation and use the techniques of connection with audience learned in class during your presentation.
Shared classes and assessment

Communicating Now
Digital World
Speaking Up
Writing Well

Interpreting Media
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Behind the Scenes
Communicating Now
Digital World
Speaking Up
Writing Well

Interpreting Media
Moving Images
Telling Stories
Making Dance
Dance Moves
Behind the Scenes
Students work together:

**Writing Well**
work with the students in *Telling Stories* to help them craft their stories for performance.

**Interpreting Media**
design an advertising campaign for the *Telling Stories & Making Dance* show.

**Moving Image**
make a 15sec. television advertisement for the shows, using the material that they created in *Interpreting Media*.

**Behind the Scenes**
employ live performance technology to provide technical services to the production of the performance event for *Telling Stories, Dance Moves & Making Dance* at the end of the Semester.
Another Example

Elective & Short Public Courses

Theatre Writing
Theatre Directing
Acting Studio

Costume Design
Set Design
Lighting Design
Stage Management
Another Example

Theatre Writing
Theatre Directing
Acting Studio

Costume Design
Set Design
Lighting Design
Stage Management

Write a short (50min) play with 3 – 4 characters
Another Example

Theatre Writing
Theatre Directing
Acting Studio

Costume Design
Set Design
Lighting Design
Stage Management

Direct a short (50min) play with 3 – 4 characters
Another Example

Theatre Writing
Theatre Directing
Acting Studio

Costume Design
Set Design
Lighting Design
Stage Management

Act in a short (50min) 3 – 4 hander play
Theatre Writing
Theatre Directing
Acting Studio

Costume Design
Set Design
Lighting Design
Stage Management

Collaborate on the design and Management of a short (50min) play
Another Example

Theatre Writing
Theatre Directing
Acting Studio

Costume Design
Set Design
Lighting Design
Stage Management

Share workshop classes on the collaborative design process, using the short play as the text for the creative discussion.
Collaboration between Departments

**Communications**
- Public Relations
- Reputation Management
- Marketing

**Design**
- Product Design

**Performing & Screen Arts**
- Art Direction
- Camera
- Editing
- Film Sound
- Production
- Screen Directing
And another

Communications
Public Relations
Reputation Management
Marketing

Design
Product Design

Create scenarios for TVC’s with Product Design Students

Performing & Screen Arts
Art Direction
Camera
Editing
Film Sound
Production
Screen Directing

TV Commercial
And another

Communications
- Public Relations
- Reputation Management
- Marketing

Design
- Product Design

Performing & Screen Arts
- Art Direction
- Camera
- Editing
- Film Sound
- Production
- Screen Directing

Make Advert
TV Commercial
And another

**Communications**
- Public Relations
- Reputation Management
- Marketing

**Design**
- Product Design

**Performing & Screen Arts**
- Art Direction
- Camera
- Editing
- Film Sound
- Production
- Screen Directing

Represents client on set

TV Commercial

Make Advert

Represents client on set
Students collaborate with each other to realise the creative needs of each project.
A conclusion

Of sorts …
The curricula is defined not as the information content of a course, but rather as the course learning experience (Meldrum, 2009).

Learning experiences throughout each course emphasise the links and application of theory/knowledge and work experience/practice.

Collaborative practice ensures ‘conversations’ occur among students/teachers/participants.

Knowledge is both applied in practice and drawn from practice.
Utilising a blended learning approach in the delivery of the courses and drawing on Unitec’s principles of learning and teaching, learners and teachers will:

• Engage in conversations about creative practice within the classroom, the community and in practice
• Share knowledge and experiences with others. e.g. individual and/or group presentations followed by discussion
• Develop meaning through sharing knowledge and experiences and by posing and answering questions. e.g. practice focused discussion
The Curricula Explained

• Develop confidence and capability as a learner and a trainee creative artist. e.g. gaining a variety of collaborative experiences in practice and with E-resources
• Anchor learning in meaningful problem solving environments. e.g. performance outcomes and practice
• Seek creative alternatives to known situations to gain new skills and construct new understanding. e.g. in practice focused scenarios in classroom exercises
• Reflect on the process of learning and practice and the implications of actions associated with learning and teaching. e.g. reflective journalling (blogging) and sharing
For me it has always been about how to get into the maze.

Once inside, the view is great and getting out seems to be easy!

But how long to stay?

Coming in from the end and working backwards works for me. What might work for you?
Discussion
References


