2. Creating education spaces for successful Indigenous tertiary learners: The TATT Project.

Tepora Pukepuke and Lydia Dawe

Tepora Pukepuke Unitec Institute of Technology Auckland, New Zealand. email: tpukepuke@unitec.ac.n

Lydia Dawe Social Practice Department, Unitec Institute of Technology.

ABSTRACT

This paper describes the Tutorial Assistance Teaching Team (TATT) project: a holistic, collaborative student success and retention initiative, designed for first-year social work students at Unitec Institute of Technology in New Zealand. The TATT project underwent its pilot year in the beginning of 2012. Though the project supports all students, it is particularly relevant to educators working with Indigenous student populations as the initiatives use Maori cultural principles. The TATT project brings together academic and pastoral care resources and creates culturally safe spaces for a diverse student cohort. The paper outlines the project's cultural underpinnings, components, processes and student response, and discusses the lessons learned from the experimental first year of this on-going project.

INTRODUCTION

The New Zealand tertiary sector has responded to a worldwide economic downturn by demanding efficient and effective service delivery from tertiary providers. In particular there are sector directives relating to the Indigenous people of New Zealand (Maori). The Tertiary Education framework provides the vision of the sector and informs the Maori Education Strategy with hopes to improve the performance of Maori learners, and to pathway them to higher learning. This approach supports the aspiration of Maori themselves in further education and reflects the many approaches to improve students' completion rates. This paper examines the tertiary sector vision in relation to supporting the aspiration of Maori in education, in particular the social work programme at Unitec, which hosts a high percentage of Maori students. The Unitec social work programme has created a team of academic and pastoral staff to support students of all backgrounds, but uses te ao Maori principles as the foundation for the initiatives. The paper outlines these initiatives and the work undertaken with a Maori student caucus in the pilot year. The challenges and excitement for the two team members, a lecturer and a librarian, is described, and how the collaborative nature of their work has helped students develop as independent learners is outlined. The team ran a series of workshops that were well attended, and students contributed to the scheduling of these sessions to create relevant and timely delivery in a friendly fashion. We also discuss the concept of an embedded librarian and how this role can be 'normalised' as an ordinary part of the student classroom environment.

BACKGROUND

The New Zealand Tertiary Education Sector

The New Zealand Government's strategic direction for tertiary education is outlined in the Tertiary Education Strategy (TES). It was informed by the draft-form of the Tertiary Education Framework that provides overarching vision to improve participation and achievement of Maori. The Maori Education Strategy 2008-2012 provides the focus for how to improve the performance of the education system in contributing to Maori success and achievement. There is rising demand for tertiary studies, although the current economic climate has meant tertiary education has come under review. It is a time of fiscal restraint with a need for tertiary spending to be used efficiently and effectively. TES recognises the tangata whenua (people of the land) status of Maori and partners to the Treaty of Waitangi. Thus the provision of tertiary education has a particular role of Maori student support: developing the skills, competencies and knowledge to allow success for Maori through undergraduate studies and pathways to higher education (Ministry of Education, 2011). This gives a clear mandate to tertiary education providers and to our programme to ensure Maori social work students' unique and specific education needs are being met in ways that are culturally relevant and likely to lead to academic improvement.

Unitec Institute of Technology, New Zealand

Unitec Institute of Technology is a tertiary institution located in Auckland, New Zealand,

with a student cohort of over 23,000 students from 80 countries. Courses range from certificate to doctorate level and are held on three campuses as well as via distance education. (Unitec Institute of Technology, 2012c). Unitec has a strong vocational focus, with strategic initiatives in place to create work-ready graduates that respond to the changing needs of employers (Unitec Institute of Technology, n.d.). Indigenous Maori students make up 10% of government-funded equivalent full-time students (EFTS) (Unitec Institute of Technology, 2012b). Unitec has made Maori student retention and success a priority as part of national education strategy objectives.

The Bachelor of Social Practice

The Bachelor of Social Practice (BSocP) is a full-time three year program based at Unitec's Waitakere campus. Students have the option of specialising in their third year in either Social Work or Community Development. The BSocP has a culturally diverse student body, which includes 25% Maori students as of 2011. Students have the option of graduating with the BSocP, which qualifies them to work in social work, mental health, community development, and counselling, with an option to continue with postgraduate diploma and masters degrees in Social Practice and Counselling (Unitec Institute of Technology, 2012a).

Social work graduates in New Zealand are affected by the New Zealand Social Workers Registration Act that introduced voluntary social work registration in 2003, and moves are underway for mandatory registration. Social work registration requires practicing social workers to have a qualification recognised by the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB). Currently the SWRB ensures social workers: meet professional standards of competent practice; are accountable in practice; and have continuing professional development. The registration of a social worker requires they have an accredited qualification, competency and in some cases a set number of practice hours. The BSocP is a qualification recognised by the SWRB (Social Workers Registration Board, 2012).

Maori Aspiration in Higher Education

The United Nations (UN) defines Indigenous people as those with distinct characteristics living in a region prior to new arrivals bringing a dominant culture. The UN asserts the right of Indigenous populations to hold their own unique knowledge and practices (United Nations, n.d.). Indigenous social work practitioners are well aligned to provide culturally responsive social services, and therefore Maori are in high demand to achieve relevant qualifications in order to work with their own distinct communities. The advancement and success of Maori in contemporary times is inextricably linked to advancement and success of Maori learners in the tertiary sector, via improved pathways to higher learning. Higher education of Maori will improve their career opportunities and accumulation of wealth leading to higher standards of living. Such improvements in lifestyle provide improved health and wellbeing of Maori and ensure their survival into a distant future (Durie, 2003).

BSocP Student Challenges to Successful Study

Many BSocP students are the first in their family to attempt tertiary study, and for most it has been several years or decades since attending secondary school. The BSocP is a challenging interdisciplinary programme which brings together the fields of sociology,

psychology and mental health, as well as Maori and Pasifika cultural studies. Tutorial discussion sessions are available for lecture content to be discussed and clarified, but these sessions only address a fraction of student learning and pastoral concerns. BSocP students tend to be overwhelmed by academic literacy and technological challenges in the first semester, leading them dangerously close to dropping out of the programme altogether. To address this issue, Unitec offers academic and pastoral support services for all students, but by necessity these services are generic in nature, with the burden on the individual student to proactively seek the needed resources. The BSocP programme needed a student support initiative to provide a middle ground between the subject-specific content of the lectures, and the generic content of the existing academic development workshops. More specifically this support programme had to respond to the cultural needs of the many Maori students in the program, while being inclusive of all students in the BSocP.

THE TATT PROJECT

In early 2012 a pilot project was designed to meet the academic and pastoral needs of the BSocP students, and to increase student retention rates in the programme. The name "TATT" was originally an acronym for Tutorial Assistant Teaching Team, although the makeup of the team changed during the pilot year to include non-tutorial services. Although the TATT project has only been running for a single academic year, it provides unique positioning by embedding Indigenous principles at all levels of intervention. The authors Tepora Pukepuke (Lecturer) and Lydia Dawe (Librarian) are positioned within the academic literacy section of TATT alongside a tutorial assistant. The librarian role has changed in the student view from the traditional stereotype of 'book finder' to that of a 'central educator'. The pastoral care section includes: a student counsellor fulfilling counselling fieldwork hours; a current Unitec student affiliated with a mentoring programme called PASS (peer assisted study support); and an administrative support worker. Over the course of the 2012 school year, the TATT project has delivered initiatives such as:

- Voluntary academic skills workshops tailored to the curriculum and timetable of BSocP first-year students (TATT Workshops)

- A culturally safe study space for all BSocP students, located within the Department of Social Practice (the "TATT Room")

- One-on-one counselling sessions for Social Practice students

- The Maori Caucus ("Te Whanau o te Matauranga") - a study group for Indigenous Maori BSocP students

- TATT website - a Moodle page containing the workshop schedule, helpful links, TATT team contact information, and academic support resources for BSocP students.

Te Rau Puawai
Maori aspiration to succeed in education relies on student supports that respond to the unique and specific needs of Maori. There are three renowned Maori student support

centres: MAIA at Unitec New Zealand; The Maori Centre at University of Otago; and the mental health workforce programme Te Rau Puawai at Massey University (Ministry of Education, 2001), with a more recent document noting the improved tertiary responsiveness, and citing collaborative approaches, of improved support for Maori learners (Tiakiwai and Teddy, 2003). One of these programmes, Te Rau Puawai, is worth examining as it has consistently high pass rates, a comprehensive range of supports, and uses Indigenous Maori principles similar to those used by the TATT team.

Te Rau Puawai is a joint venture between Massey University and the New Zealand Ministry of Health aimed at increasing the numbers of Maori mental health workers in the disciplines of social work, social policy, Maori health and policy, nursing, rehabilitation and psychology. Te Rau Puawai can be translated as "a hundred flowers" indicating early ambition to grow and nurture a hundred Maori students to complete a qualification, with the intention of them then moving into the mental health workforce. This programme began in 1999, providing comprehensive academic and pastoral support of Maori students enrolled at Massey University. In 2002 an independent evaluation of the programme (Nikora, Levy, Henry, and Whangapirita, 2002) and another in 2004 reported that the programme exceeded expectations in the first two years (1999-2001) with 56 bursars completing their qualifications. Bursars achieved an 80% pass rate compared with 65% for all students at Massey University as a whole. In 2004, this pass rate has continued, a significant achievement in light of increasing numbers of bursars being accepted and many without previously studying at the tertiary level (Nikora, Rua, Duirs, Thompson, and Amuketi, 2004) and the rates continue to climb. Both these evaluations link the success of the programme to the extraordinarily high rates of financial commitment to resource the comprehensive wrap-around supports of students, with proactive regular contact, academic and peer mentors, pastoral supports, and a student space with a resident mentor. Additional to these supports are the Indigenous Maori principles underpinning the work such as *manaaki* (care and hospitality), *whanaungatanga* (a family environment and connections), *tuakana-teina* (mentorship, and reciprocal learning spaces) and *tinorangatiratanga* (self-determination, and leadership of the education processes) (Nikora, Levy, Henry, and Whangapirita, 2002).

Indigenous Principles in TATT

TATT draws on many Maori principles informing the Te Rau Puawai programme including *manaaki, whanau* (family, connection), *tuakana-teina, tinorangatiratanga* (Nikora, Levy, Henry, and Whangapirita, 2002) and *mana* (respectful relationships, honouring each other, regard); as well as social work and community work roles such as advocacy and brokerage. These principles were used by Tepora who was part of a peer-mentoring project to support first year social work students at Massey University (Pukepuke and Nash, 2009). The use of Indigenous principles in TATT is not meant to exclude non-Maori students - quite the contrary. The intention is to be more inclusive, growing a sense of community across the diverse BSocP student body, and a friendly, supportive environment. Using these principles is also a way of modelling the Maori social work frameworks that students study in their first year.

The TATT team has its own values that inform day-to-day practice with students, stakeholders and each other. Our team values respectful relationships, robust electronic

and face-to-face communication, clear and consistent feedback, and accountable and transparent ways of working. We have weekly team meetings throughout the academic year to discuss our programme principles, workshop planning, strategic and operational objectives of our institute, and to just spend time together. To nurture our own team's sense of *whanaungatanga* and *manaaki*, we share a hot drink and funny stories about the week. After this exchange, we turn to the more formal agenda, having wide ranging discussions, confessions of our working week, difficulties and highlights. These meetings serve to bring us together in personal and professional ways, and ensure we are information-sharing on our practice so we all know what is happening. The team has become well informed on institutional policy and procedure, pastoral considerations, and pedagogy underpinning our academic work.

TATT Initiatives

TATT offered a range of initiatives including academic skills workshops; uploading resources to a website; a special Maori group meeting regularly for support, study and fun; and lastly a student zone with resident support staff.

Voluntary Academic Skills Workshops (TATT Workshops)

At the pre-semester start of the academic year, the TATT team organised and delivered the first year orientation programme, aligning with Shrupp's (2009) rationale that if orientation is done in a friendly and helpful fashion it creates a lasting connection with students and is likely to raise retention rates. Approximately 80 of the 110 expected students participated in this event, allowing the team early face-to-face contact with the students over a three-day period. The TATT team hosted the students through their first experiences within the programme, both formally as part of the orientation schedule and informally during refreshment breaks. The TATT brief during orientation was to be friendly, helpful, and immediately responsive to student enquiries. This helped to build whanaungatanga (connections or relationships) between members of the TATT team and the students.

The first five weeks of semester one were devoted to workshops designed to follow a logical progression of learning around key academic skills such as Australian Psychological Society (APA) referencing and researching and writing techniques. Initially, there were offerings of eight workshops a day, in two four-hour streams so students could choose what workshops most suited them. Several workshops were offered multiple times so students who may have missed a session could have the opportunity to attend at a later date. These intensive first few weeks centred on teaching basic academic skills, but had a sub-theme of messaging our sense of faith in student abilities and the need for them to rise to their greatest academic capacity. The workshops were structured by lesson plans with clear aims, objectives and lesson resources, though delivery reflected the teaching style of each lecturer as well as flexibility in some of the content based on classroom questions from the student.

TATT Website

The TATT workshops have an online element, in the form of the TATT Moodle page. Moodle is an open-source e-learning platform generally used at Unitec to disseminate course content, post schedules, and facilitate communication via online forums and announcements. At Unitec, Moodle serves as a 'one-stop shop' for class content, and we

decided it would make sense to create an online presence in a place that was most familiar to students.

The TATT Moodle page is primarily used to post the upcoming week's workshop schedule. Additional content consists of useful links, tips, or videos relating to a recently discussed subject as well as humorous images and quotes to lighten the tone of the site. All members of the TATT team post their contact information on the page so students can contact them with questions.

Maori Caucus - Te Whanau o Te Matauranga

Tepora undertook an early semester one initiative to bring all the first-year Maori students together to allow these students a safe space to express themselves as individual Indigenous students free from psychological or emotional harm (Holley and Steiner, 2005). The group also was designed to assert the Maori students' right to be Maori, in Maori ways commonly referred to as *tinorangatiratanga*. This term can be interpreted as chieftainship, exhibiting leadership, self-determination over their environment and self-management of processes (Mead, 2003). Tepora was aware that any institutional change that improved academic outcomes for Maori could incite staff to label the work as unethical (Nakhid, 2006) or provoke negative student reaction due to perceptions of unequal treatment.

Tepora used the student database to extract a list of names of students who self-identified as Maori, and quietly made individual contact with these students to propose a Maori caucus *hui* (meeting). This hui was to allow a safe space for Maori students to connect with one another and a Maori staff member, as well as discuss issues of their cultural and personal safety within the bachelor programme. The TATT website notice board to advertise the hui was avoided, instead meeting details were emailed directly to the students. 23 students were identified, of which 16 have met about 9 times in the one academic year. Their hui was mostly led out by Tepora in the early meetings, though over time she has shifted the leadership role of the Chair to individual students.

The hui follows an Indigenous-based schedule, starting with *karakia* (prayer), then *panui* (notices) and then a discussion time where each student talks in turn and for as long as they desire. In this way the students and Tepora were able to fully articulate their own feelings and hear the concerns and celebrations of their peers. The hui ends with another karakia and sometimes with a *waiata* (song). The format of the hui is based on a Maori model of practice called *Poutama*, a set of steps defining stages of a meeting. The model clearly begins a session with karakia; allows the unfolding of issues with deep exploration and subsequent emotions raised during discussions; brings about resolution to the satisfaction of all parties, and to a place of healing; and with a clear ending (Webster, 2002). By the third sessions, students were self-mandating the leadership role of Chair, and by the fifth meeting declared they wanted 'to go public' and proudly named themselves *Te Whanau o Matauranga* which, loosely translated, means "the family of those seeking Maori knowledge". The whanau (group or family) of eight have also accepted a proposal by Tepora to form a writing group to document their experiences. This idea has been well supported by the Programme Leader and Chair of Research, as well as the Dean of Matauranga Maori. There is provisional approval to fund a 3-day writing retreat in the next academic year, and the likelihood of

publication to the Unitec e-Press research commons. In this way Tepora is mentoring a group of Maori students in the art and process of academic writing, and providing a satisfying outcome: Indigenous students becoming published authors.

The TATT Room

A student space was designed and created by the TATT team to offer all students a place of respite and care during their study day. A shared office space alongside the offices of the BSocP was transformed into a student-friendly space with a six-seater table, a whiteboard, a mini reference-library, tea and coffee facilities, and desks for the academic and pastoral TATT team. The room is decorated with Pacific Island lei and *tapa*, with fresh flowers on display. Most days, the room sees upward of a dozen students of all backgrounds. Staff make a point of acknowledging visitors with a cheery greeting and welcoming them in. Students come to the room to make themselves a drink, to ask a question of the TATT team, to conduct their own study groups, or to sit and spend time with the team. This mix of academic and pastoral motivation to come to the TATT room could be construed as unproductive or creating dependent relationships. However, in the context of the Indigenous principle of manaaki, the room and the welcoming nature of the staff is designed to make the students feel at ease and have a sense of 'home' and familiarity likely to lead to them accessing the TATT supports more readily. The leadership role of *tinorangatiratangais* also embedded through staff messages to students to treat the room 'as their own' and to consult with students on decisions regarding the TATT room, for example, the positioning of furniture and decoration of the walls. One Pasifika student visited the room for the first time and commented to Tepora that the room was warm and friendly and the decorations made her think wistfully of her own island.

Independent Learners

In creating an environment that encourages engagement between students and staff, it follows that the initiatives are designed to be timely, relevant and friendly. It is essential to promote the development of academic skill for students to complete assignments, but also to ensure that their grades are high enough to gain entry to postgraduate studies and have confidence in their referencing, researching and writing skills at this level. While TATT provides strong 'wrap around' comprehensive supports, the aim is to ensure students become independent learners, capable of applying their skills independently of the TATT team or other academic staff. In the academic skills workshops, we emphasize 'teaching them to fish' for themselves, and show that lecturers do not have all the answers. As a result, student questions are often reflected back to the audience to create group discussion so they can learn from their peers, following the *tuakana-teina* model of reciprocal learning. We would also encourage students to visit the TATT Moodle site to find next week's workshop schedule and use the research tips and links posted to encourage further exploration of a topic.

The Librarian's Role in TATT

Prior to becoming involved as a teacher in the TATT academic skills workshops, Lydia Dawe (Librarian) met with several lecturers to ascertain the levels of information literacy in the Bachelor of Social Practice student cohort. Information literacy (IL) is 'the set of skills needed to find, retrieve, analyse, and use information' (American Library Association, 2006). Most lecturers expressed concerns about student selection and use of information in

assignments. Several emphasized that they wished students would reference 'better quality' websites, instead of encyclopaedia-level sources such as Wikipedia and About.com. These particular comments reflect common faculty concerns about student ability to distinguish between popular and scholarly sources (Bury, 2011).

Finding meaningful and effective ways to teach IL is challenging. The traditional model for IL instruction often involves demonstrating how to use databases in the classroom (Bundy, 2004), followed by reference desk interactions between librarian and student. However, this approach can often make information literacy seem like an 'add-on' to students, rather than an essential element of their education (Proctor, Wartho and Anderson, 2005) The Australia and New Zealand Information Literacy Framework (ANZILF) recommends 'embedding' information literacy right into the curriculum if possible, to ensure that it is not seen as 'extraneous to the curriculum but... woven into its content, structure, and sequence' (Bundy, 2004, p.6). Scanning the literature, Lydia found that that this embedding of IL could range from librarian-led instruction sessions closely tailored to their assignment or subject (Hall, 2008; Bennet and Simning, 2010), all the way to creating 'embedded librarians' who teach and even grade IL courses within an academic program (Bowler and Street, 2008; Pritchard, 2010).

Embedded Information Literacy in TATT

Fitting sessions into an already packed class schedule can be a serious obstacle to providing effective instruction (Bowler and Street, 2008). With lecture time at a premium at Unitec, Lydia was only able to fit a handful of sessions into the BSocP classes, and inevitably found herself cramming each session with information. With TATT sessions being so well-attended by first-year students, she saw this as an opportunity to teach IL in the context of their assignment, away from the pressure of class schedules. Instead of providing a single IL lesson, Lydia could embed multiple information literacy 'pieces' into TATT's existing lesson plans. This way, IL would be taught in the context of their assignment as part of a holistic academic literacy 'package' as opposed to presenting it as a hasty 'add-on' to their class content.

Lydia's level of teaching interaction with the TATT workshops could be as simple as recommending resources at the end of a workshop, for example, websites on APA referencing, or as complex as teaching an entire session on aspects of research, for example, researching Maori culture or evaluating websites. Usually she preferred the middle ground, teaching a section of one of the 45 minute TATT workshops in partnership with the lecturer or tutorial assistant. For example, if the workshop was centred on academic literacies for a particular assignment, the lecturer would first discuss assignment question content and essay structure, while Lydia would contribute a section on breaking down the assignment question into research keywords. In this way, IL was presented as another tool to help students succeed - always in the context of completing the assignment, or 'getting an "A"' in the paper.

Use of Library Terminology in TATT

Lydia made sure she introduced herself at the beginning of every workshop and encourage students to stop by her office at any time for help. She was careful to identify herself as 'research help' rather than use the formal job title of Information Librarian. Lydia was

concerned that the word 'librarian' might have negative connotations for students. Students tend to underestimate the job functions, education level, and capability of academic librarians (Fagan, 2002) and therefore may be confused as to how librarians fit into their support network.

Macfarlane, Glynn, Cavanaugh and Bateman (2007) identify the concept of *whanaungatanga* as a key element in establishing a culturally-safe environment for Maori students. *Whanaungatanga* involves getting to know the students as individuals, showing concern and care for their well-being, and establishing relationships of mutual respect. Lydia saw the reference desk as a physical and psychological barrier that did little to promote the values of *whanaungatanga* that Tepora Pukepuke (Lecturer) had worked so hard to establish in the TATT workshops. The privacy and relaxed time frame that one-on-one office-based 'research consultations' allowed seemed to be more supportive of this principle. To her surprise, she found that most students were highly organized, booking these 'research consultations' up to a week ahead of time. Consultations could last from 10-40 minutes, depending on the needs of the student. In the first semester of 2012, students booked over 80 'research consultations' with Lydia - not counting casual questions that she might answer on the library floor, in class, or via email. This is similar to Bennett and Simning's (2010) experience of a 400% jump in reference statistics after they started their embedded librarian project. Overall, it has been essential for the librarian to take the first step by reaching out to students in a tailored way, instead of waiting for students to come to the library after a generic orientation and introduction.

Librarians as teaching partners

Many faculty still see librarians as facilitators of collections rather than teaching professionals (Bury, 2011). However, librarians can be valuable teaching partners because they are very connected to the student experience - and subsequent struggles. Librarians know where and how confusion may occur once the assignment has been handed out (Pritchard, 2010). Essential to the success of this project has been the partnership between the librarian and lecturer and the reframing of the librarian as a trusted teacher and helper, rather than an 'information gatekeeper'. Faculty endorsement is key to student buy-in of librarian expertise. The librarian, like IL instruction, cannot be seen as an add-on, but an essential part of their academic toolkit (Matthew and Schroeder, 2006).

REVIEW AND EVALUATION

Reflexive evaluation

TATT is an experimental program in a pilot year, so it is expected to evolve over time. The TATT staffing for next year has been confirmed, although there is no specific budget allocation. As a result, constant evaluation is necessary to ensure that the TATT project components are meeting the students' needs, allowing us to justify our team existence as well as the purchasing of academic and pastoral resources.

Peer evaluation

The TATT team meets weekly to discuss various aspects of the project and to problem-solve, particularly in the area of teaching. One of the benefits of team teaching is the

opportunity to be evaluated by your peers. This peer evaluation process has been beneficial in several instances. At one point, TATT teachers were found to be veering too far in the direction of content-based lecturing so as to almost duplicate regular class content, instead of inhabiting the middle ground between content and generic academic skill teaching. At the beginning of semester two, to lessen student complacency in the workshops, the team also adjusted the lesson plans to allow more student participation in the form of facilitated discussion sessions and group activities. These fluid changes required the team to adapt to more rigorous methods of documenting their work, while learning about new pedagogy and accountability strategies.

Student input in shaping workshops

The best way to find out what students need is to ask them! Students would be asked for their feedback both in and out of class on what types of workshops they were interested in, and at what time of day. For example, one group of students suggested that the TATT team hold a session called 'Ask your Tutor' in which students could ask questions related to study, to be openly discussed in the workshop. On another occasion, the TATT team responded to student demands for a session on grammar, and a focus-group of students then provided the structure and content of the lesson plan.

FEEDBACK/OUTCOMES OF THE TATT PROJECT

Attendance in TATT Workshops

The main indicator of success in the first year of TATT workshops has been student attendance. The sessions are voluntary and are held on a day when there are no classes scheduled. TATT workshops in semester one generally had 30-35 students in attendance out of a cohort of 100 students. Many of the students were 'regulars' to the TATT workshops, but as the semester wore on, other students would come and go depending on their needs. There were fewer students attending workshops in semester two (12-15 generally in attendance). This may have been because many of the semester two TATT workshops were skills-based or refresher courses, and possibly students had become more accustomed to the academic environment and needed less help. Lydia noticed more BSocP students participating in library study groups - particularly the Maori Caucus - in semester two than in semester one, indicating that students had started to form stronger ties with peer groups for support. The TATT team looks forward to repeating the workshops in 2013 to better compare and analyse attendance patterns.

TATT Survey

At the end of semester one of 2012 a paper-based student evaluation was undertaken with first year students. There were 19 respondents of a possible class of 102, with all respondents having attended at least one TATT session. Eighteen questions were asked about: attendance at TATT; relevance of workshop content to their assignments and learning; quality of workshop teaching; accessibility of schedule information; and accessibility to the tutors.

Most students indicated that they attended TATT to learn better academic skills (18) and they perceived that it helped them learn (17) with slightly fewer saying they enjoyed the

contact with students (15). Zero students responded that they attended because they felt obliged to.

Four students reported they would have dropped out without TATT support, with a further three saying they possibly would have dropped out. Eleven said they would have stayed in the programme regardless of TATT support. Students reported that TATT was helpful, provided clarity for assignments and was enjoyable. They commented on the three TATT teachers, saying they were 'awesome', 'supportive, intelligent, and knowledgeable'.

All students commented positively on TATT and the contributions to their assignments, the following student quote sums it up: 'I love coming to TATT because I always leave the room with my *kete* (basket) full of knowledge'.

All respondents said TATT teachers were well organised. Thirteen students strongly agreed the TATT teachers were supportive toward them, while 4 agreed and one was uncertain. Students felt the TATT teachers were knowledgeable and competent, 15 strongly agreed, and three agreed. One student commented on the three TATT teacher styles saying 'I love Tepora's teaching style, straight to the point', then praising the one-on-one provided by another teacher and his constructive feedback, and Lydia as 'an awesome asset to have in TATT'.

All 18 respondents felt the TATT teachers demonstrated clear evidence of planning and preparation, and 17 strongly agreed or agreed that TATT helped them understand the assignment material, though 2 were uncertain.

Students were invited to comment on the TATT teachers. The 12 responses were positive saying TATT 'rules', is 'the best', is 'a beaut'. Again they commented that the TATT teachers 'set us straight when we are confused or stressed' and were 'beautiful teachers with wisdom words'. Students also acknowledged the levels of commitment, time and patience demonstrated and their on-going availability that ultimately led to improved assignment grades… this is summed up by one student: 'TATT teachers are great. They have helped me a lot to achieve better grades. They were always available when I need[ed] them'.

Mostly students knew the TATT schedule for the week from the TATT website, though three said they were uncertain. All students were clear they knew how to contact the TATT team, with 14 strongly agreeing that the team were approachable and responded quickly, three agreed and one was uncertain. One student commented on the help and support they received, and how flexible the teachers were: '*The TATT team have been helpful and supportive in all .. Including assignment topics. They go out of their way to help with what we, students, need. They are flexible to our learning!*'. One student felt their own levels of understanding made them less likely to come to TATT… *'It made me afraid to contact because I felt I should have known the question I have by now.'*

Both Tepora and Lydia found the evaluation aligned to their own anecdotal feedback from students during academic consultations, and further encouraged the team knowing the students were seeing the TATT initiatives as useful. It also gave us several areas to work on, particularly how to be inclusive of those students who had not been attending.

LESSONS LEARNED

The main lesson that the TATT project has taught us is to never underestimate the students. We have found that most of the BSocP students, even those who were struggling, were attending TATT not just to learn how to pass, but to learn how to get an 'A'. Our students are hungry for success, and they will rise to our expectations of them.

It has been essential to the success of TATT that the academic skills workshops be tailored to what the students are actually studying at the time. For example, instead of offering a workshop entitled 'Researching 101', it is better to create one that responds to their current assignments, such as 'Finding Information for Psychology Assignment #2'. Students need to know that the workshop will be worth their time and will address their specific needs. It is also more important for the team member leading the workshop to understand the assignment requirements than the academic content underpinning it. Often students haven't carefully read the assignment before starting it and simply need help understanding the instructions.

Collaborating across departments - ie. between the Department of Social Practice and the Library - can be logistically difficult, but it is worthwhile. All members of the TATT team have unique specialities, and when we pool our resources, the students benefit. Understanding each others' strengths has meant that the TATT team is better able to refer students to relevant support services - academic support, pastoral support, research support - when necessary, ensuring a smoother transition for the student. This collaborative work has meant the team has transitioned through some difficult periods of planning, delivery and cohesive team work to celebrate their continued delivery of services throughout the academic year.

Encouraging students to embrace their own cultures and to 'be who they are', is better than asking them to conform to an academic monoculture. Respecting and understanding the needs of students from Indigenous and collectivist cultures has made them feel more comfortable in an academic environment, and more likely to seek help when they need it.

In conclusion, the TATT pilot project can be seen as a success in collaboration between departments creating a focused synergy on individual expertise to create a student-focused set of initiatives. The project has encouraged independent study in students by teaching them skills and reducing their reliance on academic and information literacy staff. In the next academic year the lessons learned may allow a more streamlined set of initiatives, freeing staff to deliver similar services across all three years of the programme. This project has application beyond the social work department, and, due to embedded Indigenous principles, this makes it suitable for improving academic success and retention of Maori and non-Maori students alike. Mostly it is just exciting to see the students growing in their own academic capability and independent research capacity.

REFERENCES

American Library Association. (2006) *Information Literacy Glossary*. Retrieved from http://www.ala.org/acrl/issues/infolit/overview/glossary

Bennett, E. and Simning, J. (2010) 'Embedded librarians and reference traffic: A quantitative analysis. *Journal of Library*

Administration, vol. 50, pp. 443–457.

Bowler, M. and Street, K. (2008) 'Investigating the efficacy of embedment: experiments in information literacy integration'. Reference Services Review, vol. 36, no.4, pp. 438-449.

Bundy, A. (Ed.). (2004) *Australian and New Zealand Information Literacy Framework: Principles*, Standards and Practice. Australian and New Zealand Institute for Information Literacy, Adelaide. Retrieved from http://www.library.unisa.edu.au/learn/infolit/Infolit-2nd-edition.pdf

Bury, S. (2011) 'Faculty attitudes, perceptions and experiences of information literacy: A study across multiple disciplines at York University, Canada'. *Journal of Information Literacy*, vol.5, no.1, pp.45-64.

Durie, M. (2003) *Nga Kahui Pou: Launching Maori Futures*. Huia Publishers, Wellington.

Fagan, J. (2002) 'Students' perceptions of academic librarians'. *Reference Librarian*, vol. 37, no.78, pp. 131-148.

Hall, R. (2008) 'The "embedded" librarian in a freshman speech class: Information literacy instruction in action'. *College Research Library News*, vol.69, no.1, pp. 28-30.

Holley, L. and Steiner, S. (2005) 'Safe space: Student perspectives on classroom environment'. *Journal of Social Work Education*, vol.41, no.1, pp.49-64.

Macfarlane, A., Glynn, T., Cavanagh, T., and Bateman, S. (2007) 'Creating culturally safe schools for Māori students'. *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, vol.36, pp. 65–76.

Matthew, V. and Schroeder, A. (2006) 'The embedded librarian program'. *Educause Quarterly*, vol. 29, no.4, pp. 61–65. Retrieved from http://www.educause.edu/ero/article/embedded-librarian-program

Mead, H. M. (2003) Tikanga Maori: *Living by Maori Values*. Huia., Wellington.

Ministry of Education. (2001) *Hei tautoko i ngä wawata Mäori: Etahi tauira nä ngä kura. Wänanga.* Retrieved from, http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/TertiaryEducation/PublicationsAndResources/MaoriEducation/HeiTautokoINgaWawataMaori.aspx

Ministry of Education. (2011) *Tertiary Education Strategy*. Retrieved from http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/TertiaryEducation/PolicyAndStrategy/~/media/MinEdu/Files/TheMinistry/TertiaryEducationStrategy2010/TES2010to2015.pdf

Nakhid, C. (2006) 'Ethics and the obstruction of social justice for Maori and Pasifika (Pacific Islands) students in tertiary institutions in Aotearoa (New Zealand)'. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, vol.9, no.3, pp. 295-305.

Nikora, L. W., Levy, M., Henry, J., and Whangapirita, L. (2002a-f) *An Evaluation of Te Rau Puawai workforce 100: Perspectives of Te Rau Puawai Bursars* (prepared for the Ministry of Health, Technical reports No. 1-6). Māori and Psychology Research Unit, University of Waikato, Hamilton.

Nikora, L.W., Rua, M., Duirs, A., Thompson, K. and Amuketi, T. (2004) *Te Rau Puawai 2002-2004: An Evaluation*. A report prepared for the Ministry of Health and Massey University: Māori and Psychology Research Unit, University of Waikato, Hamilton.

Pritchard, P. (2010) 'The embedded science librarian: Partner in curriculum design and delivery'. *Journal of Library Administration*, vol.50, pp. 373–396.

Proctor, L. Wartho, R., and Anderson, M. (2005) 'Embedding information literacy in the sociology program at the University of Otago'. *Australian Academic and Research Libraries*, vol.36, no.4, pp. 153-168.

Pukepuke, T. and Nash, S. (2009) *Developing an At-distance Student Mentoring Project: A Resource for Tertiary Institutions*. College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Massey University, Palmerston North.

Shupp, M. (2009) *Rethinking New Student Orientation*. Retrieved from http://www.newfoundations.com/OrgTheory/Schupp721Sp06.htm

Social Workers Registration Board. (2012) *Recognised Qualifications*. Retrieved from http://www.swrb.govt.nz/new-applicants/recognised-qualifications

Tiakiwai, S., and Teddy, L. (2003) E*fficiency Report of the Responsiveness to Maori Sub-group.*: Maori Education Research Unit, University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand: Retrieved from http://www.tec.govt.nz/Documents/Reports and other documents/teifm-maori-responsiveness-report-with-cover.pdf

Unitec Institute of Technology. (2012a) *Bachelor of Social Practice*. Retrieved from http://www.unitec.ac.nz/social-health-sciences/socialpractice/programmes_community/ social-work/bachelor-of-social-practice-social-work.cfm?c7=yes

Unitec Institute of Technology. (n.d.). *Five Year Strategic Plan*. Retrieved from http://www.ebookonline.co.nz/unitec/unitec_a4_strategy_brochure_ebook/

Unitec Institute of Technology.(2012b) *Statistics*. Retrieved from http://www.unitec.ac.nz/aboutus/factsandfigures/facts-and-figures.cfm

Unitec Institute of Technology.(2012c) *Who Are We?* Retrieved from http://www.unitec.ac.nz/aboutus/who-we-are_home.cfm

United Nations. (n.d.) *United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Indigenous People, Indigenous Voices* [factsheet]. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session_factsheet1.pdf

Webster, J. (2002) *Unpublished Notes on the Poutama Model.*, New Zealand: School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work, Massey University, Palmerston North.