The ANU College of Law Excellence in Education Awards help us to celebrate the teachers who guide, inspire, motivate and facilitate learning. Students and staff members were invited to voice their opinion about who they felt deserved special recognition for excellence in education within any program offered by the College.
In 2012, both staff and students from any program in Law were invited to nominate any teacher in the College for an Excellence in Education Award. All academic staff at the College were eligible for nomination, full-time or fractional, continuing or contract.

Staff could be nominated by students or colleagues. Nominations opened on the 6th of September and closed on the 11th of October. This year yielded 31 nominees eligible for consideration, with four candidates withdrawing themselves from the process.

Nominations were considered by a selection committee that made recommendations for awards which were approved by the Dean of the College.

The Selection Committee relied heavily on the information provided in the nomination forms. Nominators were encouraged to provide as many concrete details and stories as possible to illustrate how their nominee was outstanding in education. In this booklet you’ll find slightly edited extracts from the nominations, however largely they are left in the words of their students and colleagues. There are extended excerpts about our winners, and key snippets on the nominees.
Dear Esteemed Colleagues,

Congratulations to those of you who have been nominated for a 2012 College Education Award. Students and/or colleagues have written glowingly of your skill in teaching and inspiring them. You are obviously doing something (or many things) right!

Thank you for engaging, explaining, evoking, inspiring, calming, empathizing, creating, working, being approachable and supportive, breaking down complexity, encouraging, developing, providing feedback, holding high standards, mentoring…and all of the other many things you do to deserve this nomination.

In admiration,

Anne McNaughton
Director, Teaching & Learning (Acting)
MIRIAM GANI

Award for Teaching Excellence (Established Teaching)
Criminal Law and Procedure, LLB and JD Programs

I know it is early on in my degree, but she was the first law lecturer that helped me enjoy law.

She helped me understand what I needed to do, in terms of the course and overall in law.

She managed to create a balance between putting enough material in lectures to get us interested and introduce the framework of the law, but left enough detail aside to ensure that we read the cases and the textbook.

I only wish I went to her in my first year—perhaps I would have achieved the standard I wanted.

She is the only law lecturer, that I have had, that makes sense.

She managed to explain what a judge found in a case by using common sense. Somehow this completely escaped me in my first year. She did not simply say “look the judge said it, therefore it is correct”. She explained his reasoning, and made it very logical.

I am early on in my degree, but I can safely say that if it were not for Miriam, I would have dropped law. Thank you Miriam.

Miriam is absolutely fantastic. She is very interesting, and always willing to help out.

She was quick to get back to students who had questions and she was so thorough in her explanations it left little room for questions anyway.

Miriam made horrific readings easy to tackle and was a lovely person in general.

Definitely someone I would want as a lecturer again.

Miriam’s true strength is as a brilliant lecturer.
PAULINE THAI

Award for Teaching Excellence (Early Career Teaching)
Foundations of Australian Law, LLB and JD Programs

Pauline was so enthusiastic and engaging that Foundations of Australian Law became my favourite subject.

She provided constructive feedback to work, and always remained encouraging.

In such a stressful environment, it was so valuable to have such a supportive, approachable and caring tutor.

Pauline was always amazingly prepared for class, meaning classes always ran smoothly. I always felt comfortable to ask questions, and Pauline always responded with clear and concise answers.

What I found particularly special about the class was the way there was also a personal feel. Pauline told anecdotes and made jokes, making even statutory interpretation interesting.

Pauline is by far one of the best teachers I’ve had in my life, I can’t imagine how she could be better.

She wanted all of us to enjoy the course and do well, but she also genuinely cared for our wellbeing. This created such a positive learning environment, where everyone felt comfortable and able to voice their opinions.

At the start of the year, I remember Pauline spent ten minutes going through how she felt it was best to take notes and study for the course. I was especially impressed because she made it so clear what our expectations were, and how we could give ourselves the best shot at doing well.

I can’t remember when there was even a hiccup in her teaching. She always explained things so clearly and was so engaging, that by the time I started studying for the exam, there wasn’t a single area I was unclear about.
NIGEL DOBBIE

Award for Teaching Excellence (Sessional Teaching)
Visa Compliance, Cancellation & Review, Migration Law Program

Nigel Dobbie is an unbelievably skilled lawyer, migration agent, teacher/lecturer. The extensive experience he has is a treasure on its own and he has no problems sharing that experience with students in a very constructive way.

He is unbelievably skilled in what he does and as a teacher he is extremely smart and knows how to get the message across.

He is the first one to criticise constructively any law or bill that comes out to light and shows the reason why.

He is the one that would listen to you very carefully and respect your opinions and views and take them into consideration very seriously.

I found his workshops to be excellent, he’s clear on the important bits, he gets everyone engaged on the subject and is effective. Everything he discusses is relevant to what we do.

I just think he’s an excellent lecturer/tutor and I appreciate the effort he puts onto doing his best in teaching us.

Nigel stands out like a beacon when it comes to his knowledge and the manner he manages to impart enthusiasm and inspiration.

There is no doubt all my fellow students aspire to be like him—eventually.

We all need praise and recognition if the work we do has value beyond what is expected. I believe Nigel loves his career and loves imparting his knowledge to students.
MICHELLE WORTHINGTON

Award for Teaching Excellence (Sessional Teaching)
Torts & Lawyers, Justice and Ethics, LLB and JD Programs

> Michelle is extremely engaging, knowledgeable and great at breaking complex concepts down so they are easily understandable when she is teaching the class.

> All the law students who did Torts last semester knew of her brilliance through either word-of-mouth or because they’d had her themselves, and there was a furious race to get a place in one of Michelle’s seminars for LJE.

> Michelle’s three classes filled up within about 1 minute. I think this clearly demonstrates how valued Michelle is by her students.

> Michelle is an expert at making law (which can sometimes be quite dry) lively, interesting and easy to understand.

> She uses engaging anecdotes to illustrate concepts and formulates flow charts and check-lists which make it much easier to solve complex problem questions.

> Michelle has been willing to meet with me outside of her office hours to discuss my results on assessment tasks and has provided me with very valuable and extensive feedback.

> Michelle is by far the best tutor that I (and many others I’m sure) have ever had and I feel that if anyone is deserving of this award, it’s Michelle!
ANNEKA FERGUSON, VIVIEN HOLMES, ROBERTA MCRAE, MOIRA MURRAY

Award for Teaching Excellence (Team Teaching)
Professional Practice Core, GDLP Program

The Professional Practice Core (PPC) is the integration of all the compulsory courses in the GDLP. With over 80 practitioner teachers and some 500 students, the 18 week online course requires a dedicated teaching team. Anneka, Vivien, Roberta and Moira have all held key roles in the PPC since its inception in 2010 and have contributed significantly to the design and continuing improvement of the course.

> Anneka, along with Vivien Holmes, has done tremendous work in adapting the Giving Voice to Values curriculum for the PPC. The Giving Voice to Values (GVV) curriculum is designed to help individuals learn to recognise, clarify, speak and act on their values when they encounter values conflicts in their careers and workplaces.

> Anneka is also a dedicated and effective practice management convener—she spends a considerable amount of time working with students who find group work challenging, endeavouring to equip them with the skills to succeed in a team environment. She willingly meets online with students over many hours to resolve their issues.

> Anneka does all of this work enthusiastically, cheerfully and skilfully. The PPC course would not be the dynamic course that it is without her input and commitment.
> **Vivien** is another of the quiet achievers who work within the PPC, teaching to a very high standard and always able to engage the students with well thought out ethical scenarios for the students to tackle in their virtual law practice.

> Vivien is calm, considered, compassionate and has an acute ability to weigh all the competing factors in any situation and come to the right decision.

> Vivien has done an excellent job integrating ethics into the various other subject areas the students work in—so that they can encounter ethical issues as they would in real life.

> **Roberta** has made significant contributions to the development of the PPC and the Virtual Office System outside of her own teaching area—she is constantly seeking solutions to problems and ways to improve the course and frequently suggests innovative, practical changes that have been implemented to improve the entire course.

> Property practice is the first contact students have with the Professional Practice Core. This means Roberta bears the brunt of orienting the students, and dealing with all the administrative, teaching and technological issues that inevitably arise at the start of the course. Roberta takes on this role with gusto.

> My nomination of Roberta is for her collegiality, her hard work and commitment to the development of an innovative teaching program over a prolonged period and her care for her students and staff.

> **Moira**, in her role as PPC Convenor, leads and motivates both staff and students, has had to mediate difficulties within student firms and guides and mentors staff.

> Under a great deal of pressure, Moira retains her sense of humour, is fair, compassionate and supportive whilst constantly seeking to improve the educational outcomes of the course.

> Moira has produced some excellent resources in response to issues that were becoming apparent to her such as the quality of feedforward and feedback given by staff. She analysed the recurring issues and then produced a short document which essentially operates as a “best practice” guide to giving feedback.
JOHN ALATI
Lawyers, Justice & Ethics, LLB and JD Programs

> John is a talented teacher, mainly due to his concise and friendly communication style.
> He works full time as a lawyer and makes sacrifices to continue to teach. He is supremely approachable and friendly, and his communication style is effective.
> He is the best teacher I’ve had since high school.

DON ANTON
International Environmental Law, LLB and JD Programs

> Associate Professor Don Anton is a highly effective, engaging and inspiring lecturer.
> He is not just enthusiastic about teaching and conveying his knowledge, but he also places great importance on students enjoying the experience of learning.
> Professor Anton provided our class with innovative teaching and learning opportunities throughout the course (such as organising a student led symposium) and was incredibly generous with his time in assisting students in their research projects.
STEPHEN BOTTOMLEY
Corporations Law, LLB and JD Programs

> Stephen’s teaching style is both engaging and informative.
> He creates a welcoming atmosphere which encourages students to actively attend his lectures and do course prescribed and additional readings.
> He is the most clear, amusing and enthusiastic lecturer I have experienced in the ANU Law School.

ALEX BRUCE
Contracts & Restrictive Trade Practices, LLB and JD Programs

> Alex has set me up for the rest of my degree in regards to note-taking skills, discerning important information and providing a clear, logical argument.
> Alex stressed the importance of not just listening to him, but reading the cases thoroughly so that we were able to “find our own light”.
> I felt as though his style of teaching transcended the mere relaying of information. Rather, he was passionate about us walking away with a skill, an interest or a spark in something he really enjoyed and considered valuable.
LIZ CURRAN  
Professional Practice Core, GDLP Program

Liz is a dedicated, knowledgeable and enthusiastic teacher and mentor to the students who undertake the PPC. Liz is a great colleague to work with and is always happy to share her teaching ideas and thoughts on how to approach a mentoring issue with convenors and the less experienced mentors working within the course.

We now use Liz’s mentoring emails as templates for other mentors to use when they need to deal with a student who is not committed to their team and the course.

ALAN FRECKELTON  
Australian Migration & Applied Migration Law, Mig Law Program

I was really impressed with his knowledge about Australian migration law, the system and the profession theoretically and practically and the way he treats his students with patience and respect.

Alan responds to student queries promptly, discussing issues professionally and patiently.

I want to acknowledge, encourage and thank Alan who motivates, inspires and mentors ANU students. I found Mr Alan Freckelton a treasure of this course.
ELIZABETH KEOGH  
Family Law, LLB and JD Programs

Liz is a dedicated teacher, committed to inspiring all law students to learn not only about family law, but about themselves both as learners and as human beings.

She has also been incredibly brave in embracing opportunities for innovation and change that foster student engagement in this difficult and changing climate, and demonstrates how committed she is in improving the student learning experience.

One activity she designed to help students use the research tools elicited an overwhelming positive response from students—“Who would of thought, legal research was fun!”

JOHANNES KREBS  
Criminal Law and Procedure, LLB and JD Programs

Johannes is very patient in answering questions and he demonstrates to me his passion in law that strengthens my decision of becoming a legal scholar.

In my opinion, education is not filling up a bucket. Johannes lights up the flame within the students and keeps the flame glowing.

The most important point is that he senses my ambitious dream of developing the legal system towards a better end and he makes plenty of efforts to facilitate me in moving towards that direction.
ROBERT LIU
Visa Compliance, Cancellation & Review, Mig Law Program

> Mr Liu’s vivid teaching style makes the difficult legislation and law concept easy to understand and to memorise.
> He provokes discussion and encourage me to take further legal research in the course discussion forum.
> Mr Liu is a inspirational teacher that many student agreed.

ROBERT MCLAUGHLIN
International Law & UN Peacekeeping Operations, LLM Program

> In my view, Associate Professor McLaughlin is easily the most interesting and energetic lecturer I have encountered.
> He clearly has a deep knowledge and passion for the subjects he teaches.
> He has great skill in generating interesting and free-flowing dialogue amongst course participants.
ANNE MCNAUGHTON
Contracts, LLB and JD Programs

> Anne has taken on an innovative approach, abandoning the traditional lecture in favour of pod casts and more interactive seminars, utilising the resources of the College to prepare and deliver an effective and highly professional course in limited time.

> Anne makes use of years of experience as well as a very current understanding of the student learning experience.

> She has recognised the need to encourage students, and particularly first year students, to take responsibility for their learning and engage interactively with the material and issues presented by the course.

REBECCA MONSON
Property & Equity, LLB and JD Programs

> Rebecca has an open door for students who have issues with course material.

> Rebecca’s property tutorials are clear, precise, to the point and accessible to all levels of students in the class.

> Her mentoring has really helped me clarify my professional and academic objectives, and reflects her commitment to inculcating a culture of excitement in students about the diversity of professional options open to them.
WAYNE MORGAN
Property, Law & Sexualities, International World Trade, LLB, JD & LLM Programs

> Wayne is an outstanding teacher and academic. He inspires students while providing them with the relevant guidance for them to explore their own academic strengths.

> I found that Wayne was a diligent, engaging and brilliant lecturer. In his lectures, tutorials, as well as in his general approach with students, he has never made any feel like they are wasting his time, or that their opinions do not matter.

> Wayne is engaging as an honours supervisor. In our weekly meetings, we do not meet to simply “have a chat”. He has encouraged me to be rigorous in my research and investigation of sources.

MARK NOLAN
Law and Psychology, LLB and JD Programs

> Mark’s lectures combine traditional pedagogy with a creative and applied approach to learning. His style engages students and the pace of the lecture is energetic.

> He is able to translate difficult concepts clearly to students who may have had little exposure to the issues. He inspires students to apply the concepts we study to our practice.

> He has been very supportive of students who are struggling with their law degree and who have mental health issues. Students know he is a lecturer they can go to and speak openly with—without judgment. I have been impressed with the way he deals with my fellow students who are facing tough issues.
MOLLY O’BRIEN
Evidence, LLB and JD Programs

- She was brilliant—managing to engage, educate and entertain a large student body during intensive learning.
- Molly introduced the subject of hearsay through a folksy story that was funny, inventive and a powerful aide memoire.
- Molly showed enormous enthusiasm in her teaching. It was clear she loved the subject and loved teaching it.

DAVID PRINCE
Visa Compliance, Cancellation & Review, Mig Law Program

- Despite having an enormous range of other responsibilities, David is always there for us students.
- He is very knowledgeable and always likes to challenge us. If we inquire about one matter, he will always create another question, and that way we learn more than we originally needed to.
- David is inspiring me, so I am looking to learn his way for my future.
HELEN RODRIGUEZ  
Professional Practice Core, GDLP Program

> Helen always puts the students’ interests first. She meets every deadline, and her students are never left waiting for answers to questions or feedback on their work.

> She came up with some innovative and useful ideas about how to teach Trust Accounting in future courses.

> Throughout the course Helen provides thorough “feed-forward” on their work, so that students develop a clear understanding of what is required.

PETA SPENDER  
Takeovers and Securities, LLB and JD Programs

> Peta is not only passionate about the subject, but she is also passionate about us engaging in the actual industries.

> Her lectures are interactive and she is approachable. I feel like she is always in touch with us.

> Peta is incredibly knowledgeable about the subject, and ensures we are kept up to date in all ways – including setting up a Twitter feed!
JAMES STELLIOMS  
Commonwealth Constitutional Law & Federal Judicial System, LLB and JD Programs

> James used the classes to explain complex legal material on Chapter III of the Constitution in a way that was accessible, insightful and occasionally humorous.

> James was an approachable teacher who was empathetic to students. It was clear that he has an impressive command of the content of the course and a passion for the material.

> Ever so thorough with his teaching, I really enjoy James’ enthusiasm in the field. It’s really making me enjoy this course that others might consider dry.

RUTH TOWNSEND  
Health Law, Bioethics and Human Rights, LLB and JD Programs

> Ruth’s teaching dares students to think differently about issues affecting society. She taught in a way which constantly pushed students out of their comfort zone to think for themselves.

> Through facilitating weekly debates by allocating students to teams, not only did I and others in the course develop deep friendships with one another, but facilitated engagement and interest in the subject matter.

> She ultimately proffered a culture of acceptance, empathy and collegiality. I have been deeply touched by Ruth’s teaching; and it has actually changed what I want to practice in when I leave university.
BARRY YAU
Commercial Practice, Professional Practice Core & Consumer Law, GDLP Program

> Barry’s attention to detail, timeliness and work ethic are inspiring. He is a quiet achiever who gets everything done on time and to a very high standard.

> He has designed a well thought out and engaging commercial practice scenario for the students. You can tell because there are so few “help me!” postings on the Q&A forum!

> Barry’s common sense and fair approach to things always helps to put issues in perspective.
Thank you to all those involved in the Excellence in Education Awards process here in the ANU College of Law. It is wonderful to highlight and celebrate the talent of our teachers.

Special thanks to the Selection Committee: Anne MacDuff, Anne McNaughton, Molly O’Brien, Angela Mula, Alison Ruth and Margie Rowe.

Further thanks to Claire Atteia and Angela Mula for producing this booklet.
We look forward to another successful year in 2013, where we will have the opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge our brilliant colleagues.
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