

You are here:

Teaching @ Sydney

December 2015

Congratulations to Sydney recipients of 2015 OLT Teaching Excellence Awards

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Warm congratulations to **Dr Elizabeth New, School of Chemistry, Faculty of Science**, and the **Peer Assisted Learning Programme from the Sydney Medical School**, for their successes in the awards given by the Office for Learning and Teaching. DVCE Professor Pip Pattison welcomed the news of the awards, saying,

I am delighted by this recognition of excellent teaching at the University of Sydney. The excellence and innovation in teaching exemplified by Dr New and the Peer Assisted Learning program provide our students with learning experiences which excite them and prepare them for the future.

Dr Elizabeth New received an Early Career Award for Teaching Excellence.

Dr Elizabeth New is a Lecturer in Inorganic Chemistry at the University of Sydney, with demonstrated excellence in teaching, and a thriving research program into the development of molecular imaging tools for the study of biological systems. Dr New, an accomplished researcher with a number of research awards, is passionate about sharing and developing a love of chemistry with students by promoting active engagement in the learning process. In particular, her teaching seeks to address rapid changes in the discipline, and the diversity within the student population. Over the past three years, she has made many original and innovative contributions to various aspects of teaching. Most notably, she has led a School-wide redesign of first year teaching, involving the use of weekly video and self-assessment tools and in-class active worksheets, and has significantly redeveloped the second year laboratory curriculum to incorporate a range of research-led investigation exercises. Dr New has led successful applications for a Faculty of Science Learning and Teaching Fellowship, and two University Large Educational Innovation Grants. She is the Royal Australian Chemical Institute Nyholm

Youth Lecturer (2014- 2015), and won the University of Sydney Vice Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching (2015).

The Peer Assisted Learning Programme for innovation and flexibility in curricula, learning and teaching, received an Award in the category Programs that Enhance Learning. The team is led by **Dr Annette Burgess** and includes **Associate Professor Kirsten Black, Associate Professor Renata Chapman, Professor Craig Mellis** and **Associate Professor Chris Roberts**.

In 2010, the Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) program was established at the Central Clinical School based at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, where medical students gain clinical experience. The goal of the PAL program is to develop and sustain medical students' professionalism (knowledge, skills and professional behaviours) through socialising their learning in an authentic, engaging clinical environment. The PAL program consists of four student-centred activities: a teacher training course and innovative peer teaching and assessment opportunities in formative clinical examinations. The activities enable students to take on teaching and assessment roles within the "safety" of their medical school community. Participation has created a dynamic social learning network, engaging hospital clinicians, academics, patients, and all students from Years 1-4. Extensive evaluation and research results published in leading international medical education journals provide evidence of the educational impact of the PAL program. Students feel supported by their medical school community, better prepared for their own summative written and clinical assessments, and better prepared for their future careers as medical practitioners where they will be required to teach and assess their peers. The widening impact of the program is evidenced by the uptake of PAL activities at another five clinical schools and elsewhere.

The recipients received their awards at a ceremony at Parliament House in Canberra on Tuesday 8 December 2015.

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