

describes some of the things that cause teachers generally to resist the evaluation of their teaching and the outside forces that may now begin prompting change in this context. The analysis also describes at some length the general nature of comprehensive teaching evaluation programs.

## TEACHING METHODS & MEDIA

### **Problem-based learning and problem solving: interview with Stephen Nathanson of the University of Hong Kong**

M Gordon

11 *J Prof L Educ* 1, pp 137-143

In this interview Nathanson gives his views on the experience of problem-based learning in Hong Kong, the sorts of legal areas in which it is used, and how students acquire knowledge about the law using this method if the primary objective is to learn problem solving. He discusses the links between problem-based learning and the skill of problem solving, and assessment methods.

### **A case study of the "offices" project (teacher-less, co-operative learning groups) at Griffith University: implementing educational theory**

B Dick, L Golden, K Healy and MJ Le Brun with G Airo-Farulla and D Lamb

4 *Legal Educ Rev*, 2, 1993 pp 273-297

Law students at Griffith University are required to participate in the teacher-less, co-operative learning groups called "offices". The offices meet every fortnight and answer questions similar to those that would be encountered in legal

practice. The rationale for the offices is that they provide a forum where students can develop the various legal and non-legal skills associated with the graduate professional in law. These include coping with problems that do not fit into tight legal categories, interpersonal skills, recognition of group dynamics, networking and relationship building. In order to implement "office" learning it is recommended that an organisational psychologist be consulted in order to create an effective group learning environment, assist members of the group to work together and to set up processes for research and ongoing improvement of the program.

The experience at Griffith University Law School reveals that it is necessary to formally assess the offices program in order to get students to take it seriously. The project's goals, aims and objectives should be clear to curriculum designers, teachers and students alike. Evaluation of the offices project has revealed, among other things, that the experience should be as close to real life as possible, that student comments should be received openly, that the personal, social, ethical and professional implications of working in a group should be discussed, and that dynamics within the group should be monitored.

### **Chess strategies in law teaching**

G Miller

28 *Law Teacher*, 1, 1994, pp 22-35  
British law school graduates are often unable to analyse legal problems. The main approach in British law teaching is the lecture in which the role of precedent is demonstrated. Criticism of

authority is avoided. Consequently, given a set of facts students would reach a result similar to that of a judge. The author supports the analytical method of problem solving as it dispenses with the presumed legitimacy of authority.

Analysis by precedents is then proffered. An analogy of chess strategies and solving legal problems is made. The opening strategy involves collecting the arguments of the plaintiff and defendant. The middle game in legal analysis is a where the law and the facts are proved and manoeuvring in response to arising contingencies within the problem are performed. The end game indicates a solution to the problem allowing the student to understand what is necessary to solve the problem.

### **Specimen and model answers in law teaching**

C Cobley & S White

28 *Law Teacher*, 1, 1994, pp 36-55  
Law teachers do not generally provide model answers to students as it is thought that this "will lead to students simply copying or transforming it...to serve the purpose of any subsequent assignment with little being learnt from it about writing answers; the provision of a model answer will stifle literary creativity, experiment and individuality". This response overlooks the needs of weaker students and assumes that copying is a worthless exercise. Further, students' written work is rarely characterised by creativity, experiment and individuality.

At Cardiff Law School, students made judgements on answers to written assignments and then