

Legal problem-solving skills include everything a lawyer needs to know and be able to do to solve practical legal problems - to meet client goals through a process of preventing or resolving legal conflicts. Hence it also consists of using problem-solving skills to refine and elevate the performance of other skills.

Legal problem solving can be used as the driving force in curriculum design. Modules in the curriculum should follow the skills teaching cycle: theory, demonstration, practice, feedback. If theory and problems do not fit together it is necessary to modify both theory and problems to bring them closer to each other. Problems with precedents should be created. However, students should be taught to use precedents in both a linear and flexible manner. Assessment of problem-solving skills was most effectively evaluated by determining if the problem-solving skills that the students had learned were transferable from one context to another.

Principles for teaching legal problem solving were identified: A. Students must be given opportunities to solve legal problems. B. Teachers must design meaningful problems so as to hold the students' interest. C. The curriculum must be designed around the problems - problem-generated design. D. Teachers should design problems to promote the transfer of legal problem-solving skills from one context to another. E. Students should learn by discovering solutions on their own through preparation and performance of written problems and simulations. F. A coherent knowledge base that is readily accessible should be provided through traditional teaching

methods, in addition to the problem based knowledge and learning.

STATISTICS

[no material in this edition]

STUDENTS

[no material in this edition]

TEACHERS

Solutions to the dilemmas and concerns of teaching international students in universities

D J Phillips

5 Legal Educ Rev 1, 1994, pp 47-66

The number of international students studying in Australian tertiary institutions has reached significant proportions as a result of the Australian Department of Trade's decision to allow Australian tertiary institutions to offer places to Full Fee Paying (FFP) international students.

Australia's objectives in its international education program range from provision of human resources to underdeveloped countries to the perception and development of education as an export commodity. The quality of export education to Asia should be high and represent value for money. However, the changing ethnic composition of the student body has created some difficult pedagogical issues for the academic/teaching staff of Australian universities.

To assist them the Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee has prepared a Code of Ethical Practice, which sets out a number of guiding principles for the conduct of higher education

institutions which offer FFP placements.

Examples of the dilemmas facing academic staff when teaching FFP students include the direct link between the student's academic performance and his/her financial support; whether teachers should exercise leniency when assessing FFPs; whether teachers should alter their teaching styles in order to accommodate the special needs of FFPs; and the attention that should be given to FFPs over and above that given to local students.

The term "ethnogy", coined by the author, is defined as the science of teaching across cultures. The article sets out the parameters of ethnogy and provides examples of how to apply them to problems encountered in teaching FFPs. Universities also need to focus their efforts on faculty development so that they might more adequately respond to and teach the new student today.

Talking heads: effective television techniques for academics

D A Harris

44 J Legal Educ 2, June 1994 pp 207-213

This article provides advice to law teachers upon techniques to adopt if given the opportunity to offer comment on legal issues on television. The reasons for doing television interviews are discussed, including improving your image, the benefits to your institution, and the challenge of making a complex issue understandable to most people without emptying it of all content. Advice is given as to what issues to consider before accepting an invitation for an interview and practical tips about preparation and delivery. The hardest part of preparation for the law professor is to discard the practice of

lengthening and enlarging upon issues and to talk in short sentences and give short answers.

Book Review

The quiet revolution: improving student learning in law

M Le Brun and R Johnstone

(foreword by N Gold)

Law Book Co, 1994

414pp (and preface i-lxxv pp)

This book is a highly significant event for law school educators committed to improving their teaching skills and thereby enhancing the quality of their students' learning. It also marks a point of maturity in the application of the principles derived from general educational literature and research to the relationship between law school teaching and student learning.

Professor Neil Gold in his foreword describes the book as "an importance accomplishment - the first book of its kind in the world". Whether this bold claim to uniqueness is justified is uncertain. However, at least in Australia it is indubitably the first book designed specifically to assist university law teachers in their work.

The book's purpose is clearly stated in the author's preface:

We know, as do many seasoned legal educators, that teaching matters; that poor teaching wastes time and impoverishes lives. If we are to improve the quality of student learning in law, we believe that teachers of law must address, and respond to, their students as individuals. We should neither limit our work to the transmission of knowledge nor confine it simply to the development of our students' analytical and critical abilities.

The authors acknowledge their indebtedness to the co-ordinators of the ALTA (Australasian Law Teachers Association) Law Teaching Workshop, which has been holding regular conferences and other activities in the Australasian region since 1987. Indeed, the book has been spawned by the Workshop, which has generated a great deal of interest in law teaching, as evidenced by the growth of teaching interest groups in various institutions and the number of grants for projects focussing on teaching excellence in law.

The first three chapters lay the foundation for the book by outlining the theoretical framework upon which the balance rests. In chapter 1 the authors describe the development and growth of legal education in Australia in order to tease out the reasons why legal academics hesitate to adopt knowledge about the learning / teaching process which is readily available in general educational literature. They argue for the development of a new paradigm which draws upon and blends educational theory and practice in the teaching of law and which reflects more appropriately the work of the professional graduate in law. The role of law teachers is discussed and some of the institutional, discipline-based, personal and cultural barriers are outlined which prevent them from acquiring an enlightened understanding of the teaching process.

In chapter 2 the focus shifts to the learning side of the teaching / learning equation. The authors summarise some of the more prominent learning theories in order to assist their readers to make informed choices and to develop a vocabulary which will give them

the opportunity to reflect upon their behaviour as teachers. Necessarily in a chapter of only 48 pages, the treatment of learning theory is somewhat superficial and eclectic. However, the discussion contains sufficient substance to enable law teachers, who have hitherto had little access to this very large territory which combines elements of both psychology and education, to appreciate the most significant issues and consider their relevance to their own teaching. The emphasis on the variety of learning styles exhibited by students and the need to tailor teaching accordingly in order to promote student learning is most timely.

The teaching side of the equation is examined in chapter 3, which focusses upon how teachers can create a learning environment which enhances meaningful student-centred learning. The authors also contribute a useful exercise to illustrate how teachers can create a climate for learning in law. They consider the position of law teachers in the current debate about the function of role models in law teaching. They also canvass some of the conceptions which teachers hold about teaching and describe two of the tools (Mann's teaching typology and the Myers-Briggs Indicator) which can be adopted by teachers to learn more about approaches to learning.

The next four chapters deal with day-to-day aspects of teaching, offering useful tips about the devices, techniques and methods currently available which should be considered by law teachers. Chapter 4 contains a worthwhile discussion of two closely related steps in instructional design, namely the vexed subject of learning objectives, upon which there is a wealth of educational literature, and the principles to be