

Teaching English in Tasmania: An Emerging Conversation about the Transition from TCE English to Studying English at University



Dr Lisa Fletcher, University Lecturer and Co-ordinator of the UTAS English first-year program (Hobart).

Dr Lisa Fletcher, Senior Lecturer and Coordinator of first-year English at UTAS, has been awarded a Teaching Development Grant for a project that aims to build stronger links between university staff and senior secondary English teachers in Tasmania. This grant will enable the establishment of a 'Grass Roots Community of Practice' to bring together English teachers from the secondary and tertiary sectors for conversations about the teaching of English in Tasmania. In short, a community of practice is a group of people with a common concern or passion for something who come together to work towards improving or better understanding their practice. The 'Teaching of English in Tasmania Community of Practice' (or 'TETCoP') aims to be a forum for educators to get to know each other and to develop initiatives for mutual support and collaboration. The founding members of TETCoP are:

Lisa Fletcher, Project Leader (English, UTAS)	Yoshi Budd (Faculty of Education, UTAS)
Ralph Crane (English, UTAS)	Cameron Hindrum (Faculty of Education, UTAS)
Robert Clarke (English, UTAS)	Phil Page (TATE/AATE)
Rosemary Gaby (English, UTAS)	Erika Boas (Ogilvie High School)
Elizabeth Leane (English, UTAS)	Sarah Cupit (The Friends School)
Joanna Richardson (English, UTAS)	Rosalind Walker (Hobart College)
Hannah Stark (English, UTAS)	Susan Hawkins (Claremont College)
Danielle Wood (English, UTAS)	Judith Ranson (Claremont College)

One of the challenges facing the project team is that this level of interaction is unprecedented in Tasmania (and rare in Australia). TETCoP hopes to initiate a conversation that will be of value to everyone involved – in 2013 and into the future. What *exactly* do university English lecturers and secondary English teachers have in common? What questions should be the basis for TETCoP's work in

2013? The grant application suggests some starting points:

- What is the place of literary studies (the core of UTAS English) in the pre-tertiary classroom?
- How will developments in the secondary sector impact on the development of the discipline at the tertiary level?
- Do university lecturers have the same pedagogical priorities as pre-tertiary teachers, or do we conceive of the discipline of English differently?
- Do teachers in both sectors use the same key terms and concepts or do UTAS English students have the sense that they are starting over?
- Do the assessment tasks in first-year English at UTAS build logically on the skills and knowledge most of our students would have gained during TCE?

TETCoP's first goal is to grow its membership to include representatives from as many schools in Tasmania as possible. There are two main activities planned for this year:

- In the first half of the year, UTAS first-year English lecturers (Lisa Fletcher and Robert Clarke) would like to visit schools for one-on-one and/or roundtable discussions with teachers.
- The 2013 project will culminate in late 2013 with two half-day workshops (Launceston and Hobart) for TETCoP members; the focus of these workshops will be determined over the course of the school visits.

Please contact Lisa by email or phone (Lisa.Fletcher@utas.edu.au; ph. 6226 1725) if you would like to be involved in this project.