

# Adding qualified value

## Graduate-level studies

With the rapid growth of the information industry and an increasing need for further training, the ALIA Board of Education has recommended promotion of graduate-level courses for professional development. As part of an InCite series on graduate studies, the following course is featured in this issue.

**Kuring-gai College of Advanced Education**

### **Master of Applied Science (Information)**

The Master of Applied Science (Information) course caters for the needs of information professionals in a wide variety of settings, including government information, records management, libraries, media research, technical writing, publication, and specialist information services such as pharmaceutical, historical and legal information services.

The course focuses on what are often called 'value-added' processes in information work — the identification of user markets, evaluation and repackaging of information to meet user needs, and the management and evaluation of information products and services. Advanced study of the evaluation, synthesis and repackaging of information, and of the development and management of market-oriented products and services in private- and public-sector settings, provides graduates with a sound basis for career advancement. Students have opportunities to follow their own special interests and to integrate previously acquired subject expertise (e.g. chemistry, history, sociology) with advanced information skills.

The course emphasises some strengths of Kuring-gai courses in information — information policy and provision of information in forms and ways which are tuned to user needs. It has another emphasis — perhaps the most important one for effective managers of information — on the devel-

opment of the professional, analytical and other intellectual skills essential for all practitioners, regardless of the organisational settings in which they operate.

The course has three strands:

1. 'Studies in information science' are designed to develop knowledge of the theories and principles underlying information transfer processes. The strand requires students to read extensively in the information science literature and provides opportunities to follow up on current topics and issues such as information equity; role of expert/knowledge based systems and ownership of information.

The units included are user analysis, subject analysis, information and document retrieval, information presentation, theoretical foundations of information science, and information science seminar.

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LCSH, Dewey, UDC, Bliss, Marc, L/C Marc etc. He also explained how standards are created. In-house database standards are often created, and then developed and exchanged on the national/international scene and in groups within library associations.

John urged us to look at standards, become involved in such groups, do surveys and studies, make recommendations to the national body, and organise and lobby for changes.

He also questioned the purpose of cataloguing — we can no longer just replicate the card catalogue as the format, and the nature of access has changed with automation. There are many 'channels of access' into an on-line catalogue, which no longer solely 'belongs' to cataloguers. Cataloguers need to rethink the relevancy of some data and keep in mind the information needs of the audience, while remembering the record is a 'gateway to the book' or other item, and a well-catalogued record is more easily identified and more useful to everyone.

*Carol-Ann McVinish*  
Committee member



2. 'Technical studies' in research and quantitative methods provide the students with a high level of expertise in evaluating the quality of information on which various information products and services are based. This strand also develops skills necessary for applied research in information and information provision — for example, performance measurement and other measures of the quality of service used by managers.

The units cover enquiry methods, identification of unresolved problems and questions in information practice, and basic statistics.

3. 'Integrating studies' are of two kinds, project-based and elective. The first project-based unit, information consolidation, draws together theory and professional skills aspects of the course. The project documents the design, production, management and evaluation of an information product or service of the student's choice, such as a newsletter, a state-of-the-art review, a storytelling program, a fee-based en-

quiry service, or an informational video.

The second unit, a minor or major research project, provides an opportunity for students to research a problem or question in information work in considerable depth. It focuses on the development of the student's conceptual and general intellectual skills.

An elective unit is taken by students who choose to complete the minor research project. Electives offered by the School of Library and Information Studies include information policy and planning, learning process and curriculum and information systems development. Students may also elect a unit offered in other Schools in the University of Technology — for example, in the areas of organisational studies, media and marketing.

Enquiries about this course may be directed to Helen Gilkes, telephone: (02) 413 8200.



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