

'GET IT TOGETHER' STUDY NIGHTS



Work life balance: hardworking students also enjoyed a break at the Get It Together Study Night.

CQUniversity Library staff in Sydney and Bundaberg teamed up with other campus staff to support students finishing their assignments or starting their exam preparation last year in an innovative new program that has been such a success, it is back again for first term in 2015.

Our Get It Together Study Night event was inspired by study nights held in Germany as part of the Lange Nacht der aufgeschobenen Hausarbeiten, or Long Night Against Procrastination (schreibnacht.wordpress.com), and the 2014 article by Ilka Datig and Luise Herkner, titled Get Ready For a Long Night: Collaborating With the Writing Center to Combat Student Procrastination, published in *College & Research Libraries News* in March 2014.

The Sydney and Bundaberg campus libraries stayed open and were staffed over extended hours from their normal closing time of 5pm (Bundaberg) and 6pm (Sydney) to 10pm, providing a motivating, supportive and fun environment for students to get together and get some work done.

Partnering with staff from the Academic Learning Centre (ALC) was critical to the success of the event. Students valued the opportunity to get referencing and academic writing support, as well as help from library staff on researching and evaluating information for their assignments.

The heads of both campuses also offered crucial support, as did academic staff, the business support officer, and security personnel. Both events were held in partnership with the respective Campus Life Committees who provided funding for pizza, drinks and activities. In Sydney, students were encouraged to take a break from study to eat, drink – and

dance. In Bundaberg, students were able to relax with a free shoulder massage; these proved to be extremely popular.

Preparation for the event included gaining support for the idea across each campus, and setting up the physical areas with consultation desks, laptops, and iPads for visiting staff. The student recreational area in Sydney was set up with music for break time. We also provided post-it notes, designed a poster to advertise the night, arranged a consultation desk for ALC staff in the library, and produced handouts. Text messages were sent to distance students in the area and we also used social media marketing via our library's Facebook and Twitter accounts, and used our LinkedIn account to reach out to alumni. The student area was set up for break out time.

Approximately 35 students participated in Sydney and 40 in Bundaberg. Some students commented on how much work they achieved. Library staff assisted with research, enabling one group of students to complete their assignment on the night, while ALC staff assisted with referencing and academic writing. ALC staff skills were in high demand and they were able to help students they did not normally see – either because they can't visit the campus during office hours, or they were not aware of the help available until they heard about other students being helped.

The Get It Together Study Night has been such a success it is now being considered for extension to all CQUniversity libraries and another event will be conducted at the end of the first term this year.

SUZANNE MUNRO AALIA
Librarian
CQUniversity Sydney Library
s.munro@cqu.edu.au