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EduCon 2019: event report

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Finally, the ongoing quality of ASM National Conferences is the end result of the effort of the ASM Executive (in particular, we acknowledge Dena Lyras, Cheryl Power and Kate Seib) as well as the Local Organising Committee members: Stephen Kidd (Chair), Chris Ossowicz (Deputy Chair), Peter Zilm (Scientific Program Chair), Paul Sideris, Stephanie Lamont-Fredrich (So-

cial), Laura Weyrich, Tania Veltman, Haig Henry, Gianni Scoleri, Alexandra Tikhomirova, Katarina Richter, Nicky Thomas, Darren Trott, Mohammed Alsharifi, Gupta Vadakattu and Tania Veltman. We would also like to thank ASN Events (especially Kara Taglieri, the ASM National Office Manager) for their work in organising this conference.

EduCon 2019: event report



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This year's ASM EduCon was held 3–4 July in the University of South Australia's new Health Innovation Building in Adelaide. It was a fabulous meeting, attended by 33 registrants from Australia, and from international locations. Registrants enjoyed a diverse program of engaging oral and poster presentations focussing on microbiology and broader biomedical education, teaching and learning in the higher education landscape and professional development opportunities for teaching-focussed academic staff. Throughout the program, attendees enjoyed plentiful and tasty catering supplied by *Food Lore* (caterers based within the Health Innovation Building).

The meeting commenced with Associate Professor Prue Bramwell (RMIT University) delivering an engaging presentation titled *Group work – perspectives on the student experience and assessment*. Prue, recipient of the 2018 ASM David White Excellence in Teaching Award, presented her perspectives and findings on the complexities of group work and its assessment. Prue's presentation included examples of the successful use of Spark^{PLUS}, a licensed software for peer assessment and feedback on group work.

Mr Adam Montagu, from Adelaide Health Simulation (University of Adelaide), then delivered an engaging presentation titled *Simulation under the microscope*, which included a live demonstration of the capabilities of the simulation unit by Adam and his colleagues (including physicians, technicians and actors). Following this, we were then treated to a guided tour of, and further demonstrations in, the Health Simulation unit, which is responsible for teaching active, clinical practice skills to medical, nursing, physiotherapy and health science students.

Wednesday's activities were rounded out by the EduCon Conference Dinner, held at the Union Hotel, a local gastronomic pub within walking distance of the Health Innovation Building. Once there, we enjoyed a delicious three-course meal accompanied by regional wines within an opulent, yet relaxed setting. A wonderful evening of networking and great conversation was had by all!

Thursday's program kicked-off with Dr Helena Ward and Professor Ray Peterson (both from the University of Adelaide) delivering an accessible presentation on *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Why it matters and how you can engage in it*. Given the increasing importance of scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) activities to the careers of many University academic staff, this presentation was highly informative, relevant, practical and timely.

Dr Nicolene Lottering, currently of Swinburne University of Technology but formerly with the University of Adelaide, delivered an engaging presentation titled *Re-inventing learning for the digital generation: A students-as-partners approach to maximise student engagement*, which exemplified the use of social media in increasing student engagement in her Anatomy classes. Nicolene outlined useful ways for using Instagram to boost engagement (not only with her students, but also with us via a live demonstration), and highlighted the many positive outcomes this had on student engagement, performance and the subject's reviews.

Associate Professor Wilhelmina (Willa) Huston (University of Technology Sydney) then presented *Student-Professional-Academic*

Co-creation of collaborative and active learning approaches in the new UTS PC2 Superlab. Willa's presentation articulated the consultation, design and development process that staff (academic and professional) and students at UTS underwent that lead to the new superlab laboratory spaces, which will be ready for teaching in 2020. During this process, utmost care was taken to ensure active learning approaches were incorporated into the curricula to be delivered in these engaging, multidisciplinary biomedical laboratory 'pods'.

Dr Rebecca LeBard (University of New South Wales) presented *How do we measure good teaching?*, which articulated the University's recent implementation of teaching-focussed academic roles, and the community of practice that Rebecca and colleagues established and developed to support these roles, and advance the careers of teaching-focussed academics at the University.

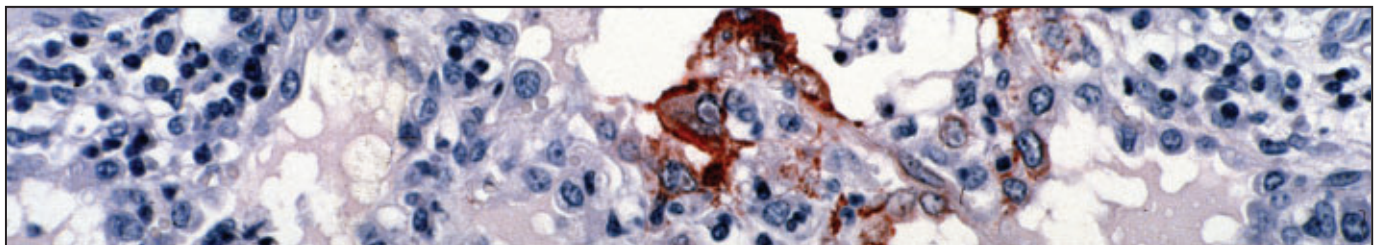
The conference program concluded with Dr Karina Riggs, from the University of Adelaide, delivering a presentation titled *'Flipping the Microbiology Lab' – A case study into Flipped Classroom design for improving student engagement.* Karina presented the strategies and pre-laboratory class activities that she has successfully used

to increase student engagement, performance and outcomes in her microbiology labs.

This year our meeting was very proudly sponsored by Monash University and The University of Melbourne. We are extremely grateful for their very generous and continued support.

Given the huge success this year's EduCon, in addition to the many wonderful conversations and networking opportunities it provided, I am already looking forward to next year's ASM EduCon, which will be held in Melbourne in 2020. See you all then!

The conclusion of ASM EduCon 2019 also marks the end of my tenure as Chair of the ASM's Education Special Interest Group (Ed SIG). I wish to take this opportunity to thank all members of the SIG, and in particular the attendees at EduCon over the last two years for their participation, attendance and engagement. It really has been a pleasure working with you all. I now hand over the reins to Dr Megan Lloyd (Edith Cowan University, WA) who, I am sure, will continue leading the ED SIG, and EduCon, with passion and vigour!



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