ALISON LEE AND CATHERINE MANATHUNGA

7. TEACHING AS PERFORMANCE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter takes up the suite of policies that reflect a growing determination of national governments to manage university teaching as a mechanism for building the alignment between higher education and the economy. It examines the policy trajectories of higher education systems in targeting teaching within quality assessment and funding mechanisms. These mechanisms produce what Stronach, Corbin, McNamara and Warne (2002) call an 'economy of performance', that attends selectively to those aspects most readily made visible and measurable and, at the same time, re-orients the field from 'teaching' to 'learning'.

Universities are differentially funded in relation to the assessment of their teaching performance; in response universities shape policy to optimise their share of the funding mechanism, which in turn affects certain aspects of the work-life of university teachers. Performance-based funding produces scripts for the self-fashioning of individual academics as well as for universities required to compete with each other in national quality leagues tables. At the same time, the daily work of teaching remains a complex matter of negotiating competing claims for attention within what Stronach et al. term 'ecologies of practice', which involve a complex of 'professional dispositions and commitments individually and collectively engendered' (Stronach et al., 2002, p. 109).

We seek in this chapter to contribute to an analysis of the effects of performance-based funding on the history and practice of teaching in the university. We do so by telling a particular kind of history within one national higher education system: that of the policy trajectory of the Australian Learning and Teaching Performance Fund (LTPF). We situate the LTPF text within its particular discursive history and subject it to a series of re-readings to explore its workings in relation to the contemporary modes of governance of the university. This is not in order to argue that policy shapes practice in any simple or linear fashion, but rather that the policy story is an extraordinary and persistent one with respect to teaching as a site of investment and control. At the same time we argue that, while teaching may have been readily requisitioned for knowledge economy discourses and strategies, it still exceeds the parameters of audit measurement. We argue that teaching can be usefully understood as 'tactically polyvalent' in Foucault's (1990) terms: symbolically powerful and endlessly available for re-definition.

Teaching as 'Tactically Polyvalent'

Teaching is understood, rhetorically at least, as a key role of the university, more recently couched in corporate discourse as its 'core business'. There are important continuities as well as discontinuities about the meaning and purpose of the university, which can be traced through the ways in which teaching is construed in literature about the university throughout its history. Simultaneously ancient and contemporary, university teaching is usefully taken up as 'tactically polyvalent' (Foucault, 1990) within the terms of a range of discourses about the university. This means that 'teaching' is a term with many meanings and values, yet one that has particular political and ethical force since it functions in the culture as an unarguable good. Freedom, democracy, literacy and indeed quality are terms mobilising tactically polyvalent discourses that reward close policy scrutiny for the work they do and the meanings they are made to make. It is hard to be 'against' teaching, or to publicly admit to not valuing it. Teaching, then, represents an undisputed 'good' of a university, and no-one in their right mind would own up to their failure to value it. But what teaching becomes is a matter of tactical manoeuvring. As such it is powerfully available for recuperation and renovation within the terms of policy and systems of governance.

Teaching, over the course of the past two centuries, has come to exist in a place of tension and struggle in relation to research, that governing symbol of the modern university. Interventions such as those of Boyer (1991) on the 'four scholarships', have attempted to intervene in the relentless binarisation of the research-teaching dynamic, with mixed success. Burton Clark (1994, 1998) has demonstrated, through comparative historical analysis, how the 'research-teaching-study nexus' at the heartland of the modern university has been subjected to 'drift' in one direction or another, as a result of the changing meanings and modes of governance of the university. In Australia, as elsewhere, there has been no more dramatic manifestation of the processes of 'drift' than the re-engineering of a tertiary education sector from a 'binary' system, consisting of 'teaching' colleges and 'research' universities, into a putatively 'unified' national system where all higher education institutions compete across the teaching-research spectrum.

While research was subjected most quickly and visibly to neo-liberal measurement and funding regimes, through research assessment exercises of one kind or another, university teaching has more recently been 'captured' through the mechanisms of government quality audit systems, to be managed and funded in terms of 'performance'. A new 'language of indicators' (Strathern, 2000, p. 314), has emerged as warrants for 'excellence', to govern the conduct of teaching and the funding of teaching as warrants for claims to expertise or quality. These manifestations of the 'audit culture' range from 'student satisfaction' to 'outcomes and attributes' data based on economic and political criteria, through to 'quality' criteria based on a new research field on student learning (Biggs, 1999; Ramsden, 1992; Prosser & Trigwell, 1999). They form a 'matrix of targets, measures and normative comparisons' that Stronach et al. (2002, p. 121) call the 'economy of performance' which they argue characterises the 'uncertain politics of professionalism' in relation to teaching.

In a complex array of policy-led developments sketched in the following sections of this chapter, these shifts accompany the arrival into the university in the past two decades of a range of professional fields hitherto managed within a separate stratum of vocational colleges. What has emerged in the past five years in particular is a growing interest in teaching as a vehicle for the delivery of economic and social benefit, and for the management of risk in the form of economic danger (McWilliam, 2004). Once arguably the private prerogative of the charismatic lone scholar, university teaching has become 'de-sacralised', rendered knowable and calculable through regimes of surveillance and funding control as well as of public discourses of 'learning and teaching'.

As 'tactically polyvalent', teaching is readily deployed as an instrument of policy steerage and particularly of the further intensification of fiscal control of universities' core business by governments. At the same time, the language of teaching performance co-exists, albeit uneasily, with other discourses of teaching practice that construe teaching in relation to disciplinary training, student learning, the socialisation of students into an intellectual culture, or into the ethical norms of a profession. This is the dilemma that Stronach et al. (2002, p. 109) characterise as being 'caught between an "economy of performance" (manifestations broadly of the audit culture) and various "ecologies of practice" (professional dispositions and commitments individually and collectively engendered)'. We return to consider this dilemma at the end of the chapter.

We argue in this chapter that the language of teaching performance and the new discourse of 'learning and teaching' serve to produce particular kinds of accounts of teaching, subjecting them to particular kinds of control and shaping what can count as quality in teaching. This discourse attends to those aspects of teaching that can be specified and measured through quality audit mechanisms, some of which we explore below. They do not and cannot readily attend to those aspects of teaching that are less readily visible and reducible to grids and scales. As Strathern's (2000) careful analysis demonstrates, what is sought in teaching audits is evidential clarity, or 'transparency'; this in turn mobilises, more or less implicitly, a theory of teaching and learning that is transmission-based, inevitably reductive and in tension with most contemporary forms of pedagogical or learning theory.

We are not proposing a simple binary polarisation between the economy of performance and some kind of romanticised notion of an 'ecology of practice' that somehow sits apart from the current fetish with neo-liberal audit grids. On the contrary, universities are irreducibly complex cultural institutions, both the subjects of increasing fiscal control and generators of internal policy in response. At the same time they remain loose federations of quasi-autonomous colleges of academics and sites of the interplay of multiple and competing disciplinary and pedagogical lineages of power, knowledge and desire. Individual academics involved in teaching shape themselves according to a variety of shifting agendas, some of which involve actively recruiting themselves into the 'games of truth' (Foucault, 1985) that are generated through policy and funding mechanisms such as the LTPF, and some of which proceed along quite different lines.

We also do not propose that the capture of university teaching within audit mechanisms is a radical departure from the past. We seek to avoid what Nikolas Rose (2007, p. 252) terms the 'breathless epochalization' that characterises much policy analysis. Rose notes that 'we are not blessed or cursed by some turning point. We do not stand at a unique moment in an unfolding history, but in the midst of multiple histories'. In the remainder of the chapter we tell a particular kind of history, documenting the establishment of performance-based teaching across a particular thirty-year period in one national system, noting its persistence and the consistency of its trajectory, across political divides of different government regimes. This is a partial history, and we suggest the need for other histories to be written.

Assessing Teaching Performance: International Perspectives

The capture of teaching into an extended grid of performance-based governance of the higher education sector has become a world-wide phenomenon that has been taken up in different education systems in remarkably similar ways. Here we delineate the audit approaches to teaching and learning that have been in operation in England[1], New Zealand and the US since the 1990s. These three examples have been chosen for their direct influence on Australian government policy thinking, but they parallel developments in European systems and, increasingly, in the rapidly developing sectors in South America and Asia (Altbach & Bala'n, 2007), where, notwithstanding major historical and cultural differences, the growing competition between nations has driven governments and universities to improve their quality of education and research, including through the widespread establishment of quality assurance systems for both teaching and research.

In England from 1993 to 2002, controversial Teaching Quality Assessments were carried out in each subject area on a five-year cycle. These involved a combination of self-assessment by the institution and visits by external subject assessors, who reviewed 'curriculum design; teaching, learning and assessment; student progression and achievement; learning support and resources; and quality management and enhancement' (DEST, 2004a, p. 11). Attracting far more criticism than the parallel Research Assessment Exercise system, this process was abandoned in 2001 in favour of institutional quality audits and the publication of information on a national Teaching Quality Information website, covering quantitative and qualitative data on university learning and teaching strategies and quality processes and student admission, progression and completion data (DEST, 2004a).

A national survey of graduate satisfaction with university teaching quality, modelled on Australia's Course Experience Questionnaire, was developed and implemented for the first time in England in 2005. The TQI and national survey data were then incorporated into an updated Unistats website from 2007 (HEFCE, 2007). A focus on quality enhancement, and supporting and rewarding excellence in learning and teaching, was introduced with the establishment of the Teaching

Quality Enhancement Fund (TQEF) in 1999. This TQEF was evaluated in 2005 and a new streamlined process was introduced in 2006 that involved initiatives at the following levels:
- Institutional (allocations to support the development of learning and teaching initiatives and 74 Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning)
- Sector wide (through the Higher Education Academy)
- Individual (through the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme) (HEFCE, http://www.hefce.ac.uk/learning/enhance/tqef.asp).

In New Zealand, in 2002, the Integrated Funding Framework was introduced that incorporated a separate funding stream for teaching and learning. Within this pool of funding, the Student Component involved some performance-based funding. A performance indicator/learner/proposed benchmark matrix, that incorporated data on successful course completions, retention and a graduate experience questionnaire for different sets of learners (all learners, Maori and Pacific learners and learners with disabilities), was debated in 2003 and 2004 (DEST, 2004a). In 2007, a new set of quality assurance processes for teaching and learning was in the process of being developed that focused on performance and development rather than student enrolments as the basis for government funding (TEC, 2007). Early in 2008, it was announced that three groups of indicators would be used to measure teaching and learning performance: participation and provision; student achievement (course and degree completions and first year attrition) and student progress (TEC, 2008a). It was envisaged that these changes would be piloted in 2008 with full implementation in 2009 (TEC, 2008b).

Meanwhile, the US has had a longer tradition of quality assessments of teaching and learning, mostly managed at the state level through an accreditation process. This usually involves a combination of self-auditing by universities and visits by peer reviewers (DEST, 2004a). In the late 1990s, many states and individual universities also adopted externally driven quantitative performance indicators, measuring data about 'enrolment trends, student performance on admissions examinations, retention and graduation rates, pass rates on … professional examinations, job placement rates, and student and alumni satisfaction' (DEST, 2004a, p. 14). In most cases, performance on these indicators was directly linked with a proportion of the state's overall funding to public state universities. There has also been a push to measure students' learning outcomes, which has resulted in the development of a range of national assessment instruments (DEST, 2004a). Since 2004 there have been a range of state-based developments across the sector.

The Australian Learning and Teaching Performance Fund: A History

In this section we detail the particular trajectory of higher education reform that has led to the increasing interest in managing 'learning and teaching' in Australia. Like the national systems sketched in the previous section, Australia has intensified its commitment to measuring teaching performance as a mechanism for harnessing the business of the university more tightly into the service of the economy. In order to track the particular shape and direction of the Australian experience, we focus on

the emergence and establishment of the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund, or LTPF, which is a funding strategy for 'rewarding teaching excellence' in Australian universities and can be usefully analysed as an exemplary articulation of this policy trajectory (DEEWR, 2008a).

It is possible to trace the genesis of the idea of 'capturing' teaching performance through policy-based recognition and reward in Australia back thirty years to a recommendation in the Williams Report on Education, Training and Employment that a national award for university teachers be established, 'the completion of which would be a condition of service for all new academics' (DEST, 2002, p. 52). Needless to say, the wholesale adoption of this kind of control did not eventuate at the time and it would be another decade before the full effects of a general orientation to higher education in terms of Quality management began to take effect. One of the key planks in what has become known as the 'Dawkins Revolution', after their chief engineer, then Minister for Employment, Education and Training (1987–1991), John Dawkins, announced the

> establishment of the annual profiles documentation and meetings process as a mechanism by which institutions and the Commonwealth negotiate and agree on key allocation and performance objectives and targets and exchange views and information on broad strategic and policy issues, along with changes to funding arrangements and student places and introduction of HECS. (DEST, 2002, p. 63)

The implementation of the Dawkins reforms saw an extraordinary intensification of activity, from 1991 through the next five years. As part of the implementation of these reforms, a research group was appointed between 1989 and 1991 to review performance in higher education according to three key indicators: quality of teaching, student progress and achievement and graduate employment. The quality of teaching is defined as the 'perceived quality of teaching measured through Course Experience Questionnaires' (DEST, 2004a, p. 8). The government reported concerns, from within the sector and from the broader community, of decreasing quality of higher education resulting from restructuring of the sector. This led the minister for Higher Education and Employment Services already in 1991 to announce a Quality Assurance Program (DEST, 2004a, p. 9). In the same year the government released a statement on *Higher Education: Quality and Diversity*. The establishment of the Committee for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (CQAHE) followed a year later in 1992. This in turn led to the introduction of external quality audits of institutions. The process was designed to 'enhance quality of teaching and research while maintaining and extending diversity by avoiding pressures towards a culture of compliance to government prescriptions'. Funding was provided to institutions which could 'demonstrate effective quality assurance practices and excellent outcomes' (CQAHE, 1995, p. 26, cited in DEST, 2004a, p. 9). Audits of each Australian university covered teaching, research and community services, with funding levels attached to the outcomes (Woodhouse, 1998). These processes were discontinued in 1995–1996, reportedly due to high administrative costs (DEST, 2002, p. 64), but accompanied by a change of federal government.

A significant initiative that has had enduring effects on the constitution of a field of learning and teaching performance was the establishment in 1992 of the Committee for the Advancement of University Teaching (CAUT), having been foreshadowed in the Quality and Diversity statement a year earlier. The statement initially envisaged the establishment of an independent National Centre for Teaching Excellence. However, following consultation with the higher education sector, it was decided that a Ministerially appointed committee would be a more effective way of encouraging 'good practice and innovation in university teaching'. The role of CAUT was to promote the development of good teaching practice in higher education and to make recommendations to the Minister on National Teaching Development Grants.

The period from 1997–2000 saw the introduction of key developments that shape the current LTPF policy. First, in 1997, following a review, the Committee for University Teaching and Staff Development (CUTSD) was established, replacing CAUT. The same year saw the establishment for the Australian Awards for University Teaching, followed a year later by the delivery of the first report of the Higher Education Council in 1998, where for the first time principles and processes for quality assessment were discussed, and a description of indicators, objectives and outcomes was introduced (DETYA, 1999). In 2000, the Australian Universities Teaching Committee (AUTC) replaced CUTSD, paving the way to its replacement in turn by the Carrick Institute of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education in 2004. In the same year the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) was established.

In the years since 2000, a further suite of wide-ranging reforms was introduced, putting increasing pressure on teaching as a site of measurement and control. 'Learning and teaching' were increasingly being seen as an engine of economic advancement and prosperity, made explicit through the reforms put in place in 2002 by the federal government Education Minister, Brendan Nelson, in *Higher education at the crossroads* (Nelson, 2002). In the associated discussion paper, *Striving for quality: Learning, teaching and scholarship*, the need for widely acknowledged rewards for teaching and for increased importance to be placed on teaching within academia were asserted. Existing efforts towards these goals, it was claimed, had little bearing on academics' promotional opportunities, were specific to the academic institutions that chose to implement them, and did not incorporate data on students' educational outcomes (DEST, 2002). A more systematic form of assessment was required. This led directly to the reforms of the *Backing Australia's Future* policy, passed in 2003, in which three major reforms were announced to 'promote excellence in learning and Teaching' (Markwell, 2003, pp. 25–26). The first of these reforms was the establishment of a National Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (named Carrick and later re-named the Australian Learning and Teaching Council), the elaboration of the Australian Awards for University Teaching, and the establishment of the Learning and Teaching Performance fund.

The LTPF was not in fact implemented until 2006, and its first round, which evaluated universities' 'strategic commitment to learning and teaching' (DEST, 2004b, p. 1), drew widespread criticism from the sector, concerning the methods of

measuring excellence. A review of methodology was subsequently conducted, based on consultations and then consideration by an advisory group (DEST, 2007b). Methodologies were amended in the second round in 2007 to measure excellence across four disciplinary areas rather than across entire institutions as in the first round. These four areas were: i) science, computing, engineering, architecture and agriculture; ii) business, law and economics; iii) humanities, arts and education; and iv) health (DEST, 2007b).

The third round was conducted in 2008. In this version, the number of factors to be considered was reduced (details in DEST, 2007b, pp. 3–4), in an ongoing process of adaptation and refinement. At the time of writing, the 2009 round is being foreshadowed as concerned with measuring 'improvement as well as excellence'. According to a press release in May 2008, the change 'aims to ensure that all universities are encouraged to achieve better outcomes over time' (DEEWR, 2008c). The performance indicators will be compared over a three year period to measure improvement.

A Closer Look

The LTPF is an exemplary apparatus of performance-based assessment of university teaching. Here we summarise some of its key features, to demonstrate the shaping and workings of the 'economy of performance' it articulates and enacts. In 2008, the LTPF applied seven performance indicators to determine the quality of learning and teaching in Australian universities. These were grouped under three key headings: *success*, including students' progress and retention rates; *outcomes*, encompassing full-time employment and part or full-time further study; and *satisfaction*, including the graduate generic skills, graduate good teaching and overall graduate satisfaction results from the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) (DEST, 2007a). One of the key changes in the implementation of the 2008 LTPF was a simplification of the adjustment factors that are applied to student progress and retention rates. University scores are adjusted to compensate for factors that are acknowledged to affect performance, in order to produce a 'level playing field' (DEST, 2007a, p. 5). These factors include narrow fields of education, admission basis, type of attendance (full/part-time), mode of attendance (internal/external), Indigenous status, gender and disability (DEST, 2007a). There is no indication in the 2008 documentation about why these particular factors have been chosen or how they are expected to affect performance, except for the inclusion of a brief example about how part-time students are less likely to complete their studies (DEST, 2007a).

The data drawn upon for these performance indicators include the DEST Higher Education Statistics Collection, the Graduate Destination Survey and the Course Experience Questionnaire. The particular graduate generic skills that are valued in this exercise include teamwork, analytical and problem solving skills; written (though interestingly not oral) communication skills; confidence in tackling unfamiliar problems; and self-direction or self-management skills (DEST, 2007a). 'Good' teaching includes measures of graduate satisfaction, key indicators being the time academics spent commenting on student work, the amount of 'helpful

feedback' they received, how well academics 'motivated students to do their best work', how well academics could 'explain things', how hard academics worked to 'make their subjects interesting', and finally how much effort academic staff put into 'understand[ing] difficulties students might be having with their work' (DEST, 2007a, p. 9).

Adjusted scores in each of these categories are then turned into 'composite indices' that 'can be used for comparative purposes within each discipline grouping listed above. Although it is emphasised that these composite indices 'cannot be used to compare universities across discipline groupings in an absolute way' (DEST, 2007a, p. 6), funding is then distributed to each university according to how well all of their disciplinary groupings perform. Funding is allocated in several bands from A1 and A2 to C for each disciplinary grouping. As the measures of performance change or are adjusted, so too do the levels of funding to each university. For some universities, these levels can vary drastically from year to year.

For example, taking the two universities we work for, the University of Queensland went from the Band A in 2006 to Bands B and C in 2008. Its funding allocation accordingly went from over $10 million to half a million dollars over that 2-year period. In contrast, UTS went from Bands B and C in 2006 to Band A in 2008, received first ranking nationally and over $8 million (DEEWR, 2008a). In an era of stringently reduced funding for universities, the LTPF is a high-stakes financial game that universities must play.

The Economy of Performance

One of the avowed imperatives for the audit of university teaching is the assumption that the largely private world of teaching practice requires management and control to bring it to visibility and hence accountability. By holding teaching up to the audit light, it is imagined, as Strathern (2000) notes, that teaching and learning will become transparent. But, she argues, visibility can also conceal. What is lost or omitted when academics are encouraged to display themselves as 'auditable, competitive and ever-active performers' (Strathern, 2000, p. 316)? It is, therefore, important to investigate how the LTPF positions 'good' teaching as well to outline what this interpretation leaves out. In the remaining sections of this chapter we consider some of the effects of the particular renditions of teaching that are produced through the discourse of the LTPF. We attempt to demonstrate the complexity of the discursive field of university teaching and its 'polyvalence', necessarily and inevitably positioning universities and academics within multiple and sometimes contradictory meaning and value systems.

As indicated above, what counts as good teaching in the LTPF is timely and helpful feedback, motivating students, clear explanations, making subjects interesting, and understanding the difficulties experienced by students. In particular, teaching performance is evaluated according to such elements as student satisfaction, curriculum design according to specification of graduate attributes, and the incorporation of curriculum and learning theories such as 'deep learning' (Prosser &

Trigwell, 1999), 'constructive alignment' (Biggs, 1999) or, more recently, 'threshold concepts' (Meyer & Land, 2005). Here the shift in the rhetorical centre of gravity from 'teaching and learning' to 'learning and teaching' is produced through a fragile coalition between a generation of research into learner-centred pedagogies and a market-driven re-positioning of the student as customer. The effects on the re-positioning of the teacher will be taken up in the final section of the chapter.

Two points about the discourse of the LTPF can be made briefly here. The first concerns the emphasis on the 'clarity' with which lecturers explained their material. Clarity is incorporated into the LTPF as a measure of effective teaching. As a value, clarity is aligned with 'transparency' and, as Strathern (2000, p. 318) notes, transparency of communication is 'routinely advocated through evaluation (audit) practices'. Yet, she suggests, this would appear to promote 'immediate assimilability' of knowledge rather than the absorption, internalisation and application of knowledge. In the terms of a professional 'learning and teaching' discourse in higher education (e.g. Prosser & Trigwell, 1999), Strathern's comments align with the canonical principles of 'surface' versus 'deep' learning. If we read the LTPF against the grain here, as Strathern encourages us to do, then we can see that this CEQ instrument contradicts some of the fundamental premises of higher education curriculum and learning theories and appears to support transmissive, superficial approaches to learning.

The second point concerns a symptomatic displacement in the Australian LTPF of the indexical teaching quality of 'inspiration', though interestingly it appears in the English instrument. Its trace may be felt in the category of 'motivation', which is effectively and perhaps necessarily bleached of its passionate and embodied dimensions. Curiously, as Kirkpatrick and Thorpe (2000) argue, passion and inspiring others must be displayed in order to win national learning and teaching awards, thus laying upon the exceptional teachers the responsibility to carry the cultural and historical load of the charismatic individual. 'Tactically polyvalent', teaching can be both science and art, motivation and inspiration, co-existing and often irreconcilable meanings taken up differently in different policy for different purposes. Learning and teaching awards are about 'the cult of personality' (Kirkpatrick & Thorpe, 2000, p. 174) and the exceptional individual (Lee, 2005), so the embodied display of passionate teaching is rewarded and even required. In contrast, the LTPF purports to be a quantifiable measure of teaching performance within a system, so a particular economy and rationality are required, one, moreover that requires of the student that they substantially displace the teacher by supplying 'satisfaction' data as a primary quality measure. These two value systems co-exist in largely uncontested coalition.

Ecologies of Practice

In the environment of performance-based funding, universities become mediators, interpreters and implementers of various learning and teaching quality instruments and measurements. It is easy, and important, to critique these kinds of develop-ments from an educational perspective. For example assessment of teaching quality

according to audit mechanisms represents a narrow, arguably impoverished notion of pedagogy, where 'measurement, effectiveness and improvement ... [have become] the primal metaphors' (Gudeman, 1986 cited in Stronach et al., 2002, p. 127).

The rhetorical economy of performance enacts a desire to guarantee quality, to control spending and to secure transparency. As a result, the models of good teaching practice sanctioned under this economy of performance tend to be universal rather than local (Gudeman, 1986 cited in Stronach et al., 2002; McWilliam, 2002). As Stronach et al. (2002, p. 127) argue, the economy of performance model of learning and teaching is one 'prefaced on Economic Man and a broadly neo-classical economics, that is "derivational, universal and strictly rationalist" in the ways that Gudeman's economic anthropology would anticipate'. These exercises in performativity are not without cost, however, as Sparkes' (2007) moving and rather chilling portrayal of an academic's breakdown vividly demonstrates.

At the same time, universities are not simply mediating tools in the enactment of a policy discourse that determines action in any simple way. Universities are complex institutions with particular histories and ecologies. They are sites of practice and of the lifeworld of academics and students. Teachers, learners, associate deans for teaching and learning, classrooms, libraries, labs, departments, academic development units and committee meetings are all actants in the daily routines of learning and teaching. These routines involve what Stronach et al. (2002) refer to as the 'ecologies of practice'. They are folkloric, messy, hard to measure and, therefore, risky. They involve 'the accumulation of individual and collective experiences' through which people laid claim to being 'professional', or in this instance 'academic', including personal teaching experience, commitments to ideologies and beliefs about what constitutes 'good practice', and so on (Stronach et al., 2002, p. 122). Furthermore, in universities, the complex relations between pedagogy and disciplinarity are always in dynamic play (Lee & Green, 1997).

In the language of performativity, local teaching practices are ungovernable and opaque. In Stronach et al.'s (2002) study of teachers and nurses, they analyse the 'uncertain politics of professionalism' in ways that are useful for thinking about the multiple positionings of academics within the polyvalent discourses of university teaching. They note that operating within the 'ecologies of practice'

> generated a *tension* for professionals, and it seemed to us that it was in living this tension, with its contradictions, dilemmas, compromises, etc., that they experienced themselves as professionals. The job of understanding professional 'work' and 'belief', accordingly, involved reading these tensions, and locating 'professional' experiences betwixt and between these affiliations. (p. 122)

We are warned, however, that these affiliations do not enact a conceptual or moral binary, nor do they exist in separate chronological spaces. As they note:

> The collision of 'economy' and 'ecology', therefore, should not in itself be seen as a morally coded encounter between 'economy' (bad; audit culture; deprofessionalizing; impositional, etc.) and 'ecology' (good; professional; solidary; voluntarist, etc.). (p. 124)

Instead they are two of the many co-existing and contradictory meanings currently circulating within discourses of learning and teaching. Importantly, Stronach et al. then go on to note their scepticism concerning whether there is 'any such thing as an "audit culture" as such', except as a 'highly metaphorical deployment of the notion of "culture"'. Furthermore, 'No-one inhabits the audit culture, even although it invests everything' (p. 122).

Exemplary of the complexity and necessary polyvalence of the discursive field is how the rendering of pedagogy as 'learning-and-teaching' in both higher education and policy discourses re-positions the teacher vis-a-vis the learner. As well as the learner being construed as customer through university policies and rhetorical address through websites and so on, the effects of technology-led changes into online environments have been, as (McShane, 2004, p. 4) notes, to 'democratise' the pedagogical relation, where 'teachers become learners, and learners become teachers'. It is not so easy to locate expertise and authority, certainly not in more traditional, disciplinary forms of power.

Conclusion

In laying out some of the terms of the policy governing performance-based funding for teaching, we have emphasised the continuity of a trajectory of government-led attention to learning and teaching quality. Focusing on a detailed (re)reading of the Australian LTPF, this chapter demonstrates the ways in which current modes of university governance seek to shape teaching practices and render them 'transparent' (Strathern, 2000). In enacting this desire for evidential clarity, we show how the LTPF, like other policy instruments, mobilises a theory of learning and teaching that is transmission-based (Strathern, 2000), superficial and in tension with most current learning theories. With this reading of policy history, we show how learning and teaching are 'tactically polyvalent' discourses that represent multiple and sometimes contradictory meaning systems that jostle for prominence in any given moment; a feature of the multiple histories that continually circulate in the present (Rose, 2007).

We argue that, while what Stronach et al. (2002) have called 'the economy of performance' can easily capture the unarguable good represented by quality learning and teaching, learning and teaching are more than performances to be measured, certified and funded. Circulating in the same policy moment are multiple discourses about learning and teaching that can be summarised as 'ecologies of practice' (Stronach et al., 2002), which represent disciplinary-based, organic, folkloric and postmodern understandings of learning and teaching practice. University teachers and learners live out the tensions between these contradictory discourses on a daily basis. With this history, we track the remarkable consistency of performance-based approaches to teaching in Australia over a thirty-year period, despite changes in the political party leading the country. This pattern is also consistent with policy trajectories in many other Western, Asian and South American countries. While this represents a partial history, and there are many other histories to be told, this chapter highlights the particular discursive work that audit mechanisms, such as the LTFP, perform in the governance of university learning and teaching.

NOTES

[1] In the early 1990s, three central bodies for higher education in England, Scotland and Wales were established and, among other responsibilities, were charged with maintaining teaching quality in publicly funded universities.

REFERENCES

Altbach, P. G., & Bala'n, J. (Eds.). (2007). *World class worldwide: Transforming research universities in Asia and Latin America*. Maryland, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
Bernstein, B. (1996). *Pedagogy, symbolic control and identity*. London: Taylor & Francis.
Biggs, J. (1999). *Teaching for quality learning at university*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
Boyer, E. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. Princeton, NJ: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
Clark, B. R. (1994). The research-teaching-study nexus in modern systems of higher education. *Higher Education Policy, 7*(1), 11–17.
Clark, B. R. (1998). *Creating entrepreneurial universities: Organizational pathways of transformation*. Oxford: Pergamon-Elsevier Science.
DEEWR. (2008a). *Learning and teaching performance fund 2008: Fund allocations*. Canberra: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Retrieved August 2009, from http://www.dest.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/9E65E462-1F30-43DA-A5C1-294B776A5FB1/18763/LTPF_fundallocations_A4_001.pdf
DEEWR. (2008b). *Review of Australian higher education: Discussion paper June 2008*. Canberra: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Retrieved August 2009, from http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/policy_issues_reviews/reviews/highered_review/
DEEWR. (2008c). *The 2009 learning and teaching performance fund: A discussion paper*. Canberra: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Retrieved August 2009, from http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/policy_issues_reviews/key_issues/learning_teaching/ltpf/2009ltpf.htm
DEST. (2002). *Striving for quality: Learning, teaching and scholarship*. Canberra: Department of Education, Science and Training.
DEST. (2004a). *Learning and teaching performance fund: Issues paper*. Canberra: Department of Education, Science and Training. Retrieved August 2009, from http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/policy_issues_reviews/key_issues/learning_teaching/ltpf/data_and_ref_links.htm
DEST. (2004b). *Promoting excellence in learning and teaching*. Update March 2004 Fact Sheet. Canberra: Department of Education, Science and Training. Retrieved August 2009, from http://www.backingaustraliasfuture.gov.au/fact_sheets/8.htm
DEST. (2007a). *Learning and teaching performance fund 2008: Assessment process part A*. Canberra: Department of Education, Science and Training. Retrieved August 2009, from http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/policy_issues_reviews/key_issues/learning_teaching/ltpf/2008ltpf.htm#2008_Administrative_Information_for_Providers
DEST. (2007b). *Learning and teaching performance fund: Issues raised in consultation*. Canberra: Department of Education, Science and Training. Retrieved August 2009, from http://www.dest.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/2312C435-1327-4B7F-AE83-9C3E4A1D0899/13063/9_TheLearningandTeachingPerformanceFundOverviewof.pdf
DETYA. (1999). *Higher education report for the 1999 to 2001 triennium*. Canberra: Department of Education, Training & Youth Affairs. Retrieved August 2009, from http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/publications_resources/profiles/archives/higher_education_report_for_1999_2001_triennium.htm
Foucault, M. (1990)[1978]. *An introduction: The history of sexuality* (Vol. 1, R. Hurley, Trans.). New York: Vintage.

Foucault, M. (1985). *The use of pleasure: The history of sexuality*. (Vol. 2, R. Hurley, Trans.). London: Penguin.

Higher Education funding Council of England (HEFCE). (2007). *Teaching quality information website*. Retrieved August 2009, from http://www.hefce.ac.uk/learning/qual/tqi.asp

Kirkpatrick, D., & Thorpe, S. (2000). Iconic (pre)occupations: Pedagogy and the body in the Australian Awards for University Teaching. In C. O'Farrell, D. Meadmore, E. McWilliam, & C. Symes (Eds.), *Taught bodies*. New York: Peter Lang.

Lee, A. (2005). *Knowing our business: The role of education in the university*. Canberra: Australian Council of Deans of Education. Retrieved August 2009, from www.acde.edu.au

Lee, A., & Green, B. (1997). Pedagogy and disciplinarity in the 'new' university. *UTS Review, 3*(1), 1–25.

McShane, K. (2004). Integrating face-to-face and online teaching: Academics' role concept and teaching choices. *Teaching in Higher Education, 9*(1), 3–16.

McWilliam, E. (2002). Against professional development. *Journal of Educational Philosophy and Theory, 34*(3), 289–299.

McWilliam, E. (2004). Changing the academic subject. *Studies in Higher Education, 49*(2), 151–163.

Markwell, D. (2003). Improving teaching and learning in universities. *Business/Higher Education Round Table NEWS, 18*.

Meyer, J. H. F., & Land, R. (2005). Threshold concepts and troublesome knowledge (2): Epistemological considerations and a conceptual framework for teaching and learning. *Higher Education, 49*, 373–388.

Nelson, B. (2002). *Higher education at the crossroads*. Ministerial Discussion Paper. Canberra: Department of Education, Science and Training.·

Prosser, M., & Trigwell, K. (1999). *Understanding learning and teaching: The experience in higher education*. Buckingham: SRHE & Open University Press.

Ramsden, P. (1992). *Learning to teach in higher education*. London: Routledge.

Rose, N. (2007). *The politics of life itself: Biomedicine, power, and subjectivity in the twenty-first century*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Sparkes, A. C. (2007). Embodiment, academics, and the audit culture: A story seeking consideration. *Qualitative Research, 7*(4), 521–550.

Strathern, M. (2000). The Tyranny of Transparency. *British Educational Research Journal, 26*, 309–319.

Stronach, I., Corbin, B., McNamara, O., & Warne, T. (2002). Towards an uncertain politics of professionalism: Teacher and nurse identities in flux. *Journal of Education Policy, 17*(1), 109–138.

Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) of New Zealand. (2007). Retrieved August 2009, from http://www.tec.govt.nz/upload/downloads/Info-pack-revised-26-Mar-07.pdf

Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) of New Zealand. (2008a). Retrieved August 2009, from http://www.tec.govt.nz/upload/downloads/2008-funding-info/bmr-methodology-scfteo.pdf

Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) of New Zealand. (2008b). Retrieved August 2009, from http://www.tec.govt.nz/templates/standard.aspx?id=1839

Woodhouse, D. (1998). Quality assurance in higher education: The next 25 years. *Quality in Higher Education, 4*(3), 257–273.

Alison Lee
University of Technology
Sydney

Catherine Manathunga
University of Queensland

MARIE BRENNAN

8. DIVIDING THE UNIVERSITY: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE MIDDLE

A Relational Analysis of University Governance

Shifts in university governance are not phenomena of single institutions or even groups of institutions: they have to be understood in the context of broader shifts in governance across multiple sites. These broader shifts have been considerable, ranging from changes to the dominant practices of governments, to globally circulating global discourses of organisations (Drori, Meyer & Hwang, 2006). Westminster traditions of government, particularly the separation of executive and legislative powers central to parliamentary systems in Australia and many ex-English Empire colonies, have come under increasing pressure in the context of globalising economic processes. Governments and agencies have used the construction of 'crisis' (Hart, 2008) – usually economic, but also natural disasters, and a range of other 'policy problems' such as child abuse – as a rationale to centralise power, such that neo-liberal government processes have depended on constructions of ever more urgent 'crises' as justifications for altering governance. These changes have usually been in the direction of more power to the executive branch of government, either weakening legislative branch power and/or pushing through legislative changes speedily, without traditional forms of deliberation or consultation. Similarly, in universities there has been a blurring of the boundaries of legislative and executive arms, paralleling this phenomenon at government levels (Krucken & Meier, 2006).

Universities, operating within nation states, have perforce monitored external changes, including those of government and private sectors, in order to develop adjustments to their own means of governing internal and external relations. University education has become a key policy arm of central governments, often positioned as part of economic restructuring and core to national competition (Barnett, 2000; Neave, 2000; Tierney, 2004a). The 2006 *International Handbook of Higher Education* notes key pressures and responses driving university change as: "(1) worldwide growth in demand and ... provision of access to higher education; (2) diversification and privatization of ... institutions; (3) increasing global interaction and interconnectedness; and (4) the growing use of technology" (Forrest & Altbach, 2006, p. 1). Each of these identified drivers of change has implications for changing existing core teaching and research practices in the university. They can also be observed in agendas for external relations with governments and other stakeholders in university systems. Thus, university interactions