

they do in their jobs? and What factors played a part in determining career destination?

At the most fundamental level, the study also provides answers to the burning question about whether, with the proliferation of law schools and burgeoning law student numbers, there are really so many graduates that there is a risk of precipitating an oversupply of legal services in the community.

Clearly, with a wealth of data at the researcher's call, the findings are far too numerous and the total picture painted too complex to be discussed in this brief note. Beyond the specific results of this one study, what should be of particular interest to researchers from other countries, puzzling about the career destinations of their own law graduates, is the methodology employed, especially the design of the survey instrument. Nonetheless, it is conceivable that, were this study to be replicated elsewhere, the picture which would emerge would bear a remarkable resemblance to this one, given the

likely similarity of the factors bearing on the employment of law graduates in the legal professions of most common law countries.

TEACHING METHODS & MEDIA

REVIEW ARTICLE

Printed teaching materials: a new approach for law teachers

R Johnstone

Cavendish Publishing, 1996
195pp

Designing print materials for flexible teaching and learning in law

R Johnstone & G Joughin

Cavendish Publishing, 1997
93pp

Richard Johnstone is to be commended upon having written two excellent practical guidebooks for law teachers about the creative use of instructional materials, especially printed teaching materials, to stimulate learning both inside and outside the classroom. The primary purpose of the first book, *Printed teaching materials*, is to anchor the principles he espouses for developing instructional materials in what we know from educational theory and research about how students learn, as well as to provide some examples of how it should desirably be done. *Designing print materials*, co-authored with Gordon Joughin, takes over where the first book left off. It serves as a practical manual or workbook for law teachers to aid them in the actual writing and production of the instructional materials they intend to use in their classrooms.

Johnstone claims that his objective in writing the first book was to provide law teachers with a new frame of reference for thinking about the use of printed teaching materials, to take

them beyond the unimaginative approaches traditionally adopted at law school. He contends that, if the focus is at all times on the creative use of teaching materials to enable students to optimise their learning through interesting and challenging private study outside class, the classroom can then be more effectively used for more participatory and reflective methods of learning. In the process, presumably, the more students can be stimulated to prepare themselves for class through the quality of the materials they are given, the more engaged they will be by the classroom activities, leading to better classroom interaction between teachers and students.

The second part of the book constructs an educational framework for developing teaching materials within which activity based, contextualised and critical learning can be promoted. Because Johnstone's aim is to influence fundamentally the way teachers think about the teaching/learning process, it is understandable that he devotes a third of the book to laying this sort of groundwork. Nonetheless, this depth of coverage of educational theory may be regarded by some as too detailed and a tad esoteric for a book focused on the practical elements of helping teachers to develop instructional materials. It may be thought that the bulk of the principles set forth in this section have already been sufficiently covered in his earlier book, *The quiet revolution*², and do not require such detailed recapitulation in this more limited context.

For the purposes of this book Johnstone singles out four schools of

Cumulative Digests for Subject Headings

You can now obtain a compilation of all digested entries under any of the subject headings used in the Legal Education Digest. Each compilation contains five years of writing on the subject heading/s of your choice and they contain a wealth of information on all aspects of legal education and training.

Contact the Centre for Legal Education to order your copy or download an order form from the web at <http://www.fl.asn.au/cle/publications/digest/index.htm>

2 Le Brun M & Johnstone, R (1994) *The (q)uiet revolution: improving student learning in law*, Law Book Company: Sydney. Reviewed in 3 *Leg Ed Digest* 3 (Jan 1995).

thought about student learning: the relational theorists who focus on the ways in which students approach learning tasks; cognitive theories which probe situated learning or cognitive apprenticeship and the nature of expertise; Perry's theory of students' cognitive and ethical development; and problem-based learning. There is a useful and pithy discussion of the role in law teaching of problem-based learning, about which a large body of literature has emerged in the past 15-20 years, as well as the function of 'self-regulated' learning, which seemingly equates with Malcolm Knowles' notion of the self-directed learner as used in adult education.

Johnstone lays great stress on the need to have a firm grasp on the individual and group characteristics of our students. This knowledge can be used to prepare a profile of them as learners, especially of the ways in which they are most likely to learn effectively and the stages they may go through in their intellectual development. The next logical step before embarking on the design of the materials is to establish the aims and learning objectives that will guide their development. He categorises the learning objectives for law students under four headings: cognitive objectives; skills objectives; objectives about values; and motivation. There is an interesting discussion under cognitive objectives about the differences between the traditional objectives of legal education, enshrined in our efforts to inculcate professional modes of thinking, and the critical and interdisciplinary approaches which should desirably ensure that law is also taught within the context of its impact upon society.

As part of this educational framework for developing teaching materials, there is also a section on the importance of assessment, with a heavy

focus on continual feedback, designed to make use of a variety of formal and informal methods in order to stimulate progressive learning. Practical examples are discussed, including problem-based examination questions, short answer examinations, essays, fieldwork reports, student presentations, quizzes in class, simulations, self-assessment and assessment based on group work.

With respect to subject structure, Johnstone rightly points out that students are unlikely to employ a deep approach to learning 'unless they are clear about the structure of the subject, it is pitched at the right level for them, they can identify with the subject matter and see its relevance for them and they have a well developed base of knowledge upon which to build in the new subject.' (p.46) A further aspect of subject structure to which insufficient attention is often paid is the principle of sequencing topics in such a way that they facilitate student learning. Johnstone provides a very useful classification of the approaches to topic sequencing contributed by Derek Rowntree.

The author devotes 12 pages of this chapter to teaching methods, listing seven in all: lectures, class discussions, small group work, pyramiding, peer learning and cooperative learning, brainstorming and simulations, role playing and mootings. Under each heading he analyses their strengths and weaknesses and provides tips for their use in law teaching as well as practical examples of how they can be successfully employed. There is even some advice about the sources of information available to law teachers to help them evaluate their own teaching.

This chapter concludes with a recap of the elements of the educa-

tional framework which the author has assembled, capturing their interrelationships and sequencing in a 'dynamic model of teaching and learning for developing teaching materials' (p.64).

Part three gets down to the nitty-gritty of the book: how to put together the instructional materials needed for successful law teaching and student learning. Johnstone provides a checklist of 13 characteristics of good teaching materials. He reinforces the earlier point about the problems posed for teachers when an insufficient number of students properly prepare for classes and claims that these obstacles can be overcome through the preparation of materials which display this characteristics. In this regard, he maintains that

Well constructed and presented teaching materials can themselves be a motivating effect on students. If students can detect our interest and enthusiasm in the preparation of the materials and find the materials relevant to their own lives, and interesting and challenging to use, they may be more likely to adopt deep approaches to learning. (p.67)

Nonetheless, it does not stop there. As Johnstone points out, there must be a perceived linkage for the students between their use of the materials and the assessment tasks they are required to perform; otherwise the materials will be neglected and not achieve their purpose.

The balance of this part of the book (33 pages) sets forth a number of what the author describes as 'very broad principles and associated techniques for the development of printed teaching materials' (p.68). These canons for the design of materials for law teaching prescribe that they must: include all basic subject information; include as much as

possible of the materials students will have to work with when engaging in self-study prior to class; be 'user-friendly'; be chosen to reflect a variety of learning objectives; be chosen to reflect a variety of voices; use visual aids and signposts; and engage students in specific activities and dialogue which anchor topics within students' own personal experience, involve them in different types of activities, give them opportunities to respond and maximise opportunities for self-assessment and other forms of feedback. To this reviewer's mind this section contains the heart of the book. The exposition of these principles is clear and concise and speaks directly to law teachers with a self-evident understanding of the nature of their task. Pertinent examples are given of the principles in operation. Tables are extensively used to capture the points being made and the steps to be followed.

The final part of the book is devoted to the provision of examples of printed materials which are intended to illustrate the principles and themes identified by the author, as well as to provide an exemplar of the ways in which law teachers can prepare their own teaching materials. The specific example that is worked through step by step is the preparation of materials for a contracts course. The author sets out a typical scenario for the class, provides an overview of the materials and class activities to be employed and identifies the tasks to be performed in situating the topic (step one), learning the law (step two), developing the principles through use and application and checking on learning (step three), and law reform, socio-legal research and economic analysis (step four).

The objective of the second book, *Designing print materials for flexible teaching and learning in law*, is essentially different, but nonetheless complementary to the first. As the authors, Richard Johnstone and Gordon Joughin, contend, it is a guide and workbook which, although well informed by educational theory and research, is essentially a 'guide to action' for those tasks that need to be performed by law teachers in order to produce effective teaching materials. They also maintain that, by adopting the systematic approach advocated in the book, law teachers will be able to proceed confidently, address all the important issues involved in developing materials and produce effective materials that will be satisfying to them and their students.

They divide the task of designing teaching materials into five stages: identifying key ideas about teaching and learning; preparing a materials blueprint; developing a sample topic or prototype; developing the remaining topics; and evaluating and improving the output. The authors neatly elaborate upon each of these stages by putting forward ideas and suggestions for teachers to use in the design of their own materials. Practical examples and checklists are provided in tabular form. There is plenty of white space to enable the readers to fill in their own answers when settling, for example, the aims and objectives for the subject or topic in question. Examples of specific learning activities, revision questions and self-assessment exercises are also provided.

These two books are a very valuable addition to the scant literature upon the development of instructional materials for the teaching of

law and indeed may be said to break new ground. Hand in hand, they concisely explain what educational theory and research have to contribute and then translate the theory into the sort of practical guidance which can be easily applied by the busy law teacher. Those who are seeking out ways of enhance the quality of the teaching materials they provide to their students will find both books, preferably studied together to gain a full appreciation of how the theory should steer the practice, an invaluable resource. Furthermore, it can be easily recognised that, although the two books are directed toward the development of printed teaching materials, the principles they put forward are largely applicable to the design of computer-based instructional material as well.

Editor

TECHNOLOGY

Gazing into the future through a VDU: communications, information technology and law teaching
P Alldridge & A Mumford
25 *JL & Soc* 1, 1998, pp 116-133

A 19th-century legal academic deposited in a law school in the last quarter of the 20th would have found the working methods of his successors in the 1970s and even the 1980s surprisingly familiar. He would, however, require significant explanation of the changes effected over the last 10 years. While the theoretical terminology considered by some of his latter-day colleagues might be difficult for him to understand, the questions addressed by the most technologically advanced of his colleagues would provide him with little trouble.

To date, the advent of the Communications and Information Technology (C&IT) revolution has sig-