‘Are You Having a Laugh?’ Using Humour as a Teaching Tool

FASE lunchtime seminar Tuesday 21 July

12.30 - 2.00pm
Tuesday 21 July
Oceans Institute Seminar Room G.05, corner Fairway Street and Edwards Street

Abstract:

Our understanding of the word ‘uncapped’ is now dominated by modern technology. Most of our students have grown up with the ability to passively click and consume information, and this has the potential to have a profound impact on the way they approach their university studies.

With technology supporting the recording and electronic distribution of lectures, students can now choose to listen to the material online rather than attend in person. And even when they do show up, the fact that they are becoming increasingly accustomed to instant access of information with minimal effort means they may be less likely to actively participate in their own learning experience.

Whilst studies have shown that humour can have a significant positive impact on students’ retention of material, the judicious use of appropriate humour is also a way of both attracting students to the classroom and encouraging their active involvement once they are there. Appropriate use of humour creates a comfortable social atmosphere and increases student attention and involvement; far from being a diversion to proper learning, it can actually help foster it.

As well as exploring the pedagogical benefits of using ‘constructive’ humour in class, this paper aims to provide practical guidance to those wishing to introduce more humour into their teaching.

About the presenter:

Assistant Professor Kate Offer
From 1995 to 2008, Kate worked as a lecturer at the University of Western Australia’s Law School. In 2007 and 2008, Kate acted as legal consultant to the Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia, providing legal advice and seminars to teachers and school administrators in the private sector. In February 2008, Kate took up a senior lecturer position at the Law School at the University of Notre Dame in Fremantle. Kate returned to UWA as an Assistant Professor in 2010 and continues to work in both the Law School and the Faculty of Education. She currently teaches Torts and Evidence. Her research focus is Education Law and Legal Education.

Kate was awarded a Faculty Excellence in Teaching award in 2012 and a Faculty Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning award in 2013. She was also the Blackstone Law Student Society’s Law Teacher of the Year in 2013, winner of the Inaugural UWA Student Guild Student Choice award in 2014 and the recipient of the 2015 UWA Award for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning.

RSVP:
Please register your attendance to fase-ecm@uwa.edu.au by Wednesday 15 July.

There will be a light lunch, refreshments and an opportunity to network informally from 12.30pm followed by the presentations.