Educators of Impact
FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCES

Alessandra Teunisse

One of the simple, yet powerful ways Alessandra Teunisse motivates her students to learn is to get her students to explain the ideas and concepts that she is teaching to each other. She also believes that humour is a great motivator for engagement and students who can laugh and truly enjoy their time in the classroom will often make for more successful learning outcomes.

“Students who are having a fun, enjoyable time while they learn are far more likely to relax and engage with the content. I also know that if I can relate the course content to the real world, it makes the concepts more concrete and students are more likely to see the value of it.”

Dr Christopher Kilby

As a tutor, Dr Christopher Kilby strives to create strong rapport with his students and ensures his teaching facilitates a safe space for students to explore concepts and ideas without penalisation if a mistake is made. He also believes that creating a learning environment where students feel in control empowers them to be courageous with their thinking and ideas.

“In class, I ask students lots of questions and encourage students to work together to complete tutorial activities. I also ask thought-provoking questions to push students to think about topics more deeply or in new ways. I have found that the novelty of this challenge helps students to remain engaged and promotes a deeper understanding of unit content.”

“Genuinely cares about how his students are progressing, is engaging and makes me want to learn the content, and brings the best out of his students.”

“Christopher is very knowledgeable and passionate about health psychology and statistics. He is very engaging as a tutor, making sure everyone is able to understand the concepts and theories. Overall, he is a dedicated person across the areas of teaching, research and service.”

– 2019 Macquarie Students
Dr Ian Stephen

Dr Ian Stephen’s enthusiasm for his subject is contagious, and he believes his own passion for teaching the Research Methods in Psychology unit helps to motivate his students to learn. By allowing students to design and conduct an experiment to investigate why people behave altruistically means students are applying the techniques they learned in the classroom and also experiencing a real-world scenario using their skills to solve problems.

“I motivate and inspire students to succeed by sharing with them my enthusiasm for the subject, by presenting information in a clear, engaging way, and by giving them an understanding of how the experience they gain in their learning will help them in their study, career, and life more broadly.”

“Dr Stephen is clearly an expert in his field. His passion and interest in his work translates into insightful and engaging lectures, tutorials and assessments. Dr Stephen is a great role model for aspiring psychologists and academics.”

“Ian was a wonderful lecturer who conveyed complex evolutionary concepts in a simple and engaging manner. I could tell he was passionate about what he was talking about and had a phenomenal amount of background knowledge. He could promptly answer any of my questions.”

– 2019 Macquarie Students

Lauren Florentia Ehrenfeld

Lauren Florentia Ehrenfeld motivates and inspires her students by creating a learning environment where they can focus on aspects of their field of study that particularly excite them. As the tutor for the Principles of Behaviour Change unit, she also works with students on developing and implementing a behavioural change intervention for themselves, which she believes is a powerful tool to enhance student engagement and learning.

“As part of the behavioural change intervention, I undertake one-on-one consultations with my students, which helps them in tailoring and refining an intervention that is personally relevant. My genuine passion for psychological intervention facilitates greater commitment of my time and resources, but ultimately is best for students.”

Winner
Vice-Chancellor’s Learning and Teaching Sessional Staff Award
Educators of Impact

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Dr Kathleen Tait
Dr Kathleen Tait uses students’ capstone projects to allow students studying special education the opportunity to learn to work with community organisations and with other staff. As a result, she says that this then becomes a form of assessment, not only supporting and enabling students’ knowledge and teaching but also developing their professional learning skills. An example of a recent active partnership involved mentoring a postgraduate student (a teacher) who based her capstone project on creating a social skills program for her son who has autism. This activity encouraged and supported positive learning outcomes for multiple stakeholders within the school community.

“Dear Kathleen, Thank you. My son’s life at school has totally been changed by this project work. Not only has it allowed me the ‘excuse’ to intervene as a mother and help to provide social support for my son, we now have several students on board that are helping him and guiding him each lunchtime. My son feels he has many friends and is thrilled by the whole experience. His teacher has also been inspired to change things too and is feeling empowered. So for that … how do I find the words to thank you?”
– 2019 Macquarie Student
(Paraphrased feedback on capstone project)

Lisa White
Lisa White believes that great teaching involves working hard to engage students and building tools for them to unlock their potential, as well as developing their curiosity and interest in the subject, and passion for transformative learning.

“In my Educational Studies tutorials, one of the ways I motivate my students is through sharing stories from the school classroom and demonstrating practical and visible learning strategies for supporting school learners sharing my passion for authentic children’s literature. It’s important to model and scaffold learning in school classrooms too, so I try to model this process in our tutorials through the use of a variety of ‘visible thinking strategies’ to help students think about their own developing pedagogy.”

“Her love for English is infectious, and it makes me want to try really hard so I too can be like that.”
“Her classes are always interesting and helpful, and you get a genuine sense that she wants all of her students to achieve to the best of their ability.”
– 2019 Macquarie Students
Dr Maria Herke

Dr Maria Herke believes that great communication is a powerful enabler for her students to succeed in all life spheres. She works hard to make the links between what her students are learning in class and how this relates to their existing or future careers.

“A very popular assessment I use to support this is getting students to create a WordPress blog where they post examples of their best written communication from any of the units they are enrolled in. They are encouraged to update this blog as they move through their units, and to use it as a showcase of communication skills for future employers.”

Associate Professor Matt Bower

Winner
Vice-Chancellor’s Award for Teaching Excellence

Associate Professor Matt Bower ran the world’s first blended-reality tutorial that enabled remotely located students to participate in face-to-face classes using virtual world avatars. In 2018, his book Design of Technology-Enhanced Learning won the AECT Design and Development Outstanding Book Award, and his educational technology research has been cited more than 2500 times. He often receives almost perfect scores on his teaching evaluation returns, and student feedback indicates that he inspires them to new levels of career success.

“I inspire my pre-service teachers by modelling learning technology innovation, creating internationally acclaimed educational resources, conducting high-impact research they can use and projecting my passion for effective learning technology utilisation.”
Raewyn Burden aims to inspire her students to be the best educators possible, by encouraging engagement in the teaching and learning process and displaying significance and connectedness in the curriculum to their lives and current knowledge. She is passionate about helping students exhibit intellectual quality, through having a qualified opinion on factors that affect them as future educators.

“I aim to role model these elements through an energetic, yet compassionate manner and hopefully motivate students to approach teaching in a confident, passionate style that they also impart to their students.”

“Rae has been a great tutor! She helped us to achieve our best in the unit, and she engaged us in all tutorials. She clearly outlined the unit/assessment expectations and guided us to succeed. She delivered the course content in interesting ways.”

“A confident and resourceful teacher who always has the students’ interests at heart; she provides in-depth teaching.”

– 2019 Macquarie Student

Associate Professor Naomi Sweller

Highly commended
Vice-Chancellor’s Learning and Teaching Student Nominated Award

Associate Professor Naomi Sweller notes that even though statistics classes are not wildly popular with psychology students, she’s still determined to help her students get the most out of her lectures. She cares deeply about the subject matter – research methods and statistics are key underpinnings of psychological research and practice – and believes that bringing this energy and passion to every student interaction she has helps them be successful.

“My passion is evident in my classes and my enthusiasm rubs off on students. I adopt a collaborative student-focused approach, incorporating anonymous in-class quizzes to lectures – and designing assessments with direct, practical applications to students’ research projects. I’m determined to help my students get the most out of a course very few of them would otherwise choose to take.”

“Naomi is so passionate about her work. She goes above and beyond to ensure that the content is not only understood but also her students get the most out of the course. She teaches a hard subject, but she always manages to make three hours of straight content enjoyable. I’ve never had a teacher who’s been able to do this before. She truly deserves to be recognised for her brilliant care, compassion and effort.”

– 2019 Macquarie Student
Associate Professor Tiffany Jones

Winner
Vice-Chancellor’s Learning and Teaching Student Nominated Award

Associate Professor Tiffany Jones is the convenor of the Exploring Australian Education: Social and Historical Contexts unit, which introduces students to the sociology of education. The unit challenges students to consider all four orientations to social issues in education – conservative, liberal, critical and post-modern – as well as education sector issues, time/place lenses and identity analyses that students may be inspired by. She believes that this unit seeds differing motivating, or success, factors in her students.

“Sociology of education is a broad field, containing deep silos. Differing ideologies, identity issues and contexts motivate different students. Indeed, alternatives will be initially off-putting, seemingly de-emphasising their core motivators. I thus facilitate learning across all students’ differing motivations by covering multiple factors within given social education debates that might inspire.”

“Tiffany is everything that I believe a teacher should be. She’s incredibly well versed in the course that she teaches, and her lectures and lessons consistently prove this. She’s designed a course that really works to convey the value of education and the impact we, as future teachers, can have on students.”
– 2019 Macquarie Student

Associate Professor Wayne Warburton

William Butler Yeats’ quote ‘Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire’ resonates strongly with Associate Professor Wayne Warburton’s own teaching philosophy and experience. He believes that students want to be inspired, not just ‘filled with facts’, and will respond positively to learning when their world is full of possibilities and empowerment.

“I like to engage with my students, encourage them to reflect on their dreams and aspirations, show my enthusiasm for their psychology journey, share stories about world-changing people, and shine a light on what is possible. Hopefully this has helped empower students to make informed decisions about their life path.”

“Excellent and engaging lecturer. Had the whole lecture theatre enraptured by his lecture. Took the theory and explained it while also giving real-world clinical examples. Engaged the audience with questions and scenarios.”

“Wayne was a really good lecturer that was able to keep me entertained for the whole two hours. He clearly explained the content in a way that was easy to understand.”
– 2019 Macquarie Student