



WARWICK

INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED  
TEACHING AND LEARNING

SUMMER 2016

# STRENGTHENING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

The Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning (IATL) has a strong history of supporting student engagement activities, having been formed by the University's two Centres of Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs). At the heart of IATL is the commitment to encourage undergraduates in their early research endeavours and to engage them with critical and creative activities that enhance their academic experiences at university. As an incubator of innovative teaching and learning activities we aim to push the boundaries and support a number of ongoing student-led and student-run projects which have emerged through over a decade of pedagogical developments.

Students continue to edit and decide the direction of our undergraduate journal *Reinvention: an International Journal of Undergraduate Research*: [www.warwick.ac.uk/iatl/reinvention](http://www.warwick.ac.uk/iatl/reinvention), which is in its ninth year. *Reinvention*, our online, open-access, peer-reviewed journal is dedicated to the publication of high-quality undergraduate student research. Our editorial board is staffed by a student Editor, six Assistant Editors and a Book Reviews Editor, drawn from the undergraduate student body of the University of Warwick and Monash University in Australia. We publish the work of undergraduate students from any academic discipline, from any university in the world, with our peer-reviews individually solicited from academic experts in the field corresponding to each paper. This combination makes the journal unique in the world of undergraduate publishing.

For the past five years we have supported both national and international student-led and student-run conferences, such as the British Conference of Undergraduate Research (BCUR): [www.bcur.org](http://www.bcur.org) and our own International Conference of Undergraduate Research (ICUR): [www.icurportal.com](http://www.icurportal.com). The first ICUR took place in 2013, following a decision to extend

the dissemination opportunities offered through *Reinvention*. Students from Warwick and Monash campuses in Melbourne, South Africa and Malaysia took part in a day of conference presentation panels, training sessions and a joint keynote - all connected via state-of-the-art video conferencing facilities. Our most recent ICUR, in September 2015, took place over two days and expanded to include student presenters in 11 universities and on 5 continents. ICUR gives undergraduates the opportunity to present their research, often for the first time, to an international audience. We provide training seminars on structuring abstracts, delivering presentations to a local and remote audience, and communicating with a multidisciplinary audience. Students develop confidence in their own research as well as in presentation skills and are able to build relationships locally and internationally through participation in the event.

We also fund many student research projects giving students the rare opportunity to conduct their own original research, initiating projects which inspire them. We support the Student Ensemble: [www.warwick.ac.uk/iatl/activities/ensemble](http://www.warwick.ac.uk/iatl/activities/ensemble) a group of students and an alumni network who create performance events in experimental, collaborative and participatory forms. Established in 2009 the group has worked with international practitioners and local communities at the Emerge Festival and Laboratory as well as visiting professionals and graduate companies.

Through *Reinvention*, ICUR and all of the other student-led and student-run projects in IATL, our work has been informed and enriched by students, all passionate about their research, their writing, their performances and their projects. This newsletter celebrates a number of these initiatives.

**Caroline Gibson, Academic Manager, IATL**

# STUDENTS AS CO-PRODUCERS: RECENTLY FUNDED STUDENT PRACTICE AT IATL

IATL's 'Student as Producer' funding incorporates three strands of activity: performance, collaboration and research. Each strand encourages Warwick students to develop extracurricular projects that foster reflective practice and professional learning, as exemplified by last year's hugely successful *'The Beanfield: Heritage, Ritual and Re-Enactment'* by Billy Barrett (now Breach Theatre), which was selected by the National Student Drama Festival before a run at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe leading to national press coverage, including in *The Guardian*.

IATL was also delighted to support Anna Himali-Howard's performance project *'Like there's no tomorrow'*. The project was 'a collaboratively devised piece of theatre about growing up in an age of optimism and coming of age at a time of pessimism, about an obsession with the apocalypse and the unsustainability of capitalism'. In March, a performance took place in the Humanities Studio and Anna Himali-Howard comments:

*'Last term I received 'Student as Producer' funding to work on a project about a preoccupation which is both personal and political for me - the end of the world. I facilitated a term-long research and performance project with 10 students from various academic backgrounds, and we explored cultural ideas around the apocalypse. Our interdisciplinary approach led us to writing, devising and collating music and images into a performance which was a surprisingly fun, messy and free take on our collective doom and generational angst, and we were extremely glad of the openness which IATL's spaces and brief provided. We're now hoping to take the performance further and continue working together.'*

In the same week, Charlotte Thomas' collaboration project *Protest and Performance* occupied the University's imagination for a week of events, talks and performances including FellSwoop Theatre's *To Know How You Stand*, which was revived by the IATL Student Ensemble at the Helen Martin Studio (Warwick Arts Centre).

IATL's 'Student as Producer' funding also supported Dorothy Allen-Pickard, BA (Hons) French with Film, with her research project *The Celluloid Ceiling*. As a female filmmaker, Dorothy was interested in challenging gender bias in the film industry and felt that one way of doing this would be by giving greater visibility to those women currently making fantastic, yet often overlooked, films. She conducted interviews with female filmmakers from across the UK and USA to find out their experiences of gender inequality in the film industry. On completion of her IATL-funded project and upon graduating from Warwick, Dorothy co-founded a new online film journal *Another Gaze* ([www.anothergaze.com](http://www.anothergaze.com)) which examines the relationship between intersectional feminism and film.

If you have an idea for a project that you would like to lead outside of your degree programme, whether through performance, collaboration, research – or even an exciting combination of all three – then we would like to hear from you before the next deadline which will be on the Wednesday of Week 10 (29th June 2016). We believe in students as co-producers of knowledge and collaborators in the academic adventure of practicing learning.

**Dr Jonathan Heron, Principal Teaching Fellow, IATL**

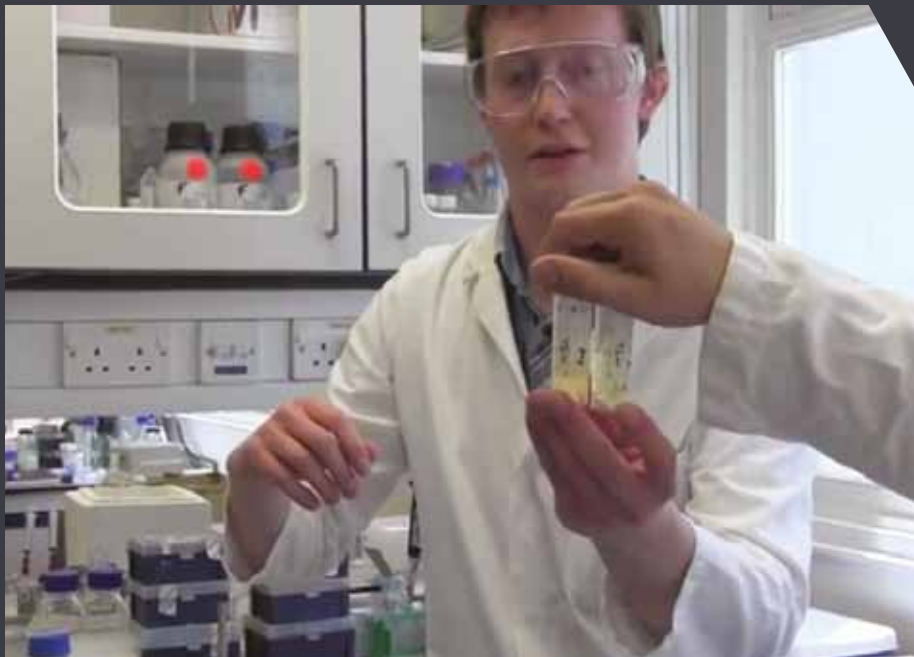


Photo: 'The Beanfield', Breach Theatre, New Diorama Theatre (photo by Richard Davenport).

The production follows the process of creating a historical re-enactment of the Battle of the Beanfield, a violent clash between new age travellers and police in 1985, as they travelled to Stonehenge to celebrate the Summer Solstice. The piece reflects on the incidents using documentary footage and interviews with those who were there, including both travellers and ex-police. Amanda Fawcett, BA (Hons) English and Comparative Literary Studies, the producer for *'The Beanfield'*, comments:

*'IATL has supported the development of 'The Beanfield' from its beginnings as a 'Student as Producer' project and further funding enabled us to take the show to the Edinburgh Fringe. The Fringe was an incredible platform for the work and allowed the show to reach further audiences and for us to make connections with venues and programmers. We're now touring the work to regional theatres, including the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, as part of an Arts Council funded tour, allowing us to connect with audiences up and down the country, increasing the reach of the show and encouraging more conversations about what went on at The Battle of the Beanfield, our civil liberties and national heritage.'*

# 'SCIENCE ON SCREEN': STUDENTS AS 'LEAD LEARNERS'



*'I thoroughly enjoyed being a 'lead learner' in the 'Science on Screen' project. It was great to see how the boundary between arts and science subjects was blurred through an innovative interdisciplinary workshop. It was excellent to be involved in the organisation and the evaluation of the project as it was something completely different from what I am used to doing. As well as this, I managed to get a lot out of the project through developing my communication and organisation skills.'*

Jack Peters, BSc Chemistry and Lead Learner 'Science on Screen'

IATL has recently been exploring the use of interdisciplinary workshops to enable cross-faculty students to learn about state-of-the-art scientific concepts in new and creative ways. Our recent two-day workshop took popular scientific films and radio plays from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries as a starting point to explore the scientific principles presented. Interactive lectures with discussion and hands-on activities followed each movie viewing. There were also opportunities to 'think out of the box' with the help of students from other disciplines as well as visits to scientific laboratories to see relevant research being undertaken.

To gain a better understanding of the impact and benefits associated with adopting this approach, two 'lead learners' were chosen to support the Science on Screen project. The selected students were first-year students with a scientific background and their key role was to collaborate with the workshop leader at every stage of the project. The 'lead learners' were involved in planning and facilitating the workshops sessions, publicising the event and assisting with the documentation and evaluation process. They recorded the activities that took place during the two-day event and supported the presentation of the results by producing a short film of the event. In addition, the 'lead learners' were responsible for summarising the students' feedback collected through a questionnaire and creating a reflective piece about their own experience.

The active participation of the 'lead learners' in the project gave them the opportunity to directly engage in every stage of the teaching and learning experience, to improve their communication and evaluation skills and to gain confidence in their own ability to be innovative, creative and curious.

The role of the 'lead learners' has been crucial in understanding and evaluating the students' interest in this interdisciplinary approach and in the planning and development of two new IATL interdisciplinary modules (IL023 Genetics: Science and Society and IL905 Thinking Water) being launched in the forthcoming academic year.

**Elena Riva, STEM Teaching Fellow, IATL**



# BCUR 2016

The British Conference of Undergraduate Research (BCUR) gives both undergraduates and recent graduates the opportunity to present research completed as part of their degree to other student and staff delegates in the form of oral and poster presentations. Starting in 2011, with its inaugural conference at the University of Central Lancashire, the conference now meets annually at a different British University with the University of Warwick taking its turn in 2012.

In 2016, BCUR was held at the Manchester Metropolitan University and was attended by Caroline Gibson and Emma Barker from IATL who gave a presentation on *Reinvention*, an online peer-reviewed journal, dedicated to the publication of high-quality undergraduate student research and ICUR, the International Conference of Undergraduate Research. In addition, the conference was attended by many students from the University of Warwick.

Sofina Mohamad Johari, BSc (Hons) Physics, tells us about her experience of attending the British Conference of Undergraduate Research:

*'Presenting at the British Conference of Undergraduate Research (BCUR) has got to be the biggest highlight of my year. The two-day conference gathered more than 400 passionate minds across various fields, all of whom were eager to share their work. Although the thought of talking in front of a broad audience about my very-niche research was daunting, it was comforting to find other delegates felt the same. We were all undergraduates, we had all done a little bit of research during our study, we were all nervous about presenting our work, and ultimately, we were all there to celebrate each other's achievement. I have to say that I am really thankful for the support provided by IATL because it really groomed me in conducting presentations, especially for a wide range of audience, ensuring I'm well prepared for future experiences. This really helped boost my confidence. Above all, the best part about BCUR was that it gave me the opportunity to have nerdy chats with other nerdy people - all in all, a very wonderful experience indeed.'*



Gemma Egan, BA (Hons) English and French, presented a poster at BCUR and is also publishing her research in *Reinvention*:

*"Having my abstract on the seventeenth-century French version of Little Red Riding Hood by Charles Perrault accepted by the MMU conference committee to present a poster was a wonderful experience. It was confirmation that not only was my research interesting to me but could interest others outside my discipline. Electing to present a poster meant that I could engage my creative juices in visual design in addition to giving a short talk. A great opportunity to hone those all-important presentation and networking skills!*

*Receiving such positive feedback on my own research into the fairy tale Little Red Riding Hood was really encouraging. When I suggested that the wolf in the tale may in fact be a monstrous woman rather than a man as many assume, this was followed first by thoughtful silence and then by the realisation that I might be on to something!*

*In addition to presenting my research at the BCUR, I've been working with the editors of Reinvention in order to realise my dream of publishing a paper. This has been an exceptional experience. My article entitled: 'All the Better to Eat You With!': Charles Perrault's monstrous wolf in Le Petit Chaperon rouge will be out in Volume 9, Issue 1 (April 2016) and I can't thank the Reinvention peer-reviewers and editors enough for their time, commitment, thorough feedback and for seeing the potential in my work. Thank you IATL for giving me the opportunity to make the most of my undergraduate work, to publish in Reinvention, and to present my poster as well as represent Warwick at the BCUR."*

# WARWICK STRAWBALE ECO-CENTRE PROJECT

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Over the past two years, *Engineers Without Borders* (Warwick) have been working with Warwick Estates to design an Eco-Centre that will be constructed, on the Warwick Campus, from straw bales. The Strawbale Eco-Centre will have a workshop space, an educational visitor lobby and a seminar room.

As a large-scale, unique and entirely student-led project, it has not been easy for us. The University's management are keen to support the project but have been understandably uncertain about the direction the project should take and about being able to confirm particular aspects of the project. This has meant that sometimes progress with the project has been a little slow and, as students, we were not always certain which steps needed to be taken next or which relevant groups of people we should be approaching.

During the course of the University's Festival of Imagination last November we discovered that many people had misconceptions about using straw bales as a building material. We realised that this was an extra hurdle that would need to be overcome when convincing groups to support the Strawbale Eco-Centre project. This year, therefore, we have been working on raising interest, awareness and support across the University community for the project. The University's Estates Department have taken on the Strawbale Eco-Centre as a University project and in December 2015 the Student Union passed the policy 'A permanent space for environmental sustainability on campus' to support our initiative.

It has been a difficult year requiring a lot of determination and perseverance; but it has also been a great learning experience with successful discussions and support established. By the end of this academic year, we hope that a location will be determined for the Eco-Centre and that, subsequently, construction of the Strawbale Eco-Centre will be completed by the end of 2017.

Finally, we hope that our interactions with the University will have been of benefit to other students in that a precedent has now been set for similar student-led projects in the future.

**Ying Cen Tee, Projects and Workshops Coordinator 2015-2016**



## INTERDISCIPLINARY MODULES

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IATL will be offering a portfolio of fourteen interdisciplinary modules for undergraduate students and three for postgraduate students in 2016-17. More detailed information on the modules can be found on the IATL website: [warwick.ac.uk/iatl/modules](http://warwick.ac.uk/iatl/modules)

We are able to offer a home for interdisciplinary modules that range across faculties, and we welcome proposals for developing further new modules. The kind of interdisciplinary work we seek to promote has the potential to provide our students with the essential skills, and insights that will equip them to face a world in which the problems they face will be increasingly complex and multi-faceted.

We welcome proposals from all University departments and from any individual from postgraduate tutor to professor. Module proposals will be considered by an IATL committee and, if approved, will be administered by us. All you need to do to propose a module is:

- Visit us to discuss your idea.
- Submit a module proposal to IATL by the deadline of 31 December 2016
- Work with IATL to set up and publicise the module.

# IATL FUNDING DEADLINES

Staff and Student funding deadlines for 2016

Deadline	Funding stream	Available to
29/06/2016	Student as Producer (Performance)	Undergraduate & Postgraduate students
14/10/2016	Academic Fellowships; Pedagogic Interventions; Strategic Projects	Academic staff
07/12/2016	Student as Producer (Performance, Collaboration and Research)	Undergraduate & Postgraduate students

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**17 May 2016**

### **Teaching and Learning Showcase: Transforming the Student Learning Experience**

A day focused on sharing, celebrating, and broadening our understanding of what constitutes teaching and learning at Warwick. The day will explore the themes of Transforming Spaces, Transforming Technologies, and Transforming Teaching.

**23 May 2016**

### **Rosalind Franklin - Science, Music and Performance, Humanities Studio**

This innovative and interdisciplinary event is open to all Warwick staff and students and explores the life and the discoveries of Rosalind Franklin – chemist, biologist and X-ray crystallographer – whose photograph 51 was the key to unlocking the mystery of the structure of DNA.

**27 and 28 September 2016**

### **The International Conference of Undergraduate Research (ICUR)**

This two day conference gives undergraduate students a unique opportunity to expand their research, cultural and international experience without leaving their university.

For more information about these events and how to register your attendance please check the Forthcoming events section of the IATL website [www.warwick.ac.uk/iatl/activities/events](http://www.warwick.ac.uk/iatl/activities/events)

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