

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



UTAS leads first survey of Australian literature teaching

Dr Philip Mead, from the University of Tasmania's School of English, Journalism & European Languages, is conducting the first national and international survey of Australian Literature teaching after receiving a \$100,000 grant for the project.

Dr Mead is leading a team from three institutions, including Ms Kerry Kilner, Executive Director of AustLit: The Resource for Australian Literature (University of Queensland) and Dr Alice Healy (David Unaipon College of Indigenous Education and Research, University of South Australia).

The project involves a systematic survey of current and recent-past teaching of Australian literature and aims to build a new framework for teaching Australian literature in upper secondary schools and tertiary institutions.

The survey will:

- gather and disseminate comprehensive educational data on current and recent past teaching of Australian literature in tertiary institutions both nationally and internationally;
- enable on-going communication between disciplinary stakeholders and practitioners;
- analyse the needs of the discipline and support a new internationalised paradigm of Australian literature teaching.

The 12-month project is being funded through a \$100,000 grant from the Carrick Institute for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

Dr Mead said the survey was prompted by the current national debate about the study of Australian literature in schools and universities.

“There is the sense within the Australian literature teaching and research community that we need to move beyond an older, isolationist paradigm in which Australian literature was taught as a subset of ‘English’ or literary studies and as part of debates about Australian identity and national culture,” Dr Mead said.

The new multi-disciplinary framework would see Australian literature play a central role in the development of national and state curricular, and to the internationalisation of the humanities, to globalisation, and to newly emerging Indigenous studies.

“The results of the survey will provide an information base for strategic changes in the teaching of Australian literature and for the development of long-term policies, curricular benchmarks and innovative resources for a new model of Australian literature teaching,” Dr Mead said.

“The process, as well as the results, are specifically designed to foster a networking of literature teachers and a sharing of quality teaching practice, across sectors and state boundaries, wherever Australian literature is taught.”

For interviews and further comment:

Dr Philip Mead can be contacted today from 9.30am – 1pm on (03) 6226 2352 or via (03) 6226 2347

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