



## Postgraduate Nutrition @ Deakin

*School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences*

**Deakin University**

Number 2, November 2009

**School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences**

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# Postgraduate Nutrition @ Deakin

## Welcome

Welcome to the second edition of the postgraduate human nutrition newsletter. We hope you found the first edition interesting and informative. Within this edition you will find a mixture of updates from our staff, student profiles and some career planning information. The career planning insights come from our Advisory Board and from Deakin University's Jobshop. We have included this in response to the feedback we have received from our students who have expressed a desire to have a greater sense of connection with careers in nutrition and the broader nutrition profession.

If you have anything that you would like included within this newsletter or ideas for topics we can cover then please let us know either by email or via a phone call.

*Dr Lynn Riddell*

*Dr Susan Torres*

*Course Coordinator*

*Deputy Course Coordinator*

## How your comments help us...

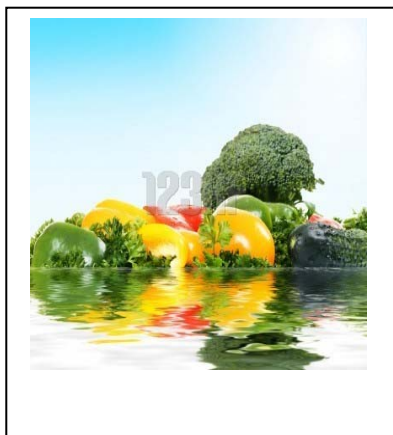
Thanks to all of you who provided feedback on our course during June 2009. This information has been invaluable for the course team as it provides us with insight into how best to structure and modify the postgraduate nutrition courses and our teaching styles to suit your needs. From the feedback we've received, it appears that the course offerings as a whole are meeting your needs, the online delivery is working well and the trimester system is a bit of a mixed blessing (the lack of a study week being noted as a concern by several students). One area that we as a course team can improve on is providing you with a greater sense of connection with career opportunities in nutrition and the broader nutrition community.

There are several ways that we hope to improve the sense of connection with the broader nutrition community and the resulting careers. Drs Lynn Riddell and Susan Torres have recently been awarded a grant by the Faculty of Health Medicine Nursing and Behavioural Sciences to examine how the current assessment tasks within our units can be better linked to core skills recognised by the nutrition profession. We hope to use this information within our unit design to provide you with a better sense of how what you are learning and working on is directly relevant to the skills you require as a Nutritionist.

The second way in which we can improve your understanding of career paths is by providing you with more information regarding career opportunities in nutrition and where to start searching for these openings. We hope you find some of the insights below useful.

**Sue Milner** has had a long association with Deakin University, initially as a member of our faculty and in more recent times as chair of our Postgraduate Nutrition Advisory Board. Sue is a passionate promoter of the nutrition profession. She is currently the manager of strategic projects within the social and community strategy unit for the southern metropolitan region of the Department of Human Services. We hope her insight into career opportunities with government agencies provides you with some inspiration for your future directions.

**Maria Sponza** works within Deakin University's Division of Student Life, with the Careers and Employment sector. For additional support with career planning please visit: [www.deakin.edu.au/careers](http://www.deakin.edu.au/careers)



## Opportunities for a career in government

*Prepared by Sue Milner*

Have you considered using the skills and knowledge you have gained through your postgraduate nutrition studies to work in government? Opportunities exist in federal, state and local government to work in a range of areas including nutrition-related policy development, project management, research and community education. Some examples include public health campaigns at a Victorian state government level such as Go For Your Life, projects addressing food insecurity at a local government level and working with vulnerable populations such as people with a disability and from Indigenous and refugee backgrounds. Check [www.careers.vic.gov.au](http://www.careers.vic.gov.au) for current positions with the Victorian state government.

## Nourish your career

*Prepared by Maria Sponza*

The career opportunities for nutrition postgraduate students are diverse both in the job titles and employment settings and are underpinned by area of interest. Employment areas include government departments involved in public health and nutrition policies, health education and training, manufacturing, private practice, marketing, media promotion and research. Keep these many areas in mind when doing your job search as the title 'nutritionist' may not be used, instead for example, 'research assistant', 'and project officer 'or' food technologist'.

## Research

There are opportunities in the research and development arm of food manufacturing companies such as Mars, McCain Foods, Cadbury Schweppes and Kraft. Search Graduate Opportunities for employer profiles [www.graduateopportunities.com.au](http://www.graduateopportunities.com.au)

University and hospital research projects have research assistant/ research nutritionist positions. Use your contact with lecturers and tutors to find out about possible opportunities as a result of funding grants at Deakin and other universities. [www.seek.com.au](http://www.seek.com.au) [www.deakin.edu.au](http://www.deakin.edu.au) [www.foodscience.afisc.csiro.com.au](http://www.foodscience.afisc.csiro.com.au)

## Public Health

Employment can be permanent or funded in short-term positions such as a Project Officer at the Department of Health and Ageing or Department of Human Services, and Health agencies such as Eastern Health [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au) [www.careers.vic.gov.au](http://www.careers.vic.gov.au) [www.easternhealth.org.au](http://www.easternhealth.org.au)

## Not for profit organisations

Clinical research associate positions or health education and promotion type positions are available at not for profit organisations such as the Cancer Council, National Heart Foundation and Diabetes Australia.

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## Update from the Head of School



### **Head of School, David Crawford**

The School's nutrition programs and research activities are going from strength-to-strength. We have recently approved two new staff to the School to further enhance our teaching and we expect to appoint another member to the nutrition team early in 2010. On the research front, you will be able to see from the list of funded activity on page 7 of this newsletter that our postgraduate team continues to achieve great success attracting research funds. Dr Gie Liem and Dr Kate Huggins have won internal funding to support nutrition research projects. In addition, Professors Caryl Nowson, Andy Sinclair, and Associate Professors David Cameron-Smith and Mark Lawrence have been successful in attracting significant external funding for their research. Dr Lynn Riddell and Dr Susan Torres are working on an internally funded teaching research program.

With these new staff and new research projects coming on-line, 2010 promises to be an exciting year for our staff and students.

### **Manufacturing and food suppliers**

The roles here can vary from food technologist, laboratory scientist to marketing officer; options depend on the size of the company. Examples include: CSL, Unilever, and Spotless Catering.

### **Other**

Nutrition adviser in pharmacies or as sales agents for vitamin/nutrition related products. Weight Loss consultants in private practice or for companies such as Jenny Craig. An emerging area is the sports nutrition adviser at Health and Recreation Centres, a nutrition tutor at university or in fitness courses at TAFE; however other teacher training certificates are required. [www.careerone.com.au](http://www.careerone.com.au)

Writing nutrition education/promotion articles for magazines [www.vwc.org.au](http://www.vwc.org.au)

If you are interested in working overseas look at **Going Global** which can be accessed through the careers and employment website or research organisations such as WHO and Australian Volunteers.

[www.deakin.edu.au/careers](http://www.deakin.edu.au/careers)

### **Professional Associations**

Professional associations also have job boards for members only, so it is worth enquiring about reduced rates for students whilst keeping informed about trends and information in your industry.

[www.nsa.asn.au](http://www.nsa.asn.au) [www.aifst.asn.au](http://www.aifst.asn.au)

### **Recruitment Agencies**

As well as the general employment sites such as Careerone and Seek there are some specialist recruitment firms which advertise vacancies: Kelly Scientific, Chemskill, and Sciencepeople

### **Careers:** [www.deakin.edu.au/careers](http://www.deakin.edu.au/careers)

Take some time to plan your career. Deakin has many useful resources available for career planning which you will find on our careers website. We can provide assistance in writing your resume using *Resume Builder*. As recruiters generally allow 90 seconds to preview your resume, it is important to take the time to ensure it is well presented and addresses the selection criteria. There are many helpful videos and resources for interview preparation in the Guide section of this site. Resume workshops are held on all campuses and for off campus students please contact [careers@deakin.edu.au](mailto:careers@deakin.edu.au)

## Refreshing our elective offerings

As part of our ongoing evaluation of our courses we continually evaluate the nature of the electives we offer. The feedback we receive from our students provides an important part of this evaluation. As a result, we have identified two new units that we will be adding to our elective offerings for 2010.

## Have you thought about upgrading your human nutrition qualifications?

Course articulation is available to students who are currently in a degree and have not yet completed or graduated.

Those in the Graduate Certificate can articulate into the Graduate Diploma of Human Nutrition, those taking the Graduate Diploma can articulate to the Master of Human Nutrition. The advantages include graduating with a higher degree and furthering depth and understanding of nutrition. Students will receive credit for prior learning for the units they have completed towards the higher degree. Help can be obtained from Elissa Turnbull 03 9244 6797

## Staying on top of your career

*Prepared by Dr Lynn Riddell*

Once you are in your chosen career it is vitally important you are able to stay on top of the ever changing scientific knowledge underpinning our profession. Staying abreast of recent advances in the Nutrition Sciences is an important component of professional development. One great way of keeping on top of the science is to attend the Annual Scientific meetings of key nutrition organisations. Both the Nutrition Society of Australia and the Australia and New Zealand Obesity host meetings each year. Many staff and students from the School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences attend and present their research findings, so as well as providing the opportunity to stay on top of the science, you are also provided with the opportunity to meet and establish relationships with members of the wider nutrition community. Visit their websites for more information:

<http://www.asso.org.au> <http://www.nsa.asn.au/>

These are only a couple of examples and there are many more: the Australian Institute of Food Science and Technology, the Dietetics Association of Australia, and Public Health Association of Australia are other national organisations. The majority of these organisations branch off from International organisations, so if you are not in Australia, a quick internet search will identify the local branch for you to join and become part of.

## New units in profile

### HSN720 Nutritional Issues in Diabetes

This unit provides an overview of the mechanisms involved in diabetes development and successful dietary interventions for preventing the progression of diabetes and related complications. It explores the changing prevalence of type 1 and type 2 diabetes over recent decades and successful management strategies. Completing this unit will develop an understanding of the impact of diabetes on normal daily living and the importance of nutrition and exercise in managing this disease. There are two written assignments and a series of online multiple choice questionnaires as the assessment component of this unit.

### HSN746 Nutritional Issues from Infancy to Adolescent Nutrition

This unit provides a detailed understanding of specific nutrition issues facing children and adolescents within Australia. The content includes social, environment and medical factors associated with breastfeeding, current controversies in assessing adequate growth, management of failure to thrive in infancy, and overweight, obesity, and eating disorders in adolescents. This unit aims to develop an understanding of the prevalence of these nutritional issues within Australia and effective management strategies. There are two written assignments and a short report as the assessment components of this unit.

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## Unit Chair Profile



**Unit Chair in Profile  
Dr Lynn Riddell**

This is the second of our unit chair profiles. In the first edition of this newsletter we introduced Dr Tim Crowe and his research interests. This time we introduce Dr Lynn Riddell, the current unit chair for HSN702 Lifespan Nutrition, a core unit of our program. Lynn is also the acting course coordinator for postgraduate human nutrition.

Lynn's academic career has always been focused on food and nutrition with an undergraduate degree in food science and nutrition from University of Otago, NZ. After working as a food chemist for a couple of years, Lynn continued her nutrition education by completing a PhD at Otago investigating dietary strategies for reducing cardiovascular disease. Following on from this experience, Lynn moved to Drexel University in Philadelphia, USA and undertook a postdoctoral fellowship working on a program investigating sustainable strategies for maintaining weight loss in overweight or obese women. The position developed into an academic appointment within this university where she was responsible for teaching both undergraduate and postgraduate nutrition as well as continuing her research program. After welcoming the arrival of her daughter in 2003, Lynn and her husband decided they needed to be closer to family and joined Deakin University in 2004.

Having had an academic and professional career in both food and nutrition, Lynn greatly enjoys working within a school which has a strong basis in both of these disciplines. Having the ability and opportunity to collaborate with food scientists and exercise scientists within one school provides some fantastic, innovative approaches to the prevention and treatment of the major dietary related chronic diseases facing our communities.

Lynn was recently awarded Deakin University's award for teaching excellence in 2009.

## Outside Studies Program

Each year, staff have the opportunity to take part in our outside studies program. This program is designed to provide staff with time to devote to their research program. Within the Postgraduate nutrition team, two of our members are currently taking advantage of this opportunity, Professors Caryl Nowson and Boyd Swinburn. Below Caryl describes her experience.

***Enhancing research at  
Deakin University:  
Professor Caryl Nowson***



Since the beginning of August I have been working in the Medical Research Council epidemiology Resource Centre, (University of Southampton, Southampton General Hospital), and will be here until mid October. This is a very active research unit and has initiated and maintained a number of large longitudinal studies. The Institute of Human Nutrition, based in the hospital also is very active and has successfully integrated nutrition into patient and community care.

The MRC unit has a number of key areas: Nutrition and Development and Lifelong health (Developing Nations and European Nations), Work and Health, with particular specialisation into Bone and Joint (Osteoporosis) and Sarcopenia and frailty. A number of these research areas are directly related to my research interests in healthy ageing. I am currently working on data collected as part of the Southampton Women's Survey (SWS). The SWS is a large study investigating the dietary and lifestyle factors that affect women's health and the health of their children. Over 12,500 women aged between 20 and 34 years of age were recruited between 1998 and 2002 and subsequently completed questionnaires about their lifestyle, size, shape and diet. Of these women, over 3,000 became pregnant and were invited to be followed during their pregnancy and then every year after they had given birth. Some of these children are now 8 years old and are being currently assessed. Whilst I am here I will assess the predictors of blood pressure in 3 year old children. I also intend to look as the predictors of falls in an older cohort of adults. Some of time will also be devoted to talking to key academic regarding innovations in teaching and research.

## Student Insight

### Caitlin Syrett

I graduated from high school in 2002 wanting to be a journalist. However, one semester into my Professional Communication studies, I realised that I enjoyed the idea of journalism as much as being poked in the eye with a sharp stick. Over the following years, I acquired a lot of general knowledge about human physiology, nutrition and chronic disease prevention, and developed a strong belief in the importance of understanding and caring for our own bodies. I realised that I wanted to apply my communication skills to healthcare, but didn't know if or where these career opportunities existed.

Without a formal health qualification, listing "know-it-all" next to "BA Communications" on my CV was never going to be enough to secure a career in health. Then I learnt about a friend studying Health Promotion. After a little research, 12 months later I was enrolled in the Graduate Diploma of Human Nutrition at Deakin University, studying part time, off campus.

I've now been working at Diabetes Australia Victoria (DA-VIC) for the advocacy group The Parents Jury (TPJ) for two years. The Parents Jury is an online network of Australian parents who want to advocate for improved children's food and physical activity environments. We lobby government, food manufacturers and other key decision makers on issues such as junk food marketing, healthy school food, activity-friendly communities, confectionery-free checkouts, traffic light food labelling, etc.

The overarching goal of TPJ is to help create supportive social and legislative environments, free from those external influences that undermine parents' efforts to raise healthy and active children. We primarily focus on media advocacy, to raise awareness of the issues, represent our members publicly and make others sit up and take notice of the issues contributing to childhood obesity.

My studies compliment my job in public health advocacy perfectly, as I continue to apply theories and academic principles to my work, and at the same time, take from real life examples to better my understanding of the curriculum.

And for the record, that girl who unknowingly inspired me to pursue a career in health now happens to be one of my friends and colleagues here at DA-Vic. The public health industry is definitely a small, small world.



**Caitlin Syrett, Student**  
*Graduate Diploma of Human Nutrition*

## Recent publications and grant funding

### GRANTS

**Cameron-Smith D, Sinclair A** Inflammatory responses in humans to dairy foods in acute and chronic feeding trials Dairy Health & Nutrition Council, DHNC 001 \$1,000,000 **Lawrence M.** (In Press). Do food regulatory systems protect public health? [Invited commentary]. Public Health Nutrition

Ducher G, Cook J, Garnham A, **Kukuljan S, Nowson C**, Kimlin M. Vitamin D status and bone health in young adolescent males. Deakin University \$8,000

Huggins C, **Riddell L**, McNaughton S, **Nowson C**. Lifestyle contributors to iron status in Australian Blood Donors. Deakin University Partnership Grant in collaboration with the Australia Red Cross Blood Service \$15,000

Huggins C, **Nowson C, Riddell L**. Is high dietary salt related to obesity in Australian children? Helen McPherson-Smith Trust \$30,000

**Lawrence M and Swinburn B**, Regulatory interventions for promoting public health nutrition in a state jurisdiction, Queensland Health, \$50,000

**Lawrence M, Swinburn B**, Burns C, Mendelson D, Establishment of a Victorian Food Policy Coalition, VicHealth Research grant - \$390,000

Neal BC, Chalmers JP, Smith WT, Flood V, **Nowson CA**, Woodward M, Szabo EA. Reducing salt in the Australian diet. NHMRC Partnership grant \$799,242

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Ryan C, Turner G, **Lawrence M**, Larsen K, Assessing the impact of future environmental scenarios on the food supply, VicHealth Discovery grant - \$100,000

### PAPERS

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Deakin University would like to extend an invitation to all our former students and staff to become members of the online Deakin University Alumni Community. Go to [www.deakin.edu.au/alumni](http://www.deakin.edu.au/alumni) to register your free membership application. Once you are registered you can take advantage of the many benefits available to our Alumni members. A list of the benefits is available at [www.deakin.edu.au/alumni](http://www.deakin.edu.au/alumni)

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