

The Future of Surveying Education in Australia

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ABSTRACT

Surveying is a practical profession. The Council of Reciprocating Surveyors Boards for Australia and New Zealand (CRSBANZ) sets standards for the curriculums of the nine surveying programs offered in Australia and New Zealand that are pre-requisite for a professional qualification of registered or licensed land surveyors in the corresponding jurisdictions. A significant professional and vocational element must be embedded into the curriculum. This professional need clashes with the motivations of modern universities who are driven by rankings to elevate their status in the eyes of future paying students. Academic staff hires are therefore favoured towards those that can enhance the rankings, with a strong emphasis on research excellence. Industry and teaching experience comes a distant second. The cohort of teachers within a surveying program should combine a spectrum of teachers with industry experience and researchers with academic experience. In recent years, new staff hires have favoured the latter, threatening the ongoing relevance of university education to the wider surveying profession. However, there is a way forward. Over the last two decades, the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) has supported several academic staff members as half industry funded. Industry donors cover half the cost of employing teaching or combined track staff and in return have some influence over the curriculum and receive access to top students. Building on this experience, the surveying program has negotiated a consortium of five industry donors to half-fund a so-called Industry Senior Lecturer in Surveying position to support teaching and bring a wealth of industry experience and connections into the BE(Surveying) program at UNSW. This presentation elaborates on this model and the benefits to the consortium members and the wider profession. New initiatives such as program enhancement, iSTEM curriculum support and a new TAFE pathway are also presented.

KEYWORDS: Education, CRSBANZ, university, curriculum, UNSW.