

USQ
AUSTRALIA

LEARNING AND TEACHING SUPPORT UNIT

View from the Trenches: Results of USQ Action Research

R. Todd Hartle, D.A.
Scholarship of Tertiary Teaching and Learning
Project Leader

USQ UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Fulfilling Lives

USQ
AUSTRALIA

Action Research Project

- Change the system through participants
- Follow AR Cycle (ADRI)
 - Assess situation and plan intervention
 - Implement intervention
 - Assess effects of intervention
 - Use assessment to plan next intervention
 - Repeat and review overall goals

USQ UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Fulfilling Lives

USQ
AUSTRALIA

Cycle 1: Measuring Success

- How can we measure SoTTL success over time and by various factors?
 - (Faculty/Department/School, authors, item type, ERA category, etc.)
- Scholarship = Publication
- Publication time lag
- Publication ladder

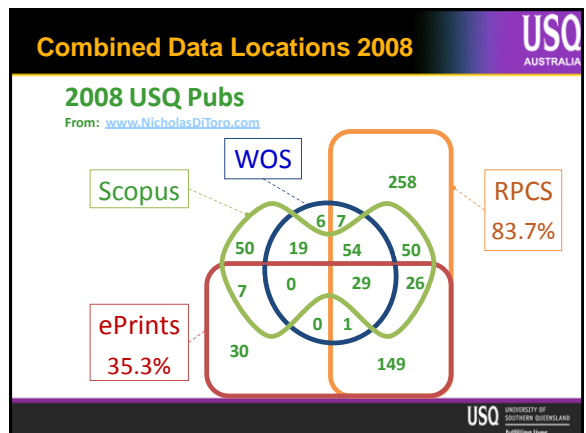
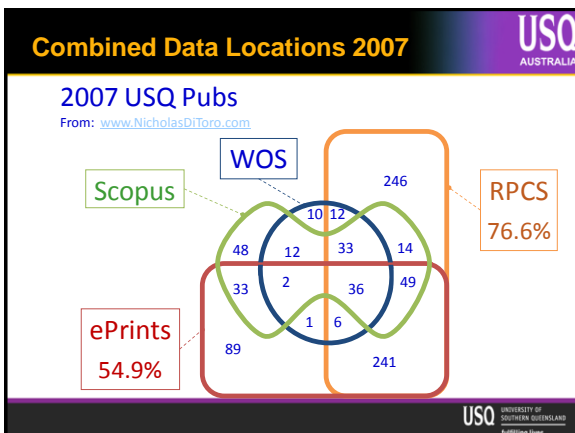
USQ UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Fulfilling Lives

USQ
AUSTRALIA

HERDC and other databases

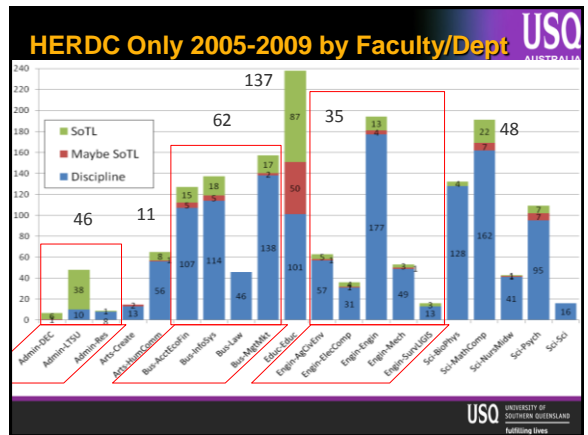
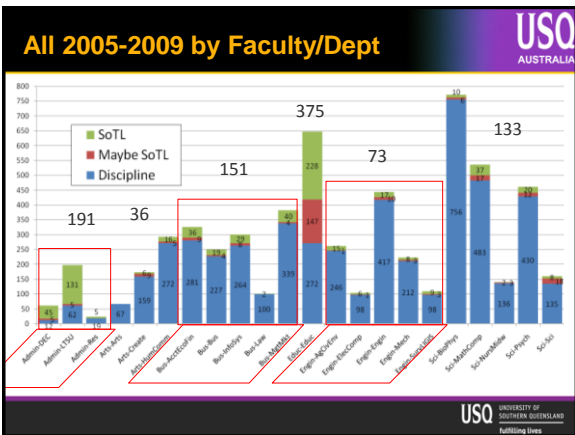
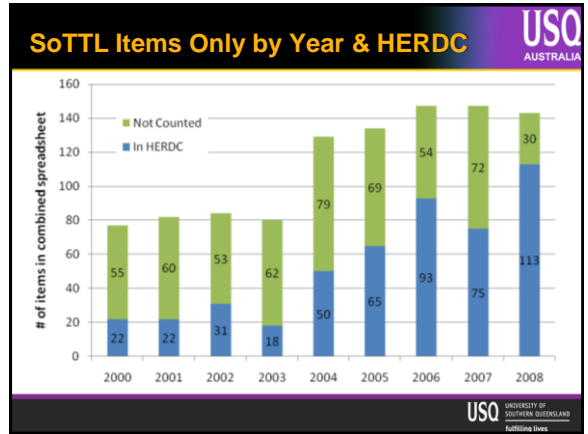
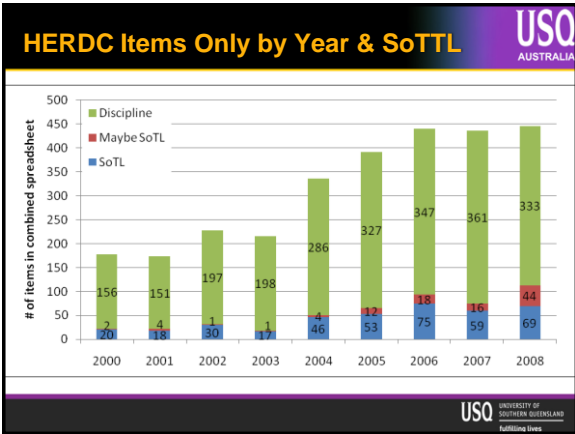
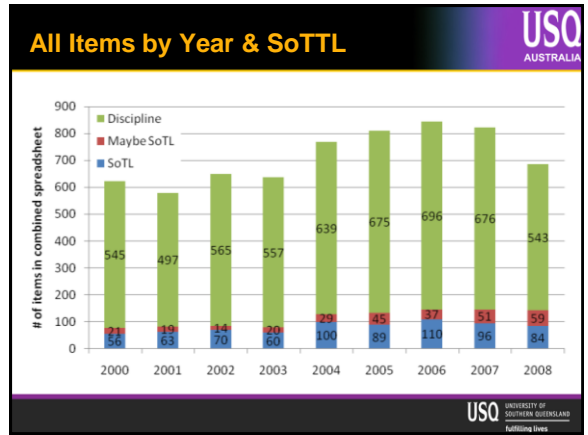
- Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC)
 - USQ Research Publications Collections System (RPCS)
 - ePrints
 - Web of Science (WoS)
 - Scopus
 - LTSU combined spreadsheets.

USQ UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Fulfilling Lives



Next database intervention?

- Integrate ePrints and RPCS
 - Must work across systems/business units
 - Needs leadership supporting needs of:
 - Academic Staff (Ease and utility)
 - ORHD (HERDC reporting)
 - Library (Archive and referencing)
 - Research Centres/Faculties
- SoTTL field and designation system
 - In process



Cycle 2: Drivers and Barriers

- What forces are the primary Drivers and barriers to USQ academic staff performing SoTTL?
 - Ask them!
 - Qualitative Interviews



USQ UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Fulfilling Lives

Qualitative Thematic Analysis

- 15 interviews with Academic Staff
- Preliminary Thematic Analysis of:
 - Academic identity
 - Experiences of USQ support for
 - Teaching
 - Research
 - SoTTL
 - Issues, Questions, Suggestions for supporting SoTTL at USQ

USQ UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Fulfilling Lives

SoTTL Drivers

- T&L is highly valued/supported at USQ
 - Academic Staff know this and agree
- SoTTL is researching what we do – Teach
- Low Level SoTTL has efficient outcomes
- SoTTL items are counted in HERDC
- High level of SoTTL interest at USQ
 - #1 Driver is personal interest
 - Personal interest must be hired/ not trained

USQ UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Fulfilling Lives

SoTTL Barriers

- SoTTL Barriers = Research Barriers
- Research needs “gravity” and “momentum”
 - Hard to get at USQ
- Staff need clear consistent goals
 - Clearly aligned with tools and rewards
- Support needs to focus on shortening the first steps
- Networking/Collaboration is essential

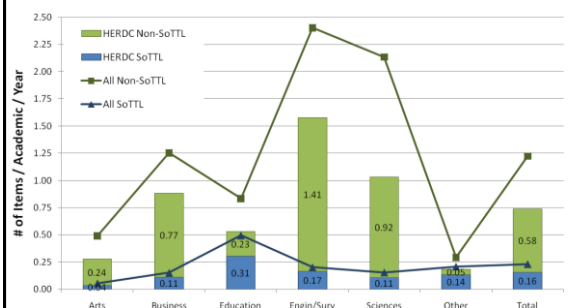
USQ UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Fulfilling Lives

Catch-22 of USQ Research

- ECRs – High teaching workload
- Priorities: Teach>Discipline>SoTTL
- Bureaucracy derails teaching and research
- Little Mentorship/Networking/Collaboration
- Publication lag
- Research Tools given as rewards
 - Workload, Res Active, Centres, Funding
- LCRs – administrative responsibilities

USQ UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Fulfilling Lives

Avg # of items / Academic / Yr (2006-8)



USQ UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Fulfilling Lives

Summarize

- Database integration + SoTTL
- Drivers
 1. Personal Interest
 2. Clear alignment of goals, tools, and rewards
 3. Networking/Collaboration
- Barriers
 1. Catch-22: Tools as rewards
 2. First steps are too big

Cycle 3: Strategic SoTTL Questions

- Does USQ want to promote SoTTL?
- What level of SoTTL does USQ want?
- Should USQ specialize in Discipline-based or Flexible delivery SoTTL?
- Who should lead/support SoTTL at USQ?
- What is the next step?

Does USQ want to promote SoTTL?

- Counts as research
- Improves our core business – Teaching
- Can be efficient source of publications
- Serves as a mechanism for collaboration
- Outputs are already good
- Already provide support through L&T

What level of SoTTL does USQ want?

- Broad but shallow? (Easy?)
 - Primarily to support L&T
 - Most academics at USQ do conferences
 - Hiring committees should have T&L member?
- National or World leader? (Very Hard?)
 - Need SoTTL "gravity" through critical mass
 - SoTTL research centre?
 - Specialists or top level researchers?
 - Specialized research programs/teams?
 - Theoretical backgrounding?
 - Post Graduate students

Discipline/Flexible-focused SoTTL?

- Major movements in Educational Research
- Specialization may require less investment than general SoTTL expertise
- Still require centralized and faculty based support systems
 - ADFI/LTSU collaboration could be the base?
- Grassroots/Ad-hoc is good starting point

Who should lead/support SoTTL?

- Currently in L&T Project (LTSU)?
- ORHD or Research Centre?
- ADFI?
- Faculty of Education?
- Diffused across Faculties/Centres?
- Grassroots individuals and small groups?
- SoTTL as a discipline or as extension of teaching practice?

Cycle 4: What is next?

USQ
AUSTRALIA

- What can we do next Monday?
- 2010: USQ Year of Research
- Research Centre Reviews
- 2010 Learning and Teaching Plans

And then???

USQ
UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Fulfilling Lives