

# Strategically Linking (Staff) Discipline Research to Improve Student Learning

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## ●●● The Argument Summarised

“In view of the central nature of research and teaching in HE, and the almost universal assumption that R benefits T, and the importance of scholarship, it is perhaps surprising how relatively few institutions have specific policies in place to either monitor, or to develop and maximise these beneficial synergies...”

*J.M Consulting (2000,16) Interactions Between Research, Teaching, and Other Academic Activities: Draft Report for HEFCE, J.M. Consulting, Bristol.*

## ●●● The Argument Developed

*Linking Teaching and Research: A Guide for Academics and Policy Makers*

Alan Jenkins, Rosanna Breen and Roger Lindsay, Oxford Brookes University. To be published by the Staff and Educational Development Association

1. Introduction and Overview
2. What Research and scholarship tell us about linking teaching and research
3. What Research and scholarship tell us about student learning, student motivation, staff motivation and staff research
4. Designing the Curriculum to link teaching and research
5. Organising the Department to link teaching and research
6. Organising the Institution to link teaching and research
7. Organising the national and international administration of higher education to link teaching and research

## ●●● National Project - Linking Teaching with Research and Consultancy in Planning, Land and Property Management and Building

- Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning
- Oxford Brookes (Project Director - Roger Zetter: Project Adviser, Alan Jenkins); Sheffield Hallam; University of Westminster; University of West of England: with Built Environment Subject Centre at Cardiff University (and cascade institutions to be chosen later)
- Starts Sept. 2000 for 3 years



## ●●● Selected Web Sites

The Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research University

<http://notes.cc.sunysb.edu/Pres/boyer.nsf/>

Linking Teaching and Research at Brookes

<http://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/ocsd/link1/ltrnew.html>

Undergraduate Research at Rutgers University

<http://acheron.rutgers.edu/urru/>

(US) National Science Foundation Awards for Undergraduate Research

<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2000/nsf00107/nsf00107.htm>



# Strategies and Case Studies

## ●●● Institutional Strategies to Link Teaching and Research

- State linking teaching and research as central to the institutional mission
- Organise events/publications to raise institutional awareness
- (Use Boyer's Analysis to) develop institutional conceptions and strategies to effect teaching/research links
- Develop/audit/Teaching policies and implement strategies to strengthen the teaching/research nexus
- Develop/audit/Research policies and implement strategies to strengthen the teaching/research nexus
- Ensure this is central to policies on hiring and inducting new staff
- Ensure it is central to policies on promotion and reward
- Develop curriculum requirements
- Review the timetable
- Publicise, celebrate and spread what has been achieved
- Link with related university strategies
- Participate in national programmes

### Rutgers University: an Institutional Case Study

Rutgers (New Jersey, USA) Undergraduates benefit from research focus through

- Set of learning goals for undergraduate programmes/courses include focus on the research process e.g. "understanding scientific modes of enquiry"
- Undergraduate Research University Experience Brochure. Sent to all students at the beginning of their second year, to orientate them to what it means to be a student at a research university
- Undergraduate Research Web site provides lists of research based opportunities that students can search by campus/town, discipline, type of research activity
- Rutgers University Undergraduate Research Fellows Programme. Funds student involvement in faculty organised research projects - money can also be used to send students to national meetings to present results etc.
- Rutgers Undergraduate Research Weeks Events celebrate what undergraduates have achieved re research
- Rutgers Scholar - an electronic journal publicising collaborative students/staff research at Rutgers

## ●●● Strategies for linking teaching and research at the level of the module/course at undergraduate/postgraduate level

### Develop students understanding of the role of research in their discipline

- Develop the curriculum to bring out current/or previous research developments in the discipline
- Develop student awareness of, learning from staff involvement in research
- Develop student understanding of how research is organised and funded in the discipline/institution

### Develop students abilities to carry out research in their discipline

- Develop the curriculum, in particular how students learn in ways that mirror/support the research processes in the discipline
- Assess students in ways that mirror/support the research processes in the discipline
- Provide training in relevant research skills/knowledge
- Develop student involvement in staff research
- Perhaps, restrict certain research opportunities to selected students?

### Manage student experience of staff research

- Limit the negative consequences for students of staff involvement in research
- Evaluate/research student experience of research and feed that back into the curriculum
- Support students in making clear to them the employability elements of research

### Case Study of Curriculum Design To Link Teaching and Staff Research

At University College London all first year geography students do this project:

- Each first year tutorial group is allocated a member of department staff who is not their tutor
- Tutorial groups are given by that member of staff three pieces of writing which are representative of their work and their CV and arrange a date for the interview
- Before the interview students are to read these materials and develop an interview schedule etc.
- On the basis of their reading and the interview, each student individually writes a 1,500 word report on a) the objectives of the interviewee's research; b) how the interviewee's research relates to his or her earlier studies c) how the interviewee's research relates to his or her teaching, other interests and geography as a whole

