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UNIVERSITY  
OF WOLLONGONG  
AUSTRALIA

Centre for Responsible  
Organisations and Practices  
eReport 2018-2019

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# Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which the University of Wollongong is situated. We pay our respects to Aboriginal Elders past and present, who are the knowledge holders and teachers. We acknowledge their continued spiritual and cultural connection to Country.

As we share knowledge, teaching, learning and research within this University we also pay respect to the knowledge embedded forever within the Aboriginal Custodianship of Country.

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# Welcome

The Faculty of Business has a long and successful history in helping to define the notion of socially responsible research – finding multi-disciplinary solutions to complex problems that impact organisations as well as society more broadly.

This report is from one of the faculty's research centres that is centrally concerned with socially responsible research, the Centre for Responsible Organisations and Practices, also known as CROP.

CROP is organised in an unusual way. Most research centres and groups are organised hierarchically, whereas CROP is organised like a project-oriented network. Many research centres and groups are organised around established senior researchers, and although CROP has senior researchers, it also has a significantly large number of early and mid-career researchers. CROP uses its resources to create opportunities and support events that assist in developing its members as researchers.

The research development aims of CROP encourage researchers to succeed through a unique approach to measuring research performance, using a number of ladders that enable its members to engage in research quality improvement.

This report provides information about the centre's activities during 2018 and 2019 by highlighting its notable projects, and focusing on some of its researchers.

**Professor Melanie Randle**

Associate Dean (Research), University of Wollongong

# What CROP Stands For

The Centre for Responsible Organisations and Practices (CROP) focuses on understanding how organisational entities of all kinds (for-profit and not-for-profit) can simultaneously work better, while also producing better outcomes for society and the planet.

CROP draws on a rich tradition of social innovation research at UOW's Faculty of Business. This publication is a celebration of the first two years of work by CROP members.

**Vision:** To be a hub for thought leadership in responsible organisations and their practices

**Mission:** To advance the understanding of responsible organisations and practices (ROP) through interdisciplinary research in business, management and allied disciplines





## Responsible Organisation and Practices

As organisations grow more complex and interconnected, it is important that they develop and maintain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of their actions on society, culture, and the natural environment, as well as on traditional internal and external stakeholders.

The concept of CROP has evolved in four significant ways:

1. **Organisational research is no longer exclusively focused on commercial enterprises, but now includes organisational units such as governments, NGOs and social enterprises, all of which have responsibility embedded within their goals.**
2. **Organisational entities are no longer restricted to formal hierarchies but are arranged in a variety of topologies including networks.**
3. **The disruption caused by the availability of ubiquitous internet technologies, digitalisation of information, and the convergence of media has enabled the virtualisation of organisations.**
4. **Organisations are now not necessarily designed to be persistent but may be purposefully transient and ephemeral.**

These changes in organisations influence the structure, function, and composition of organisational systems and processes. They also affect where accountability lies within the organisation for ensuring responsible enactment of their activities. Who, for example, is accountable for employee welfare, environmental impact, wage equity, discrimination policy, security in the supply chain, and consumer protection?

## Designing CROP

The extensive and varied research experience of CROP Co-Directors, along with multidisciplinary socially engaged business research, has informed the design of CROP, which works to four design criteria.

### 1. INCLUSIVE AND CROSS DISCIPLINARY

CROP encourages inclusivity and diversity of individual researcher interests while promoting and support multidisciplinary research.

Most research centres are designed to focus on a very narrow set of research and disciplinary interests, but for the kinds of problems that often face organisations and societies, the solutions usually require expertise from many different disciplines. An explicit goal of CROP is to promote cross-disciplinary research work within the Faculty of Business. Many of the CROP activities have been designed to promote cross-disciplinary collaborations.

### 2. PROGRAMMATIC TEAM-BASED RESEARCH PROJECTS

CROP promotes the development and support of programmatic research team-based projects.

CROP can be thought of as a collection of research projects supported by groups of its members. This is a subtle but important distinction. The usual research centre administrative mindset is to consider that we are improving individuals, transforming them from inexperienced early career researchers to research 'stars'. Research centre incentives and reward schemes are designed accordingly. In contrast, taking the research project as the focus of research administration shifts the perspective to the team. Performance really then involves how programmatically the research is being conducted, so that the efforts of earlier stages in the project can be reused in later stages of the project or additional related projects.

### 3. FLAT NETWORK STRUCTURE

CROP creates a flat organisational structure that lends itself to the formation of networks.

One of the ways that CROP differs from many other research groups is that it really does not have any internal sub-divisions within its membership. CROP is not organised into themes, or sub-themes using any internal hierarchies. Hierarchical subdivision works when the membership is very large and a certain amount of organisation is required to internally communicate, collaborate and coordinate. Good research ideas can come from early career researchers as well as senior researchers. CROP counts both kinds of researchers in its membership. A flat network structure allows members to focus on the problem, not internal structure.

### 4. ACTIVITY-BASED CONTINUAL RESEARCH ASSESSMENT

CROP implements an activity-based continual assessment for individual researchers.

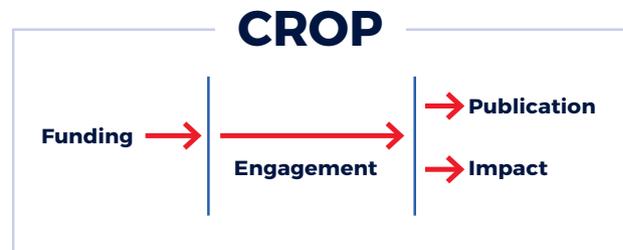
Academics have many different competing demands that cut into their available research time. Membership to CROP is based on ongoing activity, rather than simply producing the requisite number of papers to meet the University's research-active status. It is also necessary for members to be engaged in ongoing CROP activities. This represents a distinctive aspect of the design of CROPs research management.

## Measuring Success

A novel way of measuring what CROP members do is through the use of activity points. CROP members are encouraged to maintain an adequate level of activity points. This allows for a fair comparison of the performance of all researchers – regardless of their level of experience. Early Career Researchers can make a huge difference to disciplines, schools and faculties and especially research centres where their energy and enthusiasm can help achieve collective goals. Unfortunately, the success of many research centres is usually based solely on research income and publications. This tends to favour senior researchers, often to the detriment of developing researchers.

One of the design principles of CROP has been to assess performance based on four activity ladders. For each dimension, the idea is to attempt to continually improve upon the quality and quantity of the activity; the term ladder attempts to capture this improvement process.

### CROP ACTIVITY LADDERS



Publications and research grant funding are the traditional ways in which researchers and research centres are assessed. CROP recognises all categories of research income to count towards a member's Funding Activity Ladder. The expectation is for particular projects to move from internal seed funding to competitive external funding. The funding ladder facilitates the identification of, and application for, research resources (grants and in-kind).

The Publication Activity Ladder requires that members should be actively taking steps to improve the quality and quantity of publications for projects. The ladder moves from conference presentations to journal articles in the hope of improving the quality of the journal outlets over time.

The third output measure is the Impact Ladder that facilitates the transformation of academic findings into practices and policies in businesses, governments and/or societies. Many of the projects that are developed with and supported by CROP have a high societal and organisational impact (see our four Highlighted Projects as excellent examples of impactful research).

The Engagement Ladder is based on the synergy principle: the more that is contributed, the more benefits are realised. Each activity conducted by CROP members attracts activity points, and the performance of each researcher is assessed on the combination of these different kind of activity points.

## Facilitating Research

As a consequence of its design, CROP is both a research centre that is designed to achieve a diversity of outputs, while simultaneously being a development centre for assisting and mentoring its membership. CROP has experimented with a range of different mechanisms to facilitate members to openly communicate their research interests and to encourage debate, engagement and participation amongst its members. Some of the current mechanisms include:

- CROP Circles: The research equivalent of speed dating, CROP Circles are meetings that allow people to (quickly) voice their interests and needs. While the natural tendency for university research centres is to promote increasing specialisation, CROP Circles facilitate the discovery of similarities as well as synergies across the research divides.
- CROP Seminars: Both internal and external guest speakers are invited to give research seminars. More than 15 speakers featured throughout 2018 and 2019, with significant seminars recorded for conversion into educational and research materials (refer to the CROP Resources section for further details).

- CROP Retreats: These retreats usually involve a couple of days held in quiet and secluded locations away from the University's campuses. The locations have no Wi-Fi, so participants work offline using their own devices. CROP Retreats have proved to be a great success; many members have used the retreats to make significant inroads on writing papers, and a number of grant applications have developed out of these events. Two CROP Retreats were held in 2018 and four retreats were held in 2019.
- CROP Launches: CROP has also supported the launch of significant research outputs, one of these was the report, 'Hard to Reach: Examining the National Disability Insurance Scheme experience, a case study of Wollongong', which is described in detail in the Highlighted Projects section. Another was CROPs first research monograph on 'Elicitation Strategies for Interviewing and Fieldwork' (refer to the CROP Seminars and Events section for further details).

CROP encourages all research-active Faculty of Business academics who are interested in researching the relationships between organisations and the social contexts in which they work, to consider joining CROP as a full or associate member.

# Highlighted Projects

**Hard to Reach:** Examining the National Disability Insurance Scheme experience, a case study of Wollongong

**EnviroRental:** Towards a framework for an environmentally sustainable residential rental property sector in Australia

**A Research Partnership in Local Government:** Informing the development of performance measurement framework at Wollondilly Shire Council

**WikiRate Classroom Engagement:** Evaluating experiences of students and teachers

# Hard to Reach

Examining the National Disability Insurance Scheme experience, a case study of Wollongong



**Dr Freda Hui**

**Dr Corinne Cortese**

**Dr Mona Nikidehaghani**

**Dr Sandra Chapple and**

**Kellie McCombie**

Could socio-economically disadvantaged people in the Illawarra be missing out on support from the Australian National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) to which they are entitled?

We interviewed 32 individuals who were hard-to-reach due to social isolation, yet potentially eligible to apply for the NDIS, to consider the types of assistance that are required, and to provide recommendations to improve the NDIS.

This research project was a collaboration of UOW (Faculty of Business) and the St Vincent de Paul Society (SVDP) Wollongong. SVDP is a Catholic charitable organisation that provides a range of financial and non-financial assistance to those in need. Many of these people are Disability Support Pension recipients and are potentially eligible to apply for NDIS support.

## Impact

The project revealed a large gap in the access of NDIS support, through which some people are falling due to their isolation and lack of family support. We proposed a number of measures to help bring hard-to-reach individuals within the ambit of the NDIS.

To increase the public awareness of social justice and the NDIS, a report launch was held by the Faculty of Business and SVDP Society. The research team were also invited to participate in the Fixing the NDIS national conference in Melbourne and the Disability Research network series in Wollongong. This report also drew attention from the media, including ABC radio and the Illawarra Mercury newspaper.

## Outcomes

A report on the effectiveness of the NDIS for people with disabilities who are socio-economically disadvantaged was provided at the conclusion of the project. It is available here. In addition, a journal article is currently under review with the journal *Disability & Society*.

## Further Work

The team is applying for funding to extend this important work.

## Highlighted Projects

# EnviroRental

Towards a framework for an environmentally sustainable residential rental property sector in Australia

**Associate Professor Troy Heffernan**

**Professor Nina Reynolds**

**Dr Thomas Lee**

**Dr Emma Heffernan**

**Dr Matthew Daly**

Temperature records around the globe are consistently being broken year on year, and the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events is increasing (Pachauri et al., 2015). Political intervention designed to reduce climate change is gaining momentum, as was exhibited with the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement; heralded by the United Nations secretary general, Ban Ki-moon as “truly a historic moment” for “one of the most crucial problems on earth” (Davenport, 2015).

As one of the worst per capita emitters of greenhouse gases (Stewart et al., 2016), Australia needs to develop and implement strategies across a broad range of sectors



to deal with this growing problem. One such sector is the residential housing sector, which is responsible for approximately 12.5% of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions (COAG 2016). Rental dwellings account for 31.4% of total homes in Australia (ABS, 2015). However, rental houses have often been criticised for being of poor quality and including limited features to combat climate change. Furthermore, tenants are often lower income earners and potentially more vulnerable to climate change (Instone et al., 2014).

Globally, the building sector has been identified as an industry with the most potential for implementing low-cost climate change mitigation strategies (Ghaffarian Hoseini et al., 2013). However, somewhat surprisingly, research into stakeholder attitudes and motivations around climate change and how this might translate into participation and adoption of sustainable behaviours/practices in the rental sector has been limited (Instone et al., 2014).

There is a timely need to explore the drivers and inhibitors to the key stakeholders adopting solutions that enhance the environmental sustainability of rental properties.

## Impact

The key impact the EnviroRental project is attempting to achieve is the dissemination of a clear pathway for policymakers to help develop a more sustainable rental sector. This whole area is very complex and sensitive with multiple stakeholders with competing agendas. Solutions put forward from this research need to be palatable and practical to achieve real change. The first journal paper, under review, from this project identifies macro forces that impact on moving towards a more environmentally sustainable rental sector. A conceptual model that has been introduced in this paper shows what policymakers need to consider when moving forward. The second paper, which is being finalised at present, identifies the actual policy mix that has the best opportunity to achieve real change in this sector. It is hoped that the findings from this research will help in the process of seeing real change that is both efficient and effective.

## Outcomes

'EnviroRental: Policy Delphi Preliminary Findings – Towards a framework for an environmentally sustainable residential rental property sector in Australia', Energy and Water Consumers Advocacy Reference Group Meeting, 30 May 2018, Sydney, Australia, Invited Presentations

## Further Work

Further work from this project includes additional dissemination of key findings to help inform the conversation. There is also a second phase of this research planned that will examine landlords and their attitudes towards climate change and the various policy options. This stage will take place in 2020 and will look at data from Australia and beyond in an attempt to get a holistic picture of the key motivations and drivers of landlords when making decisions based around the environmental sustainability of their rental properties.



## Highlighted Projects



# A Research Partnership in Local Government

Informing the development of performance measurement framework at Wollondilly Shire Council

**Dr Oriana Price**

**Dr Mathew Pepper**

This project seeks to inform the development of a contextualised performance measurement framework for Wollondilly Shire Council. Specifically, the project aims to develop robust performance measurement and continuous improvement practices to support the newly developed framework. The Greater Western Sydney Commission Plan (2018) A Metropolis of Three Cities — The Greater Sydney Region Plan, identifies Wollondilly Council as one of the local government areas (in the Western City District Plan) as an area that will undergo significant growth in population, housing and infrastructure. Therefore, this project contributes to a larger body of work which aims to build capacity to respond sustainably in this growth context.





The drivers that underpin this partnership with Wollondilly have been identified; these include:

- A need for greater understanding of Council from both an operational and customer viewpoint.
- The desire for a performance measurement framework to capture the operating model to support the identified strategic imperatives of Council.
- The identification of key data to inform Council decision-making and to build an understanding of the relationship between internal performance and community indicators.

## About the research team

The project team of Dr Matthew Pepper and Dr Oriana Price is an established cross-disciplinary research team within CROP. This work complements ongoing research interests and activity focusing on continuous improvement in the public sector both locally and internationally. The team have jointly published in high quality journals and currently supervise a number of senior managers in local and state government undertaking higher research degrees.

## Funding for this research

This research is funded by contributions from Wollondilly Shire Council and the Faculty of Business in a Research Partnership Grant.

# WikiRate Classroom Engagement

Evaluating the experience for students and teachers

**Dr Stephanie Perkiss**

**Dr Bonnie Amelia Dean**

**Dr Belinda Gibbons**

Together with collaborators from Australia, South Korea, United Kingdom, Scotland, Germany, Austria and Columbia.

This project aims to evaluate the implementation of a learning activity (WikiRate) across higher education institutions world-wide, and determine the impact on sustainability education, awareness and action. It will:

- Elicit student and staff perspectives on the benefits and challenges of the WikiRate activity.
- Observe staff and student practices as they engage in the WikiRate activity.
- Create a suite of case studies from institutions using the WikiRate activity to compare, contrast and demonstrate the multiple uses and design of the activity.
- Observe any products of students' work through engagement in the WikiRate activity.

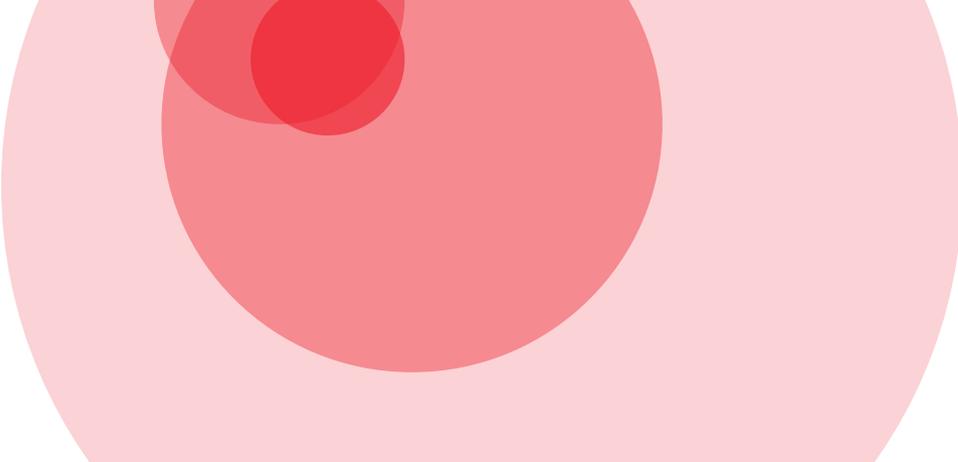
## Purpose

Higher education plays a crucial role in ensuring the next generation of business graduates are responsive to societal needs. These graduates will enter a global workforce that is challenging, changing, highly competitive, and therefore susceptible to ethical dilemmas. The complexity of the international business climate has been influenced by issues such as inequalities, abuses of human rights and child labour, exploitation of the environment, corruption, scandal, and discrimination.

As the global business climate becomes more complex, discussion intensifies among professional bodies, employers and business educators on the need to develop a deeper set of global ethical awareness skills and practices in business graduates, including professional aptitudes of ethics, sustainability and corporate governance (Gray et al., 1994; Jackling and de Lange, 2009; Dellaportas et al., 2014).

Generic or non-technical skills required include communication, interpersonal skills, critical thinking, leadership, problem solving, technological competence, planning and teamwork.





## Outcomes

With these multiple demands on students' development and workplace preparation, space must be made in what are already full business degree curricula. We partnered with WikiRate, the developer of an independent crowd-sourced platform that enables users the opportunity to contribute to making business operations transparent in relation to the UN global impact. The goal of WikiRate is to foster greater transparency relating to Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) activities of organisations around the world.

For students, WikiRate offers the opportunity to experience participation in a collective project that assists in the building of an inclusive and collaborative global community dedicated to understanding and improving corporate sustainability outcomes (WikiRate, 2019).

For each course and institution, a WikiRate project is established, and students are invited to join and research their project. Specific details of each project vary, for example, some students research multiple organisations' disclosures around specific Strategic Development Goals (SDGs), while other students research a specific organisation over a range of SDGs.

Our study implemented WikiRate in two business courses at UOW, and partnered with other global institutions who have implemented WikiRate to explore student learning, and value for staff, and development of future professionals.

# Focus on Res



## Professor Rodney J. Clarke

OPERATIONS DISCIPLINE, SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS AND MARKETING

### Systems in Organisational and Societal Contexts

Rodney's research involves applying and developing Systemic Semiotics, a combination of Systemic Functional Linguistics and Social Semiotics, to the study of information technologies in organisations.

His main research interests include the contextual analysis of systems in organisations, the development of communicative and semiotic methods for modelling business processes and services, coalitions and virtual communities, and the development of multimedia techniques for representing work spaces and work practices in organisations. This work forms part of a 30-year project.

#### Research Approach

Rodney's research training has been almost exclusively concerned with the analysis and design of Information Systems (IS). Early into his academic career, he began to realise that there are major problems at the heart of the discipline. The first of these is the concept of information itself. The concept of information used in IS precludes it from being able to describe anything that is 'informative' or 'meaningful' in our jobs, organisations, or even in society. While the theory of information is useful for describing how technical artefacts, like phones and computers, work and how they can be built, it is simply irrelevant when trying to understand about how individuals and groups of people use the technology to achieve social ends. For this you need 'meanings'-semantics.

# searchers

The second problem is the particular notion of system used in IS. The kind of systems theory used in IS is used to reduce complexity. That is reasonable given how complex modern information systems can be. But while this kind of systems theory allows us to develop descriptions of these complex artefacts (so they can be built), it does not provide any explanations concerning how they function, if indeed they do, for the individuals and groups destined to use them or help in their development. Therefore, we need to choose and use a system theory that can help us explain how those artefacts work in the larger systems of which they are a part. For example, how does a car work as part of the transport system, or how does an administrative system work within a larger enterprise system. The systems theory that is needed must help explain artefacts in their organisational and societal contexts – a problem of contextuality.

## Recent Research

Rodney has been involved in three recent contract research projects that can be described as having social innovation outcomes.

### **Evaluation of the NSW Emergency Drought Relief Mental Health Supports (2019- 2020)**

Headed by Dr Robert Gordon – Director of the Centre for Health Service Development (CHSD) and Associate Professor (Health Services Research), and Dave Fildes – Research Fellow (Health Services Research), this project is funded through NSW Ministry of Health and is conducted through the CHSD which is a part of the Australian Health Services Research Institute at the Faculty of Business, University of Wollongong.

This project aims to better support the mental wellbeing of people living and/or working in drought-affected communities, in particular farmers and their families, farm workers and farming-related businesses, broader communities (including businesses, services and residents), and people supporting these groups.

### **EmerCALD**

Community Engagement Grant (2018-2019)

This project involved studying how emergency messages provided in the dominant language (English), are interpreted, or more generally misinterpreted, in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities.

People with poor English-speaking skills, low education levels and distrust of figures of authority or institutions may rely on other family members to engage with the broader local community, but what happens in the case of emergency messaging?

In this project, communication approaches were applied to understand how the emergency messaging from the State Emergency Services (SES) can be understood – or misunderstood – through the lens of different languages and cultures.

### **MTR Learning Organisation**

Contract Research Project (2016-2018)

This was a large three-year contract research project, co-led with Senior Professor Pascal Perez. Rodney was also responsible for the conception and design of two of three major deliverables, a metamoderation-based system that supported intra-organisational innovation drives, and a new approach to social media sentiment analysis that was applied to analysing and describing an arson event that occurred on a train.

## Key Outcomes

Recent research achievements include the development of the theoretical and methodological framework for the EmerCALD project, and the publication of a new communication-based approach to interviewing; see Clarke, R. J. (2019) *Elicitation Strategies for Interviewing and Fieldwork: Emerging Research and Opportunities* Advances in Linguistics and Communication (ALCS) Book Series, Research Insights, IGI Global.



# Associate Professor Corinne Cortese

ACCOUNTING DISCIPLINE, SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTING, ECONOMICS AND FINANCE

## Accounting as a political practice

Corinne has been researching in the area of accounting regulations and the extractive industries for more than 15 years. The political processes that permeate accounting regulatory regimes are her particular area of interest. Given the varied settings Corinne examines, political and social theories are used to make sense of the contexts within which accounting is situated, and the complexities that arise from its practice. With a focus on discourse as a way of communicating meaning and exercising power, qualitative methods such as discourse analysis, genealogy, and historiography are Corinne's primary research approaches.

### Research Approach

Corinne has an interest in accounting standard setting and how regulatory processes are politically influenced, specifically in the context of the extractive industries. Corinne's doctoral thesis considered the role of power and politics in the international accounting standard setting process for the extractive industries.

### Recent Research

Most recently, Corinne has been part of a team of UOW scholars conducting research on behalf of the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) – the domestic body that sets the standards that all companies use to create financial statements. The International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) has brought the accounting standard for the extractive industry onto its agenda and invited the domestic standard setters from Australia, South Africa, Canada and Norway to provide feedback, since they are important global players in the mining and resource sector.

Corinne, as an internationally recognised expert on accounting for this sector, was invited to conduct research on behalf of the AASB. Professor Millie Chang and Associate Professor Lee Moerman joined her in this project which included a survey of Australian companies and interviews with regulators, preparers and users of financial reports. The AASB Research Forum was held in Melbourne in November 2019 to present the results of the work (see <https://www.aasb.gov.au/Research-Centre/Research-Forum-2019.aspx>).

### Key Outcomes

Corinne has published more than 30 journal papers, reports, and media articles. She has attracted industry funds from the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Australia as well as support from the Australian Accounting Standards Board and St Vincent de Paul Australia.



# Dr Marco Antônio Amaral Féris

OPERATIONS DISCIPLINE, SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS AND MARKETING

## Helping managers in making better decisions

Marco's research focuses on decision making, planning quality and project performance. His experience spans 28 years, managing programs and projects across varied industries including defence, education, R&D, IT, manufacture and industrial automation, across Australia, Brazil, Israel and the US.

### Research Approach

This is an interdisciplinary approach that involves:

1. **Dual process theory:** Explaining the decision-making process from the view of decision-makers, through two distinct systems of thinking.
2. **Behavioural science:** Explaining or predicting human and organisational behaviour.
3. **Design Science Research (DSR):** Extending the boundaries of human and organisational capabilities.
4. **Planning-performance theory:** Positively impacting financial performance through planning formality.
5. **One size does not fit all:** Managing each project according to its characteristics.
6. **Knowledge management:** Capturing, retaining and sharing the knowledge acquired in each project for improving planning quality of subsequent projects.

### Recent Research

Using a combination of concepts, methods, tools and techniques from different disciplines, Marco in 2010 produced a software tool named QPLAN. This tool assists in the increase of project performance through evaluation of the quality of planning, and introduction of best practices in the development process. It has enhanced project performance across 150 projects within 12 organisations to date.

A new version prototype is currently in development, with a view to be used as a decision support tool for Defence. This project has the support of Elbit Systems of Australia, the School of Computer Science from University of Sydney and the School of Engineering from Macquarie University.

Researchers from economics, finance and operations fields are also studying the possibility of using QPLAN to be a decision support tool in those industries.

### Key Outcomes

Marco's work has led to a number of publications in high-quality journals, book chapters and conferences. His research has also received funding through several grants including UOW Faculty of Business Start-up Grant and an Australia-Germany Joint Cooperation Scheme.



# Associate Professor Troy Heffernan

MARKETING DISCIPLINE, SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS AND MARKETING

## Communicating the truth of climate change

Associate Professor Troy Heffernan has had a long and distinguished career as an academic researcher in the field of Transnational Education, exploring the interplay between quality education and business. Today, Troy is focusing his research on human behaviour and climate change communication. He enjoys working in diverse research teams exploring complex problems that impact society and the environment.

### Research Approach

The role of humans in increasing CO<sup>2</sup> emissions, and the impact this will have on our ability to live on this planet are beyond debate, and yet, debate continues to rage. Troy is driven to understand *why*. How does our psychology work, regarding climate change? How are we being manipulated by vested interests? How can the truth be communicated in a way that people understand and take note to the urgency of the situation?

### Recent Research

**The EnviroRental project:** As one of the worst per-capita emitters of greenhouse gases (Board, 2015), Australia needs to develop multidimensional, multisector solutions to this problem. The residential housing sector generates a significant proportion, 12.5%, of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions (COAG, 2016). With 31.4% of the sector as rented accommodation (ABS, 2015), understanding the behaviour of the key stakeholders to embrace environmentally sustainable retrofit solutions becomes critical. This project will explore the enablers and barriers for the adoption of retrofit solutions within residential rental properties and present a framework that highlights a way forward.

**Sun, Sand, Sea and Sustainability (S<sup>4</sup>):** Coastal and marine tourism is particularly important in regional areas like the NSW South Coast, where it is estimated to be worth \$2.1 billion to the regional economy. The popularity of regions like the South Coast is underpinned by a range of natural assets including clean, uncrowded beaches and natural beauty. However, South Coast Councils face a daunting challenge to maintain these unique qualities while a growing population and stakeholders with economic interests demand more visitation and access to these areas. The S4 project is developing a methodology to identify the vulnerability and development of coastal towns and villages. This will provide decision makers with a more complete picture when attempting to achieve sustainability of these communities.

### Key Outcomes

The EnviroRental team is finalising the first round of data collection and writing findings. They are beginning to disseminate our findings in the form of journal papers and presentations to key stakeholder groups. One available presentation is: 'EnviroRental: Policy Delphi Preliminary Findings --Towards a framework for an environmentally sustainable residential rental property sector in Australia', *Energy and Water Consumers Advocacy Reference Group Meeting*, 30 May 2018, Sydney, Australia.



# Dr Uraiporn Kattiyapornpong (Ping)

MARKETING/SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS AND MARKETING

## Marketing for sustainability

### Research Approach

Ping's research focuses on how marketing and tourism contribute to sustainability, such as sustainable community-based tourism development, marketing multi-channels, services and relationship quality and corporate social responsibility marketing in banking and work-integrated-learning in both Australia and international contexts.

### Recent Research

Ping's current projects include:

- 1) Modelling the Effectiveness of Persuasive Cues in Daily-Deals
- 2) Revisiting Influence of Corporate Social Responsibility on Customer Relationship Quality in New Normal
- 3) Understanding Business Relationship Quality Dynamics and its Effects in Social Banking

### Key Outcomes

Ping has published in many journals including Industrial Marketing Management, Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology, Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing, Journal of Vacation Marketing, Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, International Journal of Cultural, Tourism and Hospitality Research, and Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice.

Her recent grants and achievement include Australia's Endeavour Leadership Program Mobility Funding, New Colombo Plan (NCP) Grants, and Australia Awards Endeavour Mobility Grants that provided opportunities for students to study and undertake internships overseas.



# Dr Greg Kerr

LECTURER, MARKETING DISCIPLINE, SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS AND MARKETING

## The marketing and branding of towns and cities

Greg's thesis, completed in 2009, related to *the process of implementing aspirational place brands*. Having both theoretical and substantive implications, Greg has continued to publish in this area, be involved in consultancies relative to economic development and tourism plans for towns and cities, as well as supervise higher degree research students seeking to make similar research contributions. His research, editorial and supervisory work have provided Greg with membership of a global community interested in the marketing and branding of places.

### Research Approach

Greg's former career in local government, his later role in business development, particularly in rural and regional areas of New South Wales, influenced his interest and consequent research agenda being the marketing and branding of towns and cities. A key motivator is to help places achieve competitive advantage in a world of increasing mobility of both people and organisations. Greg has a range of research skills and teaches marketing research at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Although not the only methodology deployed, case study is predominantly used in research and current supervisions. Economic development studies for instance include quantitative and qualitative methods.

### Recent Research

Through supervision of his PhD students, Greg is researching areas of place identity and image, the fashionability of places, the settlement of migrants and refugees in regional areas, and further work on the branding of cities. An additional supervision relates to artificial intelligence. Greg is part of a cross-disciplinary team which has received Global Challenges funding to investigate the sustainability of coastal communities. In addition, Greg is undertaking work on teaching and learning across the higher education and vocational sectors.

### Key Outcomes

Greg has published more than 40 journal articles, book chapters, and conference papers in total. He has conducted research in both Australia and overseas, in particular the United Arab Emirates. His practitioner contributions include membership of tourism boards, and committee member and secretary of Illawarra Multicultural Services. He regularly reviews papers for academic journals and is asked to examine higher degree and honours theses.



# Professor Lee Moerman

ACCOUNTING DISCIPLINE, SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTING, ECONOMICS AND FINANCE

## Accounting as a social practice

After a career as a radiographer, Lee wanted to make her 'second career' something interesting and worthwhile. The opportunity to research in alternative and interdisciplinary perspectives on social and environmental accounting emerged from the community of scholars at the University of Wollongong (UOW). Lee has now been researching in this field for more than two decades. She has been an active researcher and member of the Centre for Social and Environmental Accounting Research (CSEAR) at the University of St Andrews and in 2012 hosted the annual Australasian CSEAR Conference. In 2019, she was inducted into the ACSEAR Hall of Fame as acknowledgement of her contribution to the field.

As a well-respected academic in this field, Lee attracts research students interested in accounting as a social activity and the broader effects of calculative practices including climate induced sea level change, oil spills in Nigeria, and mining negotiations on Native Title lands.

### Research Approach

To study accounting as a social practice requires the use of an alternative to economic theories. Therefore, Lee adopts sociological theories to explain accounting practice in its broader context. As a qualitative researcher, Lee focusses on discourse analysis in its various manifestations to explore the meaning and power relations embedded in micro and macro level calculative practices.

### Recent Research

One of Lee's first research projects investigating the first social report delivered by British American Tobacco piqued her interest in toxic products and accounting disclosures, which led her to investigate the legacy of the asbestos industry. More recently, research in the death-care industry (with Sandra van der Laan and a CPA Australia funded grant) has received an overwhelming amount of interest from a broad range of stakeholders. The most recent project is investigating funerary practices of Sorry Business in Australia.

### Key Outcomes

Lee has published more than 40 journal papers, reports, and media articles, and has appeared on radio and television. She has attracted several industry funds from Association of Certified and Chartered Accountants (ACCA), CPA Australia and a Wingara Mura Bunga Barrabugu Grant. Following the completion of a CPA Australia funded report – *It's Your Funeral: an investigation of death care and the funeral industry in Australia*, the two researchers have contributed to over 100 media engagements including the recent Four Corners report of the industry. Her research and recommendations have been adopted in several policy settings including: the revised *Trade Practices Act* standard for the funeral industry and *ACTU Report into Insecure Work*.



# Dr Stephanie Perkiss

SENIOR LECTURER, SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTING, ECONOMIC AND FINANCE, FACULTY OF BUSINESS

## In pursuit of accountability

Stephanie is driven by a desire for equality and sustainability – where it is a balancing act between economic development, environmental protection and social prosperity. To fulfil her research goals, she believes partnerships, collaboration and interdisciplinary thought is key. Stephanie is an Early Career Researcher.

### Research Approach

Two key philosophies drive Stephanie's qualitative research and general academic role: the need for greater accountability in various situations, and the drive for sustainability and sustainable development. Although she is an accountant, her research has informed a need for accountability well beyond numbers and dollars. To Stephanie, accountability is about taking responsibility for one's impacts and communicating this to all interested stakeholders.

### Recent Research

**Embedding sustainability** – knowledge, awareness and action, into business courses. This project began in 2018 when several academics from around the world piloted a sustainability education platform, WikiRate, into their business, accounting and management courses. WikiRate is a crowdsourced platform for communicating and rating company action according to sustainable development. Students engaged in this experiential learning activity source data from companies and populate this onto WikiRate. In doing so, they are undertaking a service learning, critical thinking and problem solving activity, which aids knowledge and awareness of sustainability via learning-by-doing.

### Accounting for the effectiveness of aid and remittances in the Pacific Islands, with a focus on climate change resilience.

With the support of a Global Challenges grant, under the topic, Building Resilient Communities, an interdisciplinary (accounting, human geography and sociology) and international (Australia, New Zealand and Samoa) team has been exploring the value of both Official Development Aid, such as from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and remittances gained through seasonal worker schemes. Fieldwork has been undertaken in Samoa, as a case study, and many interviews have been conducted. The worker schemes are seen to be very beneficial to the community, ministries and individuals, with many mentioning its value towards helping climate change resilience.

### Key Outcomes

Each of these projects received University funding in the form of Global Challenges grants and a UIC International Links Grant Scheme 2018 (Chief Investigator). These projects have collectively produced four journal publications, one book chapter, four conference papers and four reports.



# Dr Oriana Price

MANAGEMENT DISCIPLINE, SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS AND MARKETING

## Shifting focus on organisations

Oriana is a qualitative organisational studies scholar adopting a 'practice' lens and an overarching ethnographic approach. Her main research interests focus on how work, change, performance management and learning are enacted in 'practice' within various organisational contexts. Oriana has undertaken research in health, education, financial services, utilities and local government. Her research experience draws on both formal research training and more than over 20 years of professional experience in organisational and human resource development and continuous improvement in various Australian firms.

### Research Approach

Oriana's research approach is underpinned by a commitment to interdisciplinary work, to which she contributes an ontological, theoretical and methodological approach to support the investigation of social phenomena and contextualised ways of organising. The study of organisations through a practice lens shift the object of enquiry from organisation as an entity to organisation as an amalgam of organising practices, shifting the focus to the day to day activities of managers and workers in situated contexts rather than on managers and workers as individuals; human resource management practices rather than human resource managers; business development practices rather than business developers.

### Recent Research

**Informing the development of a performance measurement framework in local government - A situated practice perspective.** A current research project is focused on understanding how managers in local government enact performance management practices to sustain service delivery to communities.

**An investigation in the sustainable economic practices of ecovillages (Phase 1 & 2),** Price, Gibbons (BUS), Heffernan (SBRC), Ville (SOC). The purpose of this research is to investigate the ways in which an established ecovillage community enacts practices to develop sustainable community based economic enterprises.

**The 'Pracademic': An investigation into the effective WIL practices at UOW,** Sheridan & Price (BUS), Sheridan (SOC) McDonnell & Pocus (GCDE). The purpose of this research is to identify successful 'pracademic' practices with the intension of informing professional development requirements of WIL at UOW. Professional development will assist those academics who, in response to the Federal Government policy are integrating WIL into their study programs.

### Key Outcomes

The projects above have led to a number of high-quality research papers including Price, OM, Ville, S, Heffernan, E, Gibbons, B & Johnsson, M 2020 'Finding convergence: Economic perspectives and the economic practices of an Australian ecovillage'. *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*, 34, pp. 209-220



# Dr Sanja Pupovac

LECTURER, SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTING, ECONOMIC AND FINANCE, FACULTY OF BUSINESS

## Accounting for impact

Sanja finished her PhD in 2014 and actively researches in the field of social and environmental accounting using alternative methodologies to explore the impact of accounting on society. Sanja's thesis explored the disclosure of oil spills in the Niger Shell using critical discourse analysis. Her work has been published in leading accounting journals. She attracts research students interested in a wide range of similar topics such as the role of accountability and transparency in global regulation, the disclosure of modern slavery in developing countries and the impact of mining on Indigenous peoples. Sanja is also on the Australasian Centre for Social and Environmental Accounting Research (A-CSEAR) committee, a sub-committee of the prestigious St Andrews Centre for Social and Environmental Research (CSEAR) and regularly reviews papers for leading accounting journals.

### Research Approach

Sanja takes a broad approach to understand the impact of the calculative practices of accounting. She uses alternatives to financial and annual reports to explore issues of meaning and nuanced understandings of accountability. For example, the use of counter accounts by civil society groups, letters to shareholders and CSR reports are rich sources of evidence. Sanja's research significantly influences her teaching philosophy and guides innovation in her learning and teaching practice.

### Recent Research

Sanja is working on a number of projects including the history of modern slavery and big data and its role in accounting education.

### Key Outcomes

Sanja has a portfolio of achievements including publications in leading disciplinary journals. Her approach to teaching scholarship using a research-informed philosophy has resulted in a Vice Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Contribution to Teaching and Learning, Senior Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy, HEA (UK), and is a Senior Fellow of WATTLE.



# Professor Nina Reynolds

PROFESSOR OF MARKETING, SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS & MARKETING

## Exploring digital consumption

Nina's MPhil and PhD research projects were methodological in nature and provided a basis for collaborating with peers, as well as positioning her to contribute to developing others' research capacity. Nina has held formal academic leadership roles in multiple institutions that allowed her to support fellow academics, and she chaired the research committee of a national membership organisation where she built systems that facilitated research, such as funding and networking opportunities. She has previously developed and delivered highly demanded doctoral training courses within her home institution, as well as mentored colleagues within marketing and more broadly.

### Research Approach

Consumption, in a broad sense, is necessary to live. However, out of control, thoughtless consumption has led to many of the problems faced by modern society, including (e.g. climate change, pollution, and drug misuse). What then might responsible consumption look like? As a consumer researcher Nina is motivated to understand how we can consume in ways that promote, rather than detract from, both our own and others wellbeing.

Nina wants to understand how we can consume technology in a beneficial way. How might we avoid the 'dark side' of digital consumption? From a research methods perspective, Nina is curious about the workings of research in the digital environment.

### Recent Research

With the Wollongong Antimicrobial Resistance Research Alliance (WARRA), a group that aims to develop effective ways to tackle the very real problem of increasing antimicrobial resistance, Nina is involved in a project that has developed a measure to understand consumer drivers of antibiotic use. We will establish what drives inappropriate use of antibiotics in the Illawarra so that we can test the effectiveness of targeted interventions to promote responsible use of antibiotics in the community.

### Key Outcomes

In addition to the publication of several journal, book and book chapters, Nina is currently contributing to project supported by Faculty Seed, Mentoring and Faculty Strategic University Collaboration as well as Global Challenges Project and Global Challenges Keystone funding.



# Associate Professor Ann M. Rogerson

MANAGEMENT/SCHOOL OF BUSINESS/ASSOCIATE DEAN (EDUCATION)

## Understanding cheating behaviours and promoting academic integrity

Ann is recognised as an international expert in detecting contract cheating, machine based plagiarism and bibliographic forensics. Her research into academic misconduct has led to a body of internationally recognised work into identifying evidence of contract cheating, and ways that contract cheating takes place.

Ann is an Editorial Board member of the International Center for Academic Integrity, for their retrospective of key publications on academic integrity, due for publication in 2021/22. She's also a member of the International Scientific Panel for the European Network of Academic Integrity (ENAI) and an Executive Advisory Board Member for the UAE Centre for Academic Integrity.

### Research Approach

Ann embraces her natural curiosity to develop an understanding of how and why people do what they do. She's interested in identifying patterns that can be explored and analysed to generate insights for later application. Observing irregularities in student submissions has led to work in the area of file-sharing by students, and bibliographic forensics – where markers or clues can assist with the detection of contract cheating.

### Recent Research

Working with Deakin University, the University of NSW, and Turnitin®, Ann is moving her work on bibliographic forensics into machine based detection to assist teachers and academics identifying contract cheating.

### Key Outcomes

Following an initial chapter in the Handbook of Academic Integrity, on the prevalence of machine-based plagiarism through the (mis)use of article spinners and online paraphrasing tools, this topic is now the subject of an open call for papers into the phenomena “Machine Based Plagiarism: The death of originality in the digital age” in the International Journal for Educational Integrity.



# Dr Lynnaire Sheridan

SENIOR LECTURER, MANAGEMENT DISCIPLINE, SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS & MARKETING

## Promoting positive social, ecological and economic outcomes.

Lynnaire's research focus is on identifying key insights and potential learnings emerging from complex scenarios to facilitate problem solving and promote positive social, ecological and economic outcomes. She has applied this approach to investigating organisational issues within the domains of workplace health and safety, tourism, health and global migration as well as in higher education via her teaching and learning research on work integrated learning, academic integrity and equity.

### Research Approach

Lynnaire's foundational degree in Environment Management developed her desire for collaborative and stakeholder-centred problem-solving. As environmental issues are not easily grappled with by organisations, being complex problems extending outside of organisational boundaries, her early career experiences fostered an interest in systems-based approaches – insights that she builds upon today in her research on complex socio-cultural phenomena, ranging from workplace health and safety management through to understanding unauthorised migration phenomena. Lynnaire is a qualitative researcher who is focused on elucidating what has not previously been 'seen' in a situation by its stakeholders.

### Recent Research

Lynnaire has been a Chief Investigator on the following recent projects:

#### **'Pracademic': An investigation into the effective WIL practices (2018 - 2020)**

While immediately identifying effective Work Integrated Learning academic practices to enhance to benefit UOW learners, this UOW-funded project is subsequently forming a case within a broader Higher Education study of pedagogical phenomena, such as Work Integrated Learning (WIL), in the context of Higher Education funding reforms such as the Australian Government's Performance-Based Funding.

#### **Growing Global: A UOW and UOWD model of collaborative education (2015 - 2019)**

Evolving from a pilot shared Moodle learning platform for workplace health and safety (where content was only directed from Wollongong to Dubai) towards a two-way, co-developed, teaching resource demonstrates how shared, internationalised, resources can be utilised as part of an approach to support a Global UOW.

### Key Outcomes

In addition to research publications and audio-visual resources, Lynnaire's teaching and learning research and leadership was recognised in 2019 via accreditation as a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, U.K.



# Dr Adrian Tootell

LECTURER, OPERATIONS DISCIPLINE, SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS & MARKETING

## Future Organisations – Systems, People and Innovation

Adrian is an early career researcher who has explored the barriers and drivers that exist in forming successful collaborations between universities and industry. He is interested in the initiation of collaborative relationships, especially when traversing the external environment which encompasses the competing motivations of profit seeking companies and universities building reputation.

### Research Approach

Adrian's approach to developing new knowledge is through multidisciplinary, applied research. His areas of interest include organisation and innovation management systems; the translation and operationalisation of knowledge for new product development; technological advances in transport, manufacturing, energy generation and storage; opportunities for economic development; systems that support non-financial exchanges; and building collaborative relationships.

### Recent Research

Adrian is working on a UOW Global Challenge keystone project that involves exploring how things may be made in the future. This is done through the context of a Makerspace that is associated with the rapidly growing international Maker movement. With some communities claiming business and economic development is enhanced with the incorporation of Makerspaces, the project explores the benefits of these spaces.

### Key Outcomes

In addition to being part of the team that received a Future Makers Global Challenge Keystone Project Grant in 2018, Adrian was selected to form part of the UOW Impact Maker magazine.

Adrian's work contributed to the International Standard ISO9004:2018 that provides guidance on how the quality of an organisation can be used to achieve sustained success regardless of an organisations type, size and activity. Adrian has also contributed to a Standards Australia handbook that provides guidance on 'The Stakeholder Approach to Organisational Sustainability'.



## Further information

[uow.edu.au/business-law/research/crop/](https://uow.edu.au/business-law/research/crop/)

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