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Editorial: Voices, Bones and Blogs

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Welcome to edition number two of JOHLSTE volume five. In this edition there are six academic papers, two practice papers, one report and a perspective. One interesting idea that emerges in this edition, and that is common to a number of papers, is that of voice. Whose voices do we listen to in higher education? There is of course a cacophony of voices all of which compete to be heard. The once quiet ivory towers of higher education are now besieged by requests, demands and pleas, particularly about what and how to teach. As higher education has become 'massified' it is the government voice that has increasingly demanded to be heard, particularly in regards to quality and standards. But, of course, as a result of the massification, the student body has changed dramatically. Have we tuned into the new voices of higher education represented by this heterogeneous group of students? Do our courses take account of their learning anxieties and preferences? Have we taken account of their new culture of communication?

Listening, Understanding and Responding to Leisure and Tourism Undergraduates, by Eugenia Wickens, Alastair Forbes and John Tribe, offers an interesting insight from students. This paper explores the experiences of first year leisure and tourism undergraduates, making use of focus groups and one-to-one semi-structured interviews to investigate the factors influencing their success or failure. One important finding of the study was that students' peer group networks are vitally important to their well-being and success. Indeed the study found that many students are more likely to seek help informally from their friends than from formal systems such as academic tutors.

Acolla Lewis offers another opportunity to listen to voices that are not always captured in higher education. The question that Lewis wishes to consider is that of what to teach, and the title of her paper, *Stakeholder Informed Tourism Education: Voices from the Caribbean*, indicates where and how she has gone about this task. Lewis's paper therefore brings a number of interesting new approaches to the tourism curriculum debate. She elaborates on the use of stakeholder theory and the focus of her study is the Caribbean. In many parts of the Caribbean, tourism is one of the major sources of foreign currency earnings so education and training for this sector is particularly significant. Lewis's method was to conduct interviews with tourism academics, students, tourism employees, industry, professional bodies, pressure groups, parents, the local community and government, across three sample locations in the Caribbean. The stakeholders were asked to address three key issues: the local context of tourism development; the aims and content of the tourism curriculum; and the nature of stakeholder involvement in tourism curriculum decisions. The first two areas were addressed in a previous paper by Lewis. Here she has concentrated on the issue of the stakeholders' views in a stakeholder inclusive approach to curriculum development. Her paper therefore offers an insight into the mechanics of stakeholder involvement, concentrating on who

should be consulted in tourism curriculum decision-making and how the process of stakeholder involvement can best be managed.

The question of what to teach is also considered by Yuka Inui, Daniel Wheeler and Samuel Lankford in their paper, *Rethinking Tourism Education: What Should Schools Teach?* Their paper suggests that sociological and philosophical perspectives should be included in curriculum development at the university level, arguing that these provide an important insight into the non-vocational portion of tourism in higher education. They underline the need to create both skilled and reflective graduates of tourism programmes, since although skilled individuals are necessary to the industry it is reflective individuals who will question and improve practice in the more general context of tourism development.

In contrast, Michael Brizek and Ali Poorani investigate the more vocational end of the 'what to teach' spectrum. Their paper is titled *Making the Case for Entrepreneurship: A Survey of Small Business Management Courses within Hospitality and Tourism Programs*. This paper assesses the level of demand and supply for such courses in hospitality and tourism programmes in the United States. The findings indicate that only twelve out of the top 25 hospitality programs offered such courses, despite the relatively high demand among students surveyed for having such courses in their curriculum.

I Like Your Style: The Learning Approaches of Leisure, Tourism and Hospitality Students Studying Generic Modules is the title of the paper by Crispin Dale and Pat McCarthy. The educational issue researched by these authors is one common to hospitality, leisure, sport and tourism students who, are often taught collectively with other students in generic modules. The specific problem here is that whilst large lectures gain economies of scale they can make it difficult to tailor provision to students with different learning preferences. Dale and McCarthy used a focus group approach to study the learner preferences of students studying generic modules. They found that four different learning approach identities exist: activist, instrumentalist, autonomous and perplexed. They suggest that lecturers need to be receptive to such different learner approaches, and innovative in their teaching and learning strategies when teaching students in large generic modules.

The final academic paper, by Robert Wilson, Trevor Hassall, John Joyce, Mark Piekartz and José Luis Arquero Montaña, is titled *Numeracy and Literacy in Sports Studies Students: Barriers to Skills Development*. The rationale for this research is the concern that has been expressed about the key skills of numeracy and literacy in sports studies students, and the barriers to the development of these skills. This study found that prospective undergraduate students may already have high levels of mathematics anxiety but lower levels of formal communication apprehension prior to undertaking their courses.

In the practice paper section of the journal, Ian Gilhespy looks at *The Status of Visual Data in Research Methods Textbooks for Sport and Leisure Programmes*. This paper examines renewed interest in 'the visual' in research into sport and leisure. Gilhespy notes that whilst visual data have been employed by academics working in the subject areas of sport, leisure and outdoor adventure, this approach has not been covered in key research methods textbooks in the field. The argument is based on an analysis of major research methods texts, and concludes that there is much scope for the improvement of the analysis of visual data in the research methods literature of this field.

The other practice paper is titled *Breaking Bones: Animating the Biomechanics of Sports Injury*. In this paper, Rob Laycock, Andy Smith and Andreas Liefeth share their experience of constructing a rig to demonstrate to Sports Science students on a Sports Injury module the forces involved in breaking bones. They explain how the rig was built from angle iron, which was attached to a force plate and associated software, into which could be viced pig and turkey bones. Of particular interest is the reflective aspect of this article where the tutor, technician, students and Head of School offer their critical reflections on the demonstration. This paper also makes some very interesting observations about authorship and in particular who should be cited as first author. In their case the authors wrestle with the problem in the following way: if the first author is defined as the person who did the most writing, primary authorship for this paper should be attributed to Andy Smith. Their opposing view is that the person who created what is being written about should have primacy, in

which case the first author should be the technician, Rob Laycock. In the event they took the view that being the 'doer' is more important than being the 'recorder', recognising that the originality of their short piece rests in the creation of the rig not the reflections this act prompted. In doing so they open up an interesting (and as they note largely unconsidered) debate within their discipline over issues of authorship and ownership.

Cihan Cobanoglu shares a research report which is *An Analysis of Blogs as a Teaching Tool as Perceived by Hospitality Management Students*. Cobanoglu notes that blogs, or online diaries, have become a common method of communication particularly as a marketing tool in the hospitality industry. They therefore hold some promise as an educational tool. Cobanoglu's report analyses the use of blogs as a learning tool. Students from two hospitality technology courses were asked to create a blog and put postings to this blog throughout a semester. At the end of the semester a survey was given to measure their perceptions about blogs as a learning tool. The findings were that, given proper instructions, a large majority of the students found the task of creating a blog easy. Additionally, a majority of the students also found blogs to be effective in learning new material about class subjects, and that interaction among peers increased due to their blog assignment.

Finally, Andrew Lane and Gregory Whyte provide a perspective paper titled *From Education to application: Sport and Exercise Sciences Courses in the Preparation of Applied Sport Scientists*. This position paper argues for more pedagogical research into the process of training sport and exercise scientists. They note that universities play a key role in the training of these scientists, and that the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES) accredit these scientists following a period of appropriate training under the guidance of an accredited member. Therefore, after starting an undergraduate degree, it typically takes 8-10 years to become a BASES accredited sport scientist. Lane and Whyte make the comparison that the time to become BASES accredited is similar to the amount of time to become accredited in professions such as medicine or aviation. Hence, in their view, more pedagogical research is needed in this area.