

## 2010 SESSIONAL AWARD RECIPIENT, JCU FAESS

JCU Sessional Teachers participate in a range of teaching roles and thus are oftentimes at the very forefront of student engagement, hence their ability to influence student learning in powerful ways. Sessionals contribute meaningfully to the learning and teaching community and their genuine interest in facilitating student learning promotes high quality student learning experiences as is evident in SFS.

The casual teaching experience encompasses but is not limited to preparing for and presenting tutorials and/or workshops; lectures; mentoring and group facilitation; designing teaching materials; external/online teaching and marking. In 2010, JCU peers and colleagues nominated Ms Ines Zuchowski for the JCU FAESS Sessional Award that recognizes outstanding contributions to Student Learning.

TLD's Best Practice Project brings you:

### AWARD WINNING ATTRIBUTES OF SESSIONAL **INES ZUCHOWSKI**

IN THIS ACCOUNT, THE FIRST TIME SESSIONAL AWARD RECIPIENT REFLECTS ON THE CASUAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE AND WHAT IT MEANS TO BE FORMALLY ACKNOWLEDGED FOR HER POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO STUDENT LEARNING.

*This Award provided positive feedback; recognition of my work and it gave me a sense of achievement. This is important as it validates the contribution one makes but also encourages you to continue to develop your teaching practice.*

*I think the award has reinforced the importance of being interactive and engaging with students; building good relationships and sharing work experiences relevant to the subject area. It is important in teaching that students have the space, time and freedom to explore concepts and participate in sharing their own knowledge and insights.*

*My teaching style is about building relationships with students so learning becomes part of our experience. It is a two way process that builds on what we all are bringing to the relationship.*



'Engaging, relevant and interactive are three words I would use to describe my teaching style'.

*Ines Zuchowski, Discipline of Social Work and Community Welfare*

I completed my Bachelor of Social Work degree at JCU in 1992. I have worked as a social worker in Townsville for 16 years and I started working casually as a sessional staff member at JCU in 2007. I obtained a post graduate certificate in tertiary teaching in 1999. I am currently working towards a Ph.D.

In my personal experience, the downside of sessional teaching is that it can be isolating, but the upside is the possibility to be involved in a range of subjects. Since you ask in what way can I be supported more to sustain or improve my teaching: I think that by continuing to make training sessions available; providing access to some mentoring from senior staff with specific times to discuss teaching practices, innovations and ideas, and by enabling a way for sessional teachers and other teaching staff to share information, discuss issues and training opportunities in a team environment - rather than as just a part of the wider JCU community would be very helpful.

Having worked in the field of social work, and as a colleague and employer of social workers, it is important to me that graduates are well equipped and prepared to do good work. They need to be able to explore and critically analyze skills, knowledge and theory before they enter the field; I am keen to ensure that our graduates can do this because of our teaching practices.