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# ACETALK

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## Chair's Report

Congratulations to Richard Coll, University of Waikato, on being recognised at the World Conference in July this year for "outstanding scholarship" in his research into Cooperative Education. Delegates from over forty countries met in Thailand in July and confirmed that discerning employers prefer to recruit graduates from coop programmes when they're looking for new staff. It was interesting to note that in North America and Europe, most students out on work-based learning assignments are paid as employees. These delegates were surprised to learn that in New Zealand, we sometimes have to pay the employer to take our students on!

At home in New Zealand, cooperative education programmes continue to grow in numbers, and a database of these programmes is currently being compiled. This will be sent out to members next month. It is often used by prospective students looking for a premium qualification -

choosing where to study - and by employers seeking work ready graduates to employ.

The NZACE national annual conference is coming up in March 2002 and the call for papers has just come out. Conference next year will be held in Wellington. Have a look at the notice in this issue of ACETalk. Awards will be made at the conference for significant contributions to the advancement of cooperative education by a student, an employer and for a research paper.

Next year's Asia-Pacific Conference will be held in Bandung, Indonesia in July 2002 and details are available on <http://www.dppk.org> and in 2003 the World Conference is in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. These are great opportunities for practitioners to present a paper at an international multi-disciplinary conference.

Lester Finch

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## International Recognition for Outstanding Coop Research

Dr Richard K. Coll of the University of Waikato was presented with the Ralph W. Tyler Award from the US-based Cooperative Education Association Inc. at the July World Association for cooperative Education conference held in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand. The Award was presented to Dr Coll for his contributions to research in cooperative education. The award is for "outstanding scholarship and contribution to the understanding and practice of cooperative education". Dr Coll's research for the Tyler award was concerned with aspects of the globalization of cooperative education, specifically the students' perspective on the benefits and difficulties associated with international work placements. Dr Coll is a senior lecturer in chemistry and science education in the School of Science & Technology at Waikato University. He holds a PhD from the University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand and has

extensive tertiary level chemistry teaching experience including in the Pacific and Caribbean. Richard recently completed his Doctor of Science Education through Curtin University of Technology working with Professor David F. Treagust, a world leader in science education, and joined the Centre for Science & Technology Education Research at Waikato as a senior lecturer in science education in 2000. Richard is also currently Director of the School's Cooperative Education Unit and as well as holding research interests in a variety of aspects of work-based learning, conducts research into learners' mental models for abstract science concepts, along with the evaluation and enhancement of tertiary-level learning environments in western and multicultural contexts.

Well done Richard, many congratulations from NZACE.

## Report on the WACE Conference at Nakhon, Ratchasima, Thailand

The conference had as its theme "Globalisation of Cooperative Education: Adoption of Borderless Systems." The emphasis on global opportunities for coop students was echoed again and again through keynote and paper presentations. It seems there is now widespread interest in international coop and that to be a world-class education program, coop must include an international element. Many papers were concerned with logistics and ways of facilitating international coop.

The vast bulk of papers were position or descriptive papers, with very little research reported. The conference delegates, as in past years, represented a spread of levels of experience from well-established to embryonic programs. The bulk well, however, from new programs. As such the papers presented did not report a lot of new material, and in contrast many delegates were clearly there to learn from established practitioners.

Given the fact that this conference was hosted by a developing country in which coop was very much in the early stages, the amount we learned was limited compared with other conferences. The great interest in internationalisation was a useful outcome and, as has been seen before, we need to have more structure in our own coop international agreements. However, there are two reasons for going to a conference - to learn and to contribute. In this particular conference we did the latter. It was interesting to note the New Zealand profile. The biggest number of delegates was from South Africa, but New Zealand came in at fourth for number of presentations. This coupled with the Tyler Award meant New Zealand had a real presence.

Richard Coll

## Global issues from WACE

As with previous world conferences, the recent WACE conference held in Thailand was preceded by two days of fairly intensive WACE Council meetings. With around 30 countries represented on the Council discussions were both wide reaching and thought provoking, although sometimes frustrating as delegates grappled with cultural, regional and historical viewpoints on issues - and on occasions things did seem to get lost in the translation.

A case in point was a lengthy debate on whether WACE should change both its name and broad strategic

direction. Specifically, the Council considered whether it needed to be a more inclusive organisation looking at the wider relationships between industry and education. It was recognised that WACE is indeed a 'broad church' with many differences in how cooperative education operates in different countries. Coop in Indonesia, for example, is largely driven by industry, rather than academia (as is the case in most countries like New Zealand). Many delegates pushed for a name change to the organisation - essentially, the main argument being that cooperative education has many meanings and doesn't convey succinctly what the organisation is

about. However, some delegates felt that in their country coop education was a well understood concept and was beginning to gain wider recognition and support (and therefore to change the name would add unnecessary confusion). After much debate it was agreed to refer these matters back to the WACE Executive to explore the issues in more depth. A case of watch this space...

Other items of discussion and key achievements of WACE during the year included:

- The introduction of the WACE Learning System at the conference. This training scheme was offered for the first time at this year's conference and involved two training courses: "Coop – A new Experience" aimed at those new to coop (Chris Eames and I provided some materials and advice for the coursework), and "Coop – the International Dimension", aimed at those involved in the international placements of students. This global training programme will be a feature of subsequent conferences.
- Dr. Rick Reeve of the University of Victoria, Canada, launched his book "An Employer's Guide to Work-integrated Learning". This book is the outcome of an international research project sponsored by WACE and General Motors Corporation. The study involved a global survey and several focus groups of employers, including one held in New Zealand. The book is divided into three parts:
  - Reasons Why Companies Become Involved With Work-Integrated Learning,
  - Barriers Companies Face When Seeking Involvement With Work-Integrated Learning Programmes, and
  - Features Most Commonly Found in Work-Integrated Learning Programmes.
 Some interesting findings here. Copies are available from WACE or via Rick Reeve.

- A current project underway (to be completed in 2002) is "the Harrington Project". This study, being carried out by Prof Paul Harrington and Dr. Neeta Fogg of the Center for Labour Market Studies, Northeastern University, Boston, will compare the hiring of coop and non coop employees in the College (University) job market in North America. Initial findings indicate significant gains for coop students.
- "Hotjobs.com" is nearing completion. This website will provide a free international job placement service (coop and permanent positions) for students and faculty staff. The service is hoped to be funded by (mainly US) companies placing jobs on the site for a small fee.
- The WACE ENewsletter was launched and will supplement the existing paper version.
- Finances continue to be a hot topic of debate. With Northeastern University's generous subsidy reducing over the next few years, WACE must find alternative sources of revenue. WACE will be looking to member countries to help in this effort.

Finally, it was great to see New Zealand get the nod to host the 2004 Asia-Pacific Conference on Cooperative Education. The New Zealand contingent in Thailand used every opportunity to ensure that everybody (who mattered) knew that we would like to bring this conference to the land of the long white cloud. There is still a lot of work needed to make this happen and planning is now underway. Keep tuned to future ACETalks for developments.

Dave Hodges

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## Asia-Pacific Regional Conference 2002

*Developing World Class People for Facing Future Challenges through University-Industry Partnership*

The next Asia Pacific World association of Cooperative Education will be held on 30-31 of July, 2002, at the Sheraton Hotel, Bandung, Indonesia. The deadline for abstract submission is the 30<sup>th</sup> of March, 2002, deadline

for full paper submission is 25<sup>th</sup> of June, 2002. Check out their web page for more information (<http://www.dppk.org>).

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## Asia-Pacific Regional Conference 2004

NZACE made a successful bid to hold the Asia-Pacific Conference on Cooperative Education in 2004. The venue will be in Christchurch. It is exciting to see New Zealand take an active role in the Asia-Pacific region

and it will help give New Zealand recognition as leaders in Cooperative Education. Stay tuned to ACETalk and we will inform people as more developments take place.

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# Call for Papers

## The 2002 NZACE Conference

21-22 March, 2002, Wellington

### *Education and Work Partnership for the Knowledge Economy*

The call of papers is now out for the next NZACE conference. The venue is the Quality Hotel, Willis St, Wellington, and the conference will commence Thursday at 1:00pm, closing on Friday, 4:30pm. There will be a conference dinner at the Quality Hotel on Thursday night. Registration forms will be mailed out in October and registrations can also be made on-line via the NZACE web page ([www.nzace.ac.nz](http://www.nzace.ac.nz)).

#### **Registration costs**

Members for 2 days	\$100
Non-members for 2 days	\$140
One-day registration	\$90
Dinner	\$25
Quality Hotel accommodation	\$121 per night

The deadline for submitting proposals for papers and workshops is on **1<sup>st</sup> of December, 2001**. Proposals in PC Microsoft Word or Rich Text Format (RTF) can submitted to:

**Chris Eames**  
Cooperative Education Unit  
School of Science and Technology  
The University of Waikato  
Private Bag 3105  
Hamilton  
(07) 838-4357  
[c.eames@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:c.eames@waikato.ac.nz)

**Note:** Start preparing your papers soon, as there will be an award for the best presentation or contribution at the conference.