

Giving institutional voice to work-integrated learning in academic workloads

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Little is known about how university institutions are coping with increased placement demands in professional disciplines, and what this means for the quality and integrity of the Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) experiences offered within degree programs for all partners concerned. The first stage of a critical ethnographic study is reported in this paper. It forms part of a larger, ongoing study that seeks to generate critical perspectives on the impact and effects of an inquiry-based WIL philosophy that fosters sustained, meaningful university-community partnerships across a suite of Early Childhood programs. Institutional insights into the workload of university staff responsible for these programs are presented, revealing the complexities and possibilities of what this form of work involves in efforts to sustain meaningful, reciprocal partnerships over time. Findings reveal challenges to the relational foundations of this work and the potential implications for universities to reconsider the nature of their engagement with community in the education of deliberate professionals.

Keywords: University-community partnerships, relational pedagogy, inquiry-based learning, deliberate professional

Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) describes a wide range of university-community partnerships, including service learning, work-based learning, community engagement, cooperative education, internships, teacher practicums, clinical placements, virtual projects, simulations, and fieldwork (Rowe, Mackaway, & Winchester-Seeto, 2012; Winchester-Seeto, Rowe, & Mackaway, 2016). This type of professional learning has been an integral part of university education for many years, yet according to Cooper and Orrell (2016), WIL remained invisible and under resourced until the late 20th century. Until then, it was conducted at the cost of those who did see value in offering it. In Australia, the pervasive invisibility and under-funding of WIL was highlighted in the 2005 decision to move to differentiated funding in order to redress the university sector's failure to recognize the purposes and value of WIL, and to investigate what would be needed to conduct "quality programs" (Orrell, 2011 p. 6). In addition, there is mounting pressure on the Australia higher education (HE) sector to demonstrate that degree programs produce employable, work-ready graduates who meet current workforce requirements (Patrick, Peach, & Pocknee, 2008). Together these factors have instigated a "recent, rapid expansion" (Orrell, 2011) of WIL programs across Australian universities acknowledging the potential for bridging the gap between student's university education and the workforce (p. 5). With the increased visibility of the value of WIL within university courses and degrees, a significant amount of research has investigated the role of key participants in the WIL process including that of the university and university staff (academic and professional/support) in developing, offering, facilitating, and supporting WIL programs (Billett, 2010; Boud, 2001; Breen, 2001). These studies have highlighted the often contrasting perceptions and expectations of the three separate interest groups involved in WIL; universities, host organizations, and students (Levin, Bok, & Evans, 2010; Winchester-Seeto et al., 2016).

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Academic staff responsible for WIL within their courses and degrees have raised significant concerns about the sustainability of this work, and equity in regards to workloads in managing WIL processes (Boud, 2001; Edwards, Perkins, Pearce, & Hong, 2015; Clandinin, Downey, & Huber, 2009). These high workloads are a result of a rise in university expectations of WIL becoming integrated across the curriculum, as well as increasing student numbers, competition for desirable placement sites, and a culture of increasing accountability (Winchester-Seeto et al., 2016). The increased complexity of this work is not recognized by universities nor reflected in workload models (Tuinamuana, 2016). Several studies have gone further to suggest that not only is WIL poorly acknowledged in workload models, but additionally academics are expected to meet these new expectations despite little reward for their efforts and participation in WIL programs (Levin et al., 2010). This undervaluing, as suggested by Patrick and colleagues (2009), is not helped by the perception that WIL involvement is career limiting, with research into such professional programs not considered sufficiently scholarly by the academy.

In teacher education, WIL is not a recent addition to work done by teacher educators, as teacher placements are a long-standing tradition and constitute a requirement for professional registration in Australia. However, WIL in teacher education has seen substantive changes in recent years, including the embedding of WIL across curriculum units in addition to traditional school/early years placements. There is also an increasing focus on building continuing relationships with schools and early learning centers and the mentor teachers who supervise pre-service teachers (Le Cornu, 2010; Krieg & Jovanovic, 2013; Young & MacPhail, 2016; Escalié & Chaliès, 2016; Karagiorgi & Symeou 2007). While these current foci coalesce around the outcomes identified by Orrell (2011) as essential elements for successful WIL, it furthers the divide between what is valued by the university (such as research outputs) and those with whom the university seeks to form meaningful and mutually beneficial WIL partnerships (Mayer, 2014).

As such, further investigation is timely into what engagement in WIL entails for academic staff, and how it impacts upon their work, workload, professional engagement and identity. To this end, this paper seeks to investigate the nature and complexity of WIL work, for academics working in pre-service teacher education at an Australian university engaged in innovative WIL work in both the 'traditional' pre-service teacher placements, and in embedded WIL projects in curriculum units. The paper reports on a study that applies a critical ethnographic lens to the day-to-day work of educational WIL processes. The investigation of the often 'invisible' yet significant labor required in successful WIL programs, which demands both time and emotional investment, will be of interest to university staff and institutions involved in placement and non-placement WIL.

CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

A decade ago the *Top of the Class* report indicated that a number of Australian universities were facing serious difficulties in finding sufficient numbers of teacher education placements for enrolled students (Fawns, Misson, Moss, Stacey, & Ure, 2007, p. 70). In the years following, this issue has broadened and is now a significant concern faced by a widening-range of professional disciplines in higher education (e.g. Smith, Corso, & Cobb, 2010). A demand-driven system, emerging from the removal of caps for the Australian Commonwealth Grants Scheme (CGS) 'places' in 2008, has heralded substantial increases in students studying a range of professional disciplines like nursing, social work and education (Dow, 2014). In turn, the government-led deregulation of such professional services in the community, driven by the belief in individual user-choice and private-market forces (Jovanovic & Fane, 2016), has made it progressively harder for these disciplines to source voluntary placement opportunities (Orrell, 2011, p. 19). Yet offering students WIL (including placements) has become a

prominent feature of university curricula both nationally and internationally, with the employability of graduates said to be amplified by undertaking a component of WIL during their studies (Oliver, 2015). WIL is now a highly-valued component of contemporary course offerings globally in the Higher Education sector (Kaider & Hains-Wesson, 2015).

Boyer's scholarship of engagement offers insight into potential ways and means of redressing an escalating demand for, and reducing supply of, WIL opportunities. As Sandmann (2002) states, "the scholarship of engagement means connecting the rich resources of the university to our pressing social, civic and ethical problems, to our schools, to our teachers, and to our cities" (p. 4). The means of achieving such outcomes raises some fundamental questions. We seek to address concerns about how universities can deepen their community connections and collaborations in ways that are pragmatic, mutually-beneficial, and educationally-meaningful, when this form of intellectual work is typically underestimated and subsumed into 'service' work in academic workloads (Emslie, 2011; Sandmann, 2002). Recent calls to integrate theory and practice through close partnerships with providers, education systems and schools, highlight the need to re-think professional disciplines' approaches to WIL in university curricula (Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG), 2014, p. v; The Education State, 2016, p. 11). Australian policy makers see this as the most important action to be pursued in developing a national education profession that delivers effective teaching to its students. Such partnerships are seen as a pragmatic necessity, sold under the guise of potential mutual-benefit for universities and their community partners. The suite of Early Childhood courses reported in this study, however, have sought to foster and sustain university-community partnerships in response to the sector's interests in reflexive praxis, inquiry-learning and relational pedagogy, in an era where documentation and policy-requirements leave little room for teachers to deepen and interrogate their professional practices (Jovanovic & Fane, 2016; Logan, Press, & Sumsion, 2016; Urban, 2008; Wong, Harrison, Press, Sumsion, Gibson, & Woods, 2015).

Without losing sight of the need for pragmatism in WIL collaborations, the theoretical foundations of this research study has three elements. First, the reported approach is underpinned by a relational pedagogy, recognizing that WIL is encased in a web of relations, negotiations and collaborations that traverse across and through the physical and socio-cultural dimensions of teaching and learning (Newman & Ashton, 2009, p. 95). In early childhood education, educational outcomes are seen as inherently affective and social, grounded in the teacher-child-family relationship. Teachers use careful observation and continuity-of-care to identify individual children's personal learning needs in the moment and over time, using joint-involvement and reflection as a means of extending the co-construction of new knowledge and understandings (Brebner, Hammond, Schaumlöffel, & Lind, 2015; Brownlee & Berthelsen, 2008; Dalli, Rockel, Duhn, & Craw, 2011; Elfer & Page, 2015; Rockel, 2009). In higher education, the set of inter-, intra-, and extra-personal relationships are an equally important part of this co-construction of teaching and learning that seeks to facilitate opportunities for the learners' personal transformation (Lysaker & Furuness, 2011; Papatheodorou & Moyles, 2009; Tate, 2016). Accordingly, the research team used these key tenets of relational pedagogy to begin forging a learning community that balances individual agency and reflection with an outward-looking, collaboratively-driven intent for real action towards curriculum innovation for young children.

Second, inquiry-learning has acted as a catalyst for authentic curriculum innovation in local contexts in our reported approach to WIL. A key strand of this involves investigating site priorities to "engage in a shared process of inquiry that emphasizes the importance of praxis, or theoretically-informed teaching" (Flinders University, 2016), and with the aim of contributing to children's learning, the partnering site, and the student's professional development. Inquiry is a well-recognized component

of the education system internationally, as it provides greater scope for learner agency and direction, and acknowledges the collaborative nature of learning through the co-construction of responses to real-world concerns (Ministry of Education, 2007; Nuttall, 2016). Inquiry-learning is thus student-centered, problem-based, and investigative in nature, in contrast to the more passive approach of teacher-directed, top-down curricula. The British Education Research Association (2014) has called for such an approach to be sustained within contemporary teaching, beginning in teacher education, to embed it as the norm rather than the exception in education systems, for continuous self-evaluation and improvement (p. 6). Grounded in Dweck's (2008) concept of growth mindsets, and Palmer's (1997) belief that we teach who we are more than what we know (as cited in Faulkner & Latham, 2016), we use inquiry learning to support our students to "find ways to become autonomous both intellectually and morally and remain autonomous in the face of pressure to act in ways contrary to the best interests of their students" (Brown, Castle, Rogers, Feuerhelm, & Chimblo, 2007, p. 14). Accordingly, we use inquiry-learning as a means to work individually and collectively towards professional learning in the university-community partnership, which has the capacity to transform both early childhood education and WIL praxis (Mockler, 2015).

Third, we see the notion of reflective teaching as integral to bringing about such transformation. Reflective teaching is at the core of early childhood philosophy; recognizing that quality practice combines personal awareness with theoretical knowledge to delve into the role of self in the practical, emotional and physical dimensions of work with children, families, and colleagues (Goodfellow, 2003; Manning-Morton, 2006). Using relational pedagogy and inquiry-learning approaches, each member involved in a WIL experience across our early childhood programs works together on a shared priority concerning children's learning or teacher practice, honoring the profession's focus on continuous improvement (Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority, 2012; Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), 2011; Reimann, Waugh, & White, 2010). Cooper and Orrell (2016) see such 'deliberate reciprocity' as promoting ideal conditions for university-community engagement in the education of what they term the 'deliberate professional' (p. 107). Deliberate professionals purposefully consider the complexities of the workplace cultures and learning environs they are a part of [in WIL] to explore the possibilities and challenges associated with their own, and their teams', professional practice. Our focus then with reflective teaching is to scaffold early childhood students to deeply explore their own professional identity through this approach to meaningful university-community partnerships using inquiry-based WIL.

Aim of Study

The study generates critical perspectives on the effects of an inquiry-based WIL approach on the students, community-partners, and university staff, who are re-positioned as active co-contributors to the inquiry work, distinct from more traditional forms of WIL. The first phase of this research seeks to understand the concerns, interests and workloads of the university staff responsible for its administration and pedagogy across a suite of early childhood programs.

METHODS

Methodological Underpinnings

Most ethnographic research examines a particular setting's socio-cultural landscape from the view of its participants (May, 1997). Given the importance of comprehending the perspectives of all partners in WIL (Orrell, 2011; Winchester-Seeto et al., 2016), the current study uses a critical ethnographic approach. Importantly, the aim is to access and understand the concerns, interests, and voices of those

who are in positions of influence in inquiry-based WIL, as well as those who may be marginalized or subjugated within it (Ball, 2003, p. 3). Reasons for this critical lens were three-fold:

- to show the part an inquiry mindset plays in maintaining or undermining the notion of being 'apprenticed' in WIL;
- to go beyond describing the tenets of WIL as understood by its participants in order to reflect on how these tenets might be changed for the better (i.e., moving from "What is this?" to also consider "What could this be?" (Thomas, 1993, p. v, as cited in May, 1997, p. 1); and
- to be emancipatory in examining ways that inquiry-learning and relational pedagogy might work to override the domination of neoliberalism in WIL and HE.

Critical ethnography thus offers both a means to focus on the context-specific social and cultural understandings various partners bring to our inquiry-based WIL, as well as its broader applications to university-community partnership in HE (Rudkin, 2002).

Context and Participants

In using an inquiry-based approach to WIL, we are seeking to reposition the student, community-partners, and university as equal contributors towards a shared concern where each partner learns and benefits together (Krieg & Jovanovic, 2013; see also earlier section 'Context of the Research'). This philosophy underpins the 11 professional experience placements and 13 subjects with WIL-embedded curricula offered across three programs of study included in the research. Accordingly, the research study's intent is to redress the social and historical power imbalances of traditional apprenticeship models of WIL, by interrogating the ethical stances and effects on learning for those who partner in our inquiry-based approach (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2013, pp. 243–244). At the heart of this ongoing research is concern about issues of influence, domination, voice and empowerment (p. 244).

In this first phase of data collection, an academic with administration and teaching responsibilities across placements and WIL-embedded subjects over the last seven years volunteered to participate in the study ($n=1$); documenting their workload and its foci involving 360 pre-service teachers, 34 casual and 6 continuing academic staff, and 358 education sites and their teams. Small sample sizes may be seen as problematic in hypothetico-deductive research that seeks to test theoretical premises. In this phase of the critical ethnography, however, the focus was on the academic staff experience of inquiry-based WIL, to seek valid inferences about its impact and influence on work and workload; not to make generalizations that would stand as wide-ranging truth claims in this arena (Carspeken 1996; Madison, 2011, p. 141).

Data Collection

Carspeken's (1996) five recommended stages for critical qualitative research have shaped the study's emerging focus and research processes to-date (pp. 41–42). These stages are not necessarily hierarchical or linear in progression, as they are interrelated, intended to be returned to as needed, and are often cyclical in nature. This paper reports on research undertaken in the initial first two stages: compiling the primary record and preliminary reconstructive analysis. In the first stage, information is collected by researchers from within the social context of the study. Primary records of data are written using a mono-logical third-person perspective. In the second stage, researchers analyze collated primary record data, looking for patterns, relations, structures, roles, sequences and other such meanings to identify culture themes and system factors that are not easily visible or readily revealed by those in the social context. Subsequent stages then build on this initial exploratory form of data collection, to be

considered in light of data generated through more interactive and facilitated modes in stages three-to-five.

The following de-identified data for Stage 1 was collated as it pertained to our work in inquiry-based WIL:

- email correspondence - initial emails or replies by teaching staff were collated and analyzed, but recipients' correspondence was not included
- meeting/phone conversation notes; and
- diary records documenting workload, recorded daily in half-hourly blocks of time

Data was collected from the period between July 2015 to July 2016 to encompass a full cycle of WIL projects embedded within academic units, as well as the full suite of placements undertaken by our students across a calendar year. These forms of data collection assist in providing insights into the institutional experience of working to forge and sustain student-university-community partnerships, before seeking to elicit the views of students, community partners and others involved in inquiry-based WIL.

Data Analysis

In keeping with the study's critical ethnography frame, data were analyzed to amplify "efforts to articulate components of meaning that one normally understands without much explicit awareness" (Carspecken, 1996, p. 111). Initially, meaningful acts and reconstructions evident within and across the data sets from Stage 1 and 2 were deductively coded using Winchester-Seeto and colleagues' (2016) articulation of academic supervisor roles in WIL work (p. 107). Table 1 outlines these roles as shown in this paper.

Some differences were similarly noted in WIL educational and support roles. Notably, devoting attention to the 'development of specific WIL inquiry' questions and scope emerged from the analysis, and relational aspects of the 'Support' role, such as 'conflict resolution' and 'staff mentoring' work were also regularly noted. An additional role within WIL-related work duties was also identified related to research, as WIL university staff began pursuing opportunities to research into this space as a collective.

It became apparent, however, that these roles and sub-roles were qualitatively different from the work undertaken by university staff using a WIL-inquiry approach. For example, while we did engage in 'Administration' sub-roles like 'Placement logistics' and 'Managing experience', such organizational matters were managed in a more relational way than these categories imply, to emphasize our university priorities of reciprocity and its relevance in new and ongoing university-community partnerships. Similarly, sub-roles like 'communication' needed greater articulation, being an integral part of this approach, with relational and reflective sub-roles emerging from the need to work collaboratively on shared inquiries and priorities built about foundations of relationships and trust (see Table 2; retained categories in italics). The development of inquiry foci required careful attention to its design to ensure it met professional requirements, and the situational support staff could offer.

TABLE 1: Winchester-Seeto et al.'s roles & sub-roles in WIL-related work duties

Roles	Sub-roles of academics & host supervisors
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication Duty of care Placement logistics Managing experience Project design Recruitment
Educational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment & evaluation Designing a project or activity Educational input Ensuring a quality learning experience Feedback Overseeing student progress
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability & accessibility Emotional support Make comfortable Personal & professional development Special issues Other

TABLE 2: Critical revision of roles & sub-roles in WIL-related work duties

Roles	Sub-roles of academics & host supervisors
Relational pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building & sustaining partnerships <i>Feedback</i> Rapport building Conflict resolution Staff mentoring
Inquiry learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff situational support Development of specific WIL inquiry <i>Educational input</i> <i>Availability & accessibility</i>
Reflective Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WIL design in subject/unit <i>Assessment & evaluation</i> <i>Ensuring a quality learning experience</i> Guiding student progress Personal & professional development Action research
Administration/ other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Duty of care</i> WIL logistics/management Meeting professional requirements

Recognizing the potential for bias as practitioner-researchers, teaching staff analyzing the data used validity reconstruction to ensure reflexivity (i.e. Monitoring of our own role in gathering and analyzing data) to establish and maintain the rigor of the qualitative data reported (Tricoglus, 2001, p. 138). A second phase of data coding on the full data-set were thus undertaken using newly identified sub-roles, re-categorized under the value-driven roles of 'relational pedagogy', 'inquiry-based learning', 'reflective teaching' and 'administration/other'. The cultural themes and system factors that illustrate the complexities involved in forming and sustaining university-community partnerships via inquiry-based WIL are presented next, from the perspectives of the university staff who undertake this work.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Workload Over Time

Like many academic positions in HE, participating university staff workloads were broadly divided into the roles of *Teaching and Learning Scholarship*, *Research and Creativity*, and *Service to the University*, sometimes referred to as 'Administration and Community' (National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU), 2016). Often considered a missing dimension in sector workloads (Emslie, 2011), WIL has been tentatively aligned in some or none of these roles at the discretion of individual HE institutions.

In this study WIL workload was calculated within the role of 'Administration and Community', with an additional 0.2 FTE fraction allocated on top of a standard 10% for balanced academic roles.. Diary records of documented work from a 20-week period are presented in Table 3, with WIL duties separated out with allocated staff workloads presented for comparison. Comparatively, time for research was on-par (28% of hours worked versus 27% of workload allocation) and administration/community work was 11% higher than allocated (47% with WIL versus 36% workload allocated), meaning that there was 11% less time for teaching and learning scholarship (25% of hours worked versus 36% of workload allocation). Accounting for a 7.35 hour 'standard' working day, university staff with WIL-inquiry work responsibilities were completing an average of three additional hours of work per week beyond allocated hours.

TABLE 3: Actual versus allocated workload hours (over 20 weeks)

Workload description	Diarized workload undertaken by university staff	University staff allocated workload in hours
Admin Community	113 hours (17%)	230 hours (36%)
Teaching	161.5 hours (25%)	232 hours (37%)
Research	181 hours (28%)	172 hours (27%)
WIL	194 hours (30%)	n/a (WIL not listed)

WIL University Staff Roles within an Inquiry-Approach

Analyses of WIL university staff email correspondence and meeting notes show the proportion of instances that were recorded related to the work of relational pedagogy (637), inquiry learning (727), reflective teaching (1240), and administration (1097). In the 2015-2016 phase of the study the sub-roles of 'guiding student progress', and 'assessment and evaluation' were a substantial proportion of the workload (see Figure 1). Working to support the 'availability and accessibility' [of WIL] for all partners,

as well as administrative matters related to 'WIL logistics/management' and the 'meeting of professional requirements' were also sizable foci

The work that is emphasized within these roles has a strong, clear focus on putting people first in the design, decisions, and support of a WIL-inquiry approach. For example, the sub-roles within the university partnerships, and 'building and sustaining partnerships' occurred almost twice as often as other 'relational' sub-roles (see Figure 1). Building from this foundation, university-staff spent more time seeking ways to support the 'availability and accessibility' of WIL opportunities to facilitate 'inquiry learning', more time than any of the other 'inquiry learning' sub-roles combined. Likewise, university-staff were 'guiding student progress' and supporting 'assessment and evaluation' work with students and community partners up to three times more often than other forms of 'reflective teaching' work.

work of 'relational pedagogy' show that engaging in 'feedback' with students and community- Conversely, aspects of university-staff work within a WIL-inquiry approach appear to raise more questions than answers. For instance, while it is possible to rationalize why there was little work undertaken in the area of 'action research' when the team had just begun such work, 'rapport building' and 'emotional support' were less than ten-percent of 'relational pedagogy' work (see Figure 1). Similarly, sub-roles like 'educational input' (inquiry learning) and 'WIL design in subject/unit' (reflective teaching) are only a small portion of the work undertaken in this WIL approach. Overall, administration accounts for almost one-third of WIL academic work undertaken, in addition to WIL reflective teaching duties (see Table 4). Just what impact might a greater focus on these former roles and sub-roles have for community-university partnership work, and how are they affected by heavy administration and teaching duties?

TABLE 4: Division of academic work within inquiry-based WIL

WIL roles	Time (%)
Relational pedagogy	17%
Inquiry learning	20%
Reflective teaching	33%
Administration/Other	30%

Evolution of University Staff WIL-Inquiry Work Roles Over a Year

Across a 12-month period, analyses of roles revealed when particular types of WIL work were most typically undertaken in the light of key dates for enrolment, semesters, and WIL-inquiry opportunities. Within this Australian context, an intensive summer semester (January-February) and two 12-week semesters ran during the year from March-June and July-October, with enrolments opening in early December.

Across the 12-month period of data collection, 'administration' was by far the most dominant aspect of this work (see Figure 2). Issues pertaining to the 'meeting of professional requirements' and 'WIL logistics/management' were most frequently handled across February-June, spiking at over 461 instances of this work in March when Semester 1 commenced and the majority of the cohort returned to their studies for the academic calendar year. This work tapered off considerably after July but is still an overriding aspect of WIL-inquiry work overall.

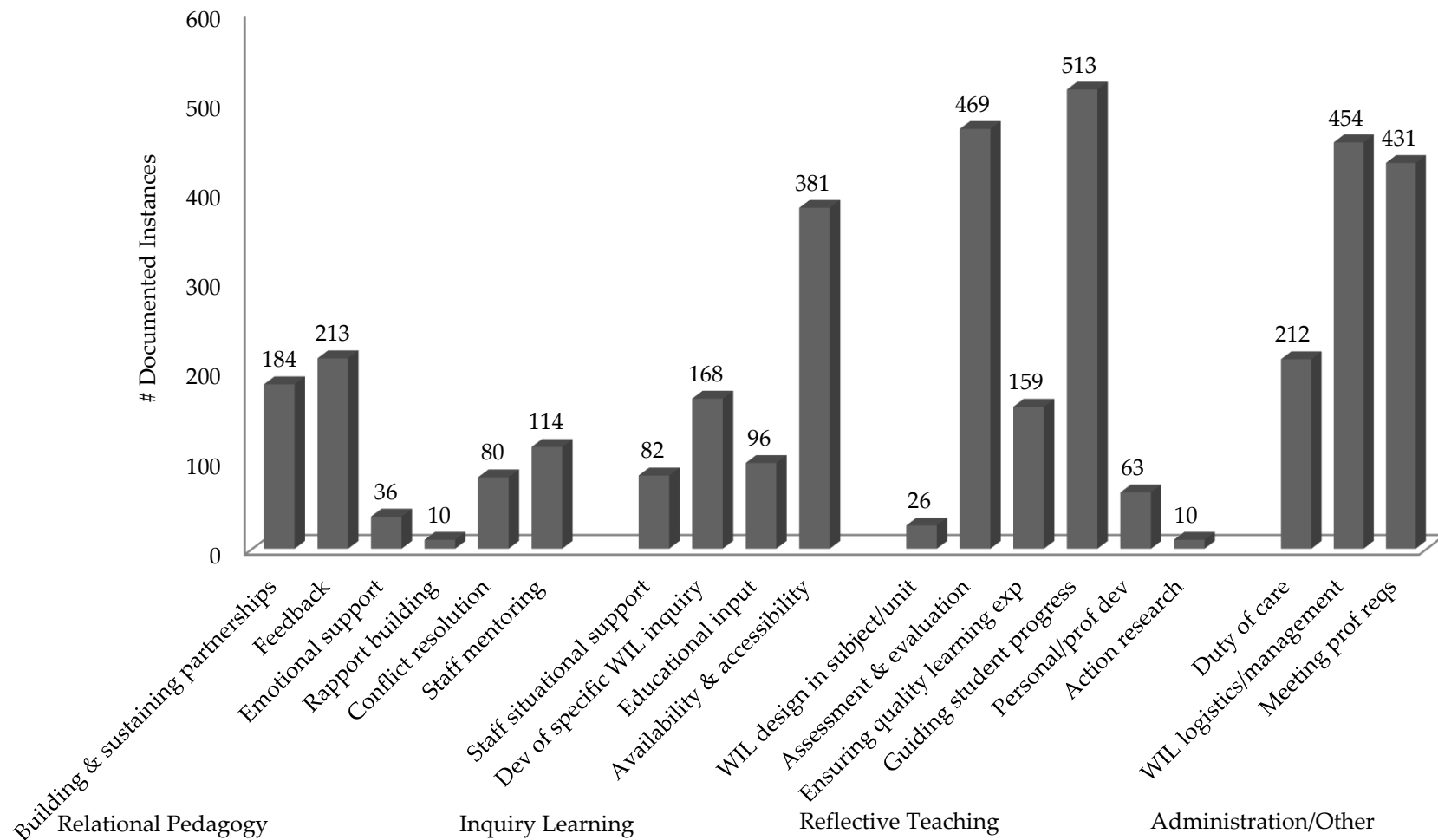


FIGURE 1: Roles & sub-roles in WIL-related duties documented in email correspondence & conversational notes over July 2015 to June 2016

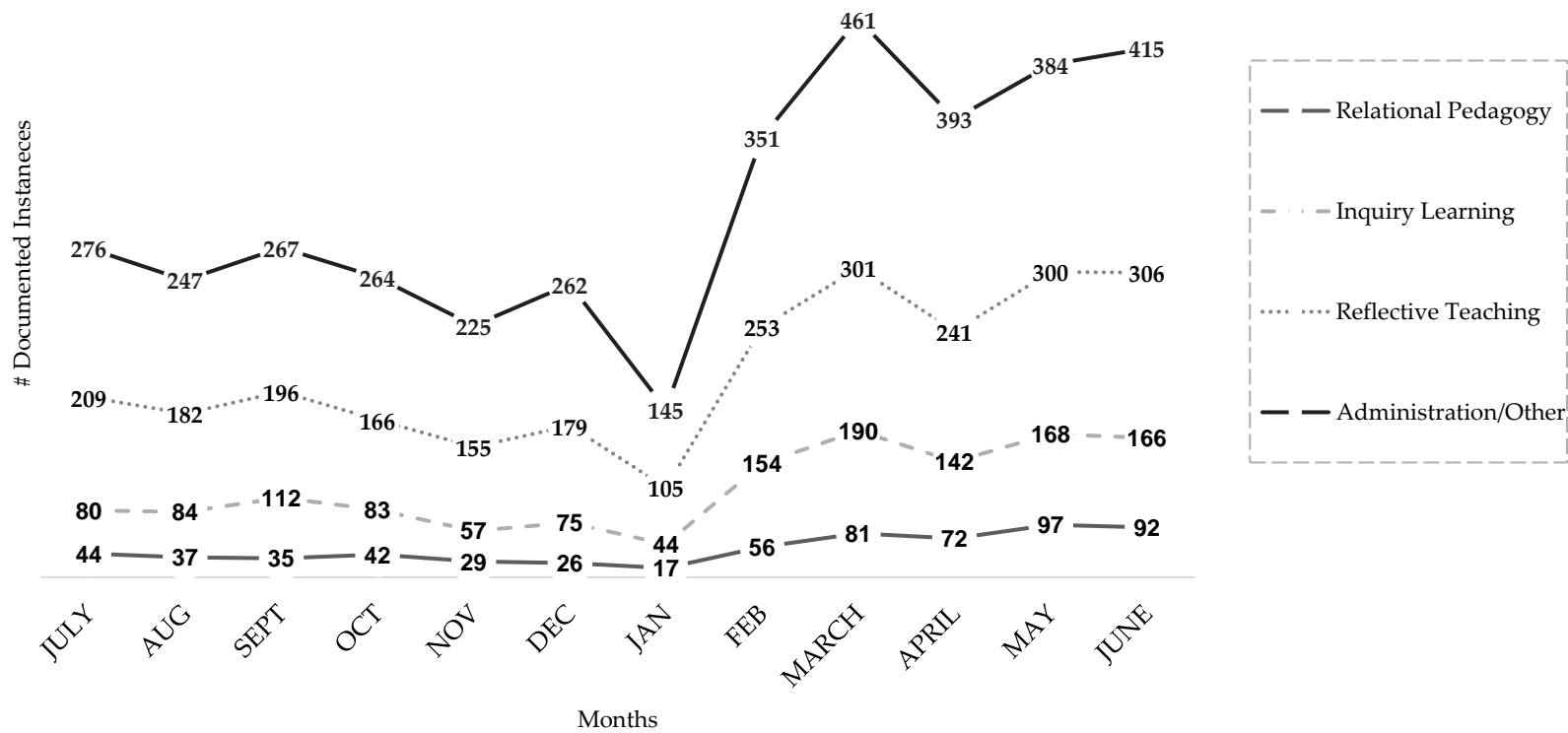


FIGURE 2: Roles in WIL-related work duties in email correspondence & conversational notes from July 2015 to June 2016

'Reflective teaching' followed a similar pattern of work intensity as 'administration', with a higher volume of work in this area noted between February-June, peaking at 301 instances of such work in March. This mirrors when our students are commencing their WIL inquiries and are grappling with issues of praxis when seeking to actively contribute to community-partner-identified priorities in ways that will progress their own learning [as students] and meet assessment criteria.

Interestingly, while 'inquiry learning' and 'relational pedagogy' roles occurred less frequently, overall, there is a more even distribution in the spread of this work intensity across the year. The building and sustaining of partnerships with community, the mentoring of WIL university-staff and their situational support of students and community-partners, and the reasonable adjustments needed to ensure the 'availability and accessibility' of WIL for students was constant. The need for university-staff to support this work consistently and frequently signals the complexities involved in re-positioning student-community-university partners as co-constructors of WIL inquiries for the benefit of all involved.

DISCUSSION

In this initial stage of the project, we are concerned with the practical and theoretical implications of how academics in HE might manage their workloads effectively in regard to work-integrated learning across the course. Specifically we want to explore the tensions that exist between traditional apprenticeship models of WIL, and the university-community partnerships that are pivotal to the success of WIL in 21st century HE courses (Cooper & Orrell, 2016; Mayer, 2014; Orrell, 2011). Findings from our research show that there are real-world implications of such partnership work that need due consideration in academic WIL workloads.

Practical Implications

Our findings suggest a mismatch between institutional expectations for the potential of WIL, in creating work-ready graduates (Patrick et al., 2008), and existing expectations about standard academic workloads. The changing nature of academic work in response to increased university focus on WIL, and the challenges this creates, has been noted prominently within the greater WIL literature for the past several decades (Boud 2001, Edwards, Perkins, Pearce, & Hong 2015). However, little work has been done within the literature to move beyond calling attention to this issue. The initial stage of the project seeks to go beyond simply flagging the concept of workload issues for academics and universities involved in WIL as an issue, to seeking to understand the complex nature of this work and quantifying it in ways similar to other aspects of academic work (teaching load, research outputs). In the course of managing WIL requirements across both standard placements, and within-unit WIL inquiry projects, the data show WIL work having two critical effects. The first is expanding existing workloads in unsustainable ways, with at least three hours of additional work being required to do this effectively. The second was to witness, within this expanded academic work day, an erosion of time devoted to supporting inquiry learning and our relational pedagogical work, in response to the administration and teaching demands of coordinating WIL effectively within the course.

When framing our WIL work as fundamentally relational, inquiry-based, and reflective, we have in mind a transformative approach to education that seeks to model better pedagogical practices, and richer and more reflective curriculum content. In wanting this for our students, it seems current teacher education and WIL policies see us compromise our own teaching practices around relational and inquiry-based learning. While this is early data, and data only from a one year period, it is worth noting the rise in time devoted to WIL administration and teaching from July 2015 to June 2016, which is only partially explained by the cohort returning to their studies for the academic calendar year.

Theoretical Implications

At a theoretical level, we are seeking greater alignment between our course philosophy of transformative education, and the ways we spend our time as academic staff. If we say we are committed to relational pedagogies, to inquiry-based learning, and reflective practices, then how can we bring our own work commitments into alignment with these when administration and regular teaching requirements dominate our WIL workloads? As the data in Figure 5 reveal, the largest category of time is spent upon work driven by bureaucratic compliance with external frameworks, or with day-to-day logistics, amounting to between a-third-to-a-half of all work throughout the year. When a substantial proportion of our working hours are spent performing work roles that are the least essential to our philosophical intentions, it is inevitable that critical tasks, such as building and sustaining partnerships (5%), or ensuring a quality learning experience (4.3%), are being starved for time and attention. It is yet unclear how this might undermine university-community partnership work via WIL opportunities.

We understand that despite the numerical data we are presenting, this can never be an exact science. The categories we have used - a revised version of the Winchester-Seeto et al. model (2016) - may not capture academic workloads effectively, and our analysis of each moment spent in an academic day may not always be consistent over time. Many 'work samples' could fit within multiple categories, and our coding reflects best estimates of the main work focus at any given moment. Nonetheless, we believe the fuzzy logic of these necessarily-human processes of evaluation and analysis does reveal some distinct and useful patterns.

We claim that our most significant priority is relational pedagogy, and yet this has never received more than 10% of our time, and frequently much less. Reflective teaching fared better, receiving a much larger proportion of our time, but even then this figure is weighted heavily towards assessment measures, a more traditional focus of university teaching and one that is valorized within neoliberal educational approaches. In comparison, our own educational work reflecting on how to integrate WIL more deeply within our regular teaching received about one fiftieth of the time spent on direct assessment of students.

Extending Brownlee and Berthelsen's (2008) epistemological work to our own teaching practices, it is apparent that our own relational epistemologies, which privilege complex understandings of teaching, and many possible solutions to any given problem, are not likely to be reflected in students' experiences of how we spend our time. Instead, the large amount of time focused on assessment, even if this is formative rather than summative, leaves little time for more valuable knowledge work, such as direct feedback about relational pedagogy (less than 6% of total time) or educational input into students' inquiry projects (less than 3%). These apparent priorities are not receiving the time and attention they deserve in ways that would make a difference to teaching and learning within our WIL programs and, possibly, to our university-community partnerships.

CONCLUSION

We see an emerging predicament in current neoliberal government expectations for universities as professional graduate factories, producing pre-evaluated work-ready individuals devoid of context or meaningful professional identities. These expectations see WIL as the solution to the messy world of academic knowledge, which is seen as troublesome in privileging critical thinking, and in asking difficult questions about the purpose of professional practice (including teacher education) in a rapidly changing world. We believe that WIL has great potential to do more than simply provide 'work-ready'

graduates. We think it can contribute to critical engagement with existing practices (Escalié & Chaliès, 2016), thereby deepening students' knowledge, and actively building better educational environments, responsive to the needs of context and moment.

However our critical examination of our work practices has revealed a significant gulf between what we say we value as academics at a course level, and how we spend our time. We suggest that the large amounts of time spent on compliance and administrative processes are evidence of the pressures felt within HE to deliver a consistent product ('acceptable' graduates) rather than, in our case, critically-minded and divergent thinkers, capable of solving real world problems in ways that are equitable and responsive to a wide range of [educational] contexts. We have claimed that we value relational pedagogy, inquiry-based learning, and reflective thinking, but instead show ourselves conforming to external standards regarding academic work, rather than our stated values. Those external standards are not about good learning, but about reproducing the labor force, without thought to the social dynamics and equity of the fields concerned.

Academic WIL priorities will differ markedly across different disciplines and institutions, and be driven by different values than those we claim to hold within our own courses. Yet we think it is important to analyze our own practices as academics, asking whether we are remaining true to our own goals, or being subverted by external pressures. Returning to Sandmann's (2002) point about the pedagogy of engagement, how are the rich resources of our university being used to help solve the pressing problems of our time?

The discipline of cooperative education (or WIL) knows about the uneasy fit between traditional academic programs, and the haphazard engagement with the field we see across many professional courses of study. We suggest that the answer is to look at our own practices, as academics, questioning how we spend our time, and in whose interests? By devoting energy to building our relationships with the field, we believe we can save much of the time currently spent on guiding student progress, and assessing it. We should trust our community partners to guide this progress better than we can, given our distance from their work contexts. This will allow us to focus on building their institutional resources, and our ongoing relationships, in ways that will make for sustainable long-term partnerships that are genuinely transformative and mutually beneficial.

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