Avondale College of Higher Education

Numbers Don’t Tell the Whole Story: A Diploma Pathway Course Widens Access to Higher Education

1991 the Beginning

Foundation Studies
- A tertiary pathway (despite title)
- Typical load: 2 generics + 2 or 3 deg units
- Generics: Fdtn English, Fdtn for Tertiary Stud
- Degree units from faculty offerings
- Pastoral support
- 15 in class, 7 completed deg (1994 & 1995)
Accredited Diploma

- Accreditation achieved late 1994 for a 2-yr Associate Diploma of General Studies
- Mix of generic units and degree units
- Name changed to Dip Gen Studs in 1999
- Accreditation renewed 1999 and 2004
- AUQA commendation, January 2009
- Accreditation application rejected, 2009
- Accreditation restored on appeal, 2010

Summary of Cohorts to 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>n = 47</td>
<td>n = 182</td>
<td>n = 162</td>
<td>n = 448</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>G = 38</td>
<td>G = 111</td>
<td>G = 127</td>
<td>G = 323</td>
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<td></td>
<td>G = 16</td>
<td></td>
<td>G = 125</td>
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<td>G = 0</td>
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<td>G = 130</td>
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</tbody>
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Number of Students
Summary, 1991-2012

- 1066 students (44% male, 56% female)
- 300 graduates, mostly bachelor degrees
- 3/4 recent school leavers: 1/4 mature age
- 43% of DGS intake complete degree
- 64% of degree starters complete degree
- 2/3 complete in normal time
- Females outperform males

Year 12 Ranks

Classes of 2005-2011

- 251 DGS entrants had a rank
- 55 had completed degrees by 2011
- No correlation between ranks and college grades
Students with Year 12 Ranks Completing Avondale Degrees, 2005-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Average Yr 12 Rank</th>
<th>Average Grade (WAM)</th>
<th>Completion Percentage (to 2011)</th>
<th>Projected Completion Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50-60</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>56</td>
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<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt;30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>&lt;30</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>34</td>
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</table>

My Research

**Topic**
A narrative evaluation of the student experience of the Dip Gen Studs, using stories from the class of 2012

**Research questions**
- What are the students’ stories of education?
- How do their stories unfold in the DGS?
- What does my story contribute?
- What do these stories add to the clarity of Avondale’s processes?
Participants I

- Aged under 21 (mostly 18 & 19)
- 6 male, 6 female
- ATAR range 34.4 to 50.65 (av. 41.6)
- 3 have no ATAR (1 Year 10 leaver)
- 3 have dyslexia and/or ADD
- 7 “ethnic”, 5 white Australian
- Data collection

Participants II

- Ben (50.65), victim of bullying, family issues
- Jeremy (43), migrant, dyslexia plus ADD
- Joshua (39), Samoan, ADD, rugby union
- John (35.2), ESL, overseas, disrupted education
- Trevor, school was all about fun
- Andrew, hopes to play for the Knights
  
  Average ATAR = 42
Participants III

- Eva (46.7), ESL, living her mother’s dream
- Kate (44.9), dyslexia, very determined
- Gina (42.15), Samoan, artistic, fun loving
- Amber (38.3), ESL, spacey, possible ADHD (hypo-activity version)
- Mandy (34.4), “a bit slow”, “ditzy”
- Jodi, Yr 10 leaver, wanted to join police
  Average ATAR = 41.3

Conclusion

- Diploma pathways can and must contribute to helping achieve the federal government objective of 40% of young Australians earning bachelor degrees by 2025.
- For the past 22 years Avondale’s Dip Gen Studs has been making a contribution to this objective.