



Interview with Professor Rachael Field

Rachael Field is currently a Professor of Law at Bond University Law School. Until May 2016, Rachael was part of the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) Law School. She was made an ALTC Teaching Fellow in 2010 and is currently communications officer for the Australian Learning and Teaching Fellows.

How can teaching promote student wellbeing?

I think that a lot of the strategies for teaching in a way that promotes student wellbeing are actually just good teaching practice, so it's just about thinking how to teach well and through that you probably will also be promoting student wellbeing. So if you teach well you will be letting students into the secrets of success at university, that involves things like intentional curriculum design to teach threshold concepts well, so that student go through the portal of knowledge or of a skillset and then on the other side they are let into the secrets of success in that regard. Also active learning and using active, engaging ways of teaching and connecting with students is really important. Giving students a sense of purpose and meaning through their learning, so not just teaching content but actually making that content real for students and authentic and helping them to see a sense of professional identity of how they might be a lawyer or a scientist or a mathematician, and giving a sense of purpose to what they're studying. So these are things that we can do in law but they are things that we can do across the curriculum across the university.

I think if we support student learning we will be supporting the students sense of competence and that will be supporting their wellbeing, but also if we're doing things like connecting students in with a sense of meaning, then we're supporting student autonomy and if we teach in an active way and engaging way then we're supporting student relatedness. So all of those things that are good teaching practices are actually supported as well by theories of psychology that we know support thriving and doing well.

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