Robotics ‘how to’ seminar wins consultancy inquiries

The Centre for Robotics’ Robot Application Service has been approached to undertake consultancy projects for several companies following an ‘Introduction to Robot Technology’ seminar last month.

In addition, the seminar was so popular another already is being planned for July to continue the work of promoting awareness of how robot technology can be used to benefit Australian industry. Dr Yow-Lam Oh, Executive Director of the Centre for Robotics, says the seminar was designed so that participants required no prior knowledge of robotics.

The 25 participants were a mix of managers, engineers and technical staff from a wide range of backgrounds. Some were from companies already using robots, while others wanted information about how robots could be used in their businesses.

Dr Oh says seminars at the seminar, including Mr Duncan Law, Dr Peter Atkinson and Mr Ken Wong, presented both technical and practical aspects of robotics, ranging from the basic systems to how robots should be selected for specific applications.

The seminar originally was planned for two days with an optional extra day of hands-on robot programming.

But demand for the hands-on day was so great it had to be extended to two days to allow all participants adequate time.

Law plugs in to future

Information networking is the watchword as Chisholm Institute of Technology Library moves into its next five years.

The library will seize opportunities offered by information technology and new management techniques to upgrade its activities within Chisholm, and in the wider community.

According to Institute Librarian, Mr Don Schauder, the first quarter in 1985 has seen fundamental change in the library’s approach to planning and organisation.

‘Two major factors have made this possible,’ Mr Schauder says.

‘These are the Chisholm Planning Document, and the readiness of library staff to re-assess their working methods and their role in the Institute within a “matrix style” organisational structure.

Under the guidance of the Library Policy Committee, library staff have been studying the Institute’s Corporate Plan, summarised in the Chisholm Planning Document, and recording the library objectives and programs that support each point in the plan.

Many of these programs are already in place, but others are ideas that need to be explored with other Chisholm departments and with business and community groups.

When the first draft is completed, the library’s response to the Chisholm Planning Document will be made available for widespread comment within the Institute. The response will demarcate the role of the library as an instrument of the Institute’s academic programs, and its involvement in the community.

‘Information networking is the key to the library’s internal and external relationships.

‘We want to work with others to see that appropriate information resources exist in our Institute and our region, and that they are accessible to those who need them,’ says Mr Schauder.

‘Within the Institute, we want to work with each academic area in building up Information and Resources teams, consisting of our staff and theirs. To generate the resources, environments and skills for the educational use of information in all forms, including on-line resources.

‘Externally, we want to make the expertise and facilities of Chisholm library available in co-operative programs with business, government and the community generally, particularly in the south-eastern and southern regions of the metropolitan area.

‘The move into external servicing will be facilitated by the newly created Division for Information Networking within the library.

‘This division will facilitate the development of self-supporting programs such as the creation and marketing of databases, on-line searching services, publishing a systems bulletin, service to smaller libraries and consultancy on records management problems.

‘Wherever possible activities of the division will be undertaken jointly with Chisholm academic departments and centres,’ Mr Schauder says.

Using its Data General Computer and ALIS software, Chisholm library already provides 16 on-line public access catalogue terminals at Caulfield and Frankston, a level of on-line provision among the best in Australia.

Access will be extended soon to enable users to consult the library’s system from terminals or microcomputers in their departments or at home.

Unlike other academic libraries which have received VPS-EC grants for automation, Chisholm and its library decided to self-finance this advanced system.

‘It was a daring step, but it was worth it,’ says Mr Schauder.

‘As a result of that and the smooth implementation of the system last year by library staff, we are now in a position to consider a wide range of opportunities for extending the system’s effectiveness and co-operative effort both within and outside the Institute, in the framework of the Institute’s Corporate Plan.

Squeal against funds squeeze, Council told

Chisholm and other Colleges of Advanced Education needed to look seriously in squeezing to avoid further real funding cuts, Academic Staff Representative, Mr Arthur Crook, told Council’s April meeting.

Mr Crook also said that Deans should be selected for specific rather than reducing teaching hours by up to 25 percent while maintaining educational standards.

But Mr Crook said there really was not much that could be done internally because the Institute had been squeezed for funds for so many years.

In any case, alternative teaching strategies involved in their own costs and would take time to develop and implement.

Mr Crook said an orchestrated campaign by CAEs and involving academic staff as well would be a good move.

He proposed that Council discuss the whole matter in detail ‘as soon as possible’. In the meantime, Mr Crook urged the President, Dr Clive Coogan, to take up the matter when he met the State Education Minister, Mr Ian Cathie.

‘We must make sure the Minister gets the message,’ Mr Crook said.

Other members of Council agreed, but felt the Institute must be seen to be operating efficiently as well.

‘Squealing is important, but it is only part of it,’ Mr Crook said.

‘We must demonstrate that we are attempting to spend our money as economically as possible as well,’ Mr Ken Green, former President, said.

The meeting was told that at least one other CAE, RMIT, was taking a similar approach to making its operations more economical so that the demands for further efficiencies without concomitant funding increases could be met.

Professor Bill Walker said there was a need to examine departments and courses individually — while most might be ‘over-studented’ there could well be some which effectively were underloaded.

Dr Croogan said two areas which could be looked at were computer teaching and rationalisation of courses so that similar courses were taught in common.

The Accreditation Board was concerned about the number of small courses.

In addition, there was the possibility of tele-education: the Foundation Dean of the Faculty of Technology, Dr Trenery Pearcy, had just completed a report which now was in the hands of Vice-Chancellor suggesting major savings could be made by adopting the tele-education concept.

Other Task Force recommendations included:

- That the Associate Director (Planning and Resources) prepare a co-ordinated strategy to increase the funding available to the Institute.

- That Cost Centres identify and reduce the amount of recurrent funding used to generate extraneous income by selling services to the public or other more appropriate charging system.

- That the 1986 budget made the Institute analyse fully the same relationship between non-direct and direct teaching costs, and that 84.54 percent and 76 percent (currently 34.08 and 7 percent) of non-academic staff are not subjected to excessive work loads because of budgetary pressures.

Frankston number

The new switchboard has been installed, and if everything happened which was supposed to happen in the last week, you should be able to call Frankston on its new number of 784 4211 by the time you read this.

With the new switchboard, direct dialing from outside extensions is possible.

Campus Manager, Mr Barry Bilham, tells everyone at both campuses to take a note of the new number, use it and spread the word.

In the meantime, anyone calling on the old number will be switched automatically to the new.
Declared status no panacea

Delivered status is no panacea for all ills and it will not necessarily mean course accreditation or re-accreditation will proceed any faster than at present, Council members have warned.

In fact, the within-Institute checks and balances in the accreditation process that has caused delays in making self-accrediting of courses a formal process than the current external accreditation.

In addition, the real costs to the Institute and the region of $250,000 a year, Mr Anthony Bailey told Council.

The warnings came when April Council reviewed a detailed discussion paper on declared status soon to be circulated within the Institute.

Council members praised the paper but asked for it to be revised in some areas, in particular to emphasise the challenge self-accreditation would receive academic staff.

The acceptance of declared status would mean Chisholm was asked to develop academic staff programs and events were as good as any in the world, Professor John Leary said.

In the higher degree area, work by Chisholm students would be subject to rigorous external scrutiny, and the Institute would be judged on the quality of that work.

President of Council, Dr Olive Coogan, said it was an expression of the VPSC Accreditation Committee, told Council that the process of Chisholm gaining self-accreditation status would be slowed down because of a glut of applications due to the Accreditation Board.

So many Colleges of Advanced Education were seeking self-accreditation that the Board was swamped.

In the meantime, the Academic Secretary, Mr Clive Coogan, of the declared status program, Mr Paul Rodan, of the Institute, has made a number of "positive advances" towards self-accreditation.

These include:

* The accreditation of two Master's degrees by coursework in Business Administration, with the first Master's by coursework to be offered in the Institute. These were a milestone in the academic standing of Chisholm, and would greatly enhance Chisholm's academic standing.

* The tougher approach of the Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission which now has a far more exacting scrutiny of the standards it requires in documentation of accreditation and re-accreditation submissions.

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Brits throw down mileage gauntlet

Chisholm faces a big new challenge this year in its annual assault on the world fuel economy record in the Shell Mileage Marathon in June.

The battle for supremacy is no longer a head-to-head contest between the enthusiasts of Chisholm's Mechanical Engineering Department and Ford Australia since the entry of a heavily sponsored Ford British car into the fray.

Running at a track in Britain, the Ford British car recorded an amazing 3800 miles per gallon (1145 kilometres per litre), 20 to 30 percent better than the best Australian cars.

One of the leaders of Chisholm's challenge, Mechanical Engineering Lecturer, Mr Paul Wellington, says Ford Britain's success was hardly surprising.

"They spent $80,000 plus on the car, including special tyres built for them and a CIBA-Geigy built body," he says.

In addition to the most expensive technology, the Ford British car had the advantage of running on a track which was much flatter and had only half the number of corners than the twisty, undulating Amaroo Park circuit near Sydney where the Shell Mileage Marathon takes place.

Chisholm's first challenge this year is to get its cars over the magic 3000 mpg mark. It just missed last year in coming second and third outright to the Ford Australian machine.

The next target is to knock off the Ford Australian car, which won last year's event with a world record of 3133 mpg in controversial circumstances where it failed by a metre or so to reach the finishing line after being baulked by another car on the run in.

After that, the Ford British figure is the challenge.

Chisholm has entered three cars this year - the two cars, Chisholm 82 and Chisholm 83, which did so well last year and a new, twin engine machine.

The dual engine car, with a larger engine to boost acceleration where needed and a smaller engine for running, is a doubtful starter however.

"The dual engine set up is very complex and is causing us lots of problems at this stage," Mr Wellington says.

The team of staff and students is also working on a super efficient 20cc fuel injected two stroke engine, but that will definitely not be ready for this year.

In the meantime, development work is continuing on the two existing cars.

"We're looking at fuel injection and improved aerodynamics with changes to the cars' canopies and fairings over the front wheels to improve our performance this year," Mr Wellington says.

"We aim to change the finishing order and get in front of Ford Australia this time."

Chisholm has been closing the gap on Ford, with a 3000-4000 mpg improvement last year (2900 mpg in practice and 2812 mpg in the event despite problems of dirt in the fuel line and a flat tyre while Ford's final figure was only 200 mpg better than it had done previously.

"But overtaking the Ford machine will be no easy task."

Like their competitors at Chisholm, the Ford Australian enthusiasts have been developing their machine on the smell of an oily rag.

"They are expected to be pretty miffed about losing their world record to the heavily sponsored British team and will be out for revenge."

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BRIEFLY

Visiting Chinese scholar

Ms Li Luqiong, a lecturer in environmental engineering at the Kunming Institute of Technology in China, is to be attached to the Centre for Applied Mathematical Modelling at Chisholm for one year as a visiting scholar.

Announcing Ms Li's visit at the April meeting of the Council, the Director, Mr Patrick Leary, said her choice of Chisholm as the place to work was a "magnificent portrayal of the international standing of CAMM."

Ms Li elected to work and study at CAMM on the advice of Dr William Marlatt, of Colorado State University, USA.
Third year ceramics. Ms Nicki Hataley, at work on one of the ‘trees’ for the ‘Changing Environment’ exhibition.

CAULFIELD ARTS CENTRE
CONSTANTIA DESIGNER FURNITURE
3134 6005 2093

POTTERY BY THANCOPUIE
BATSIKI FROM THE WOMEN
AT UTOPIA, 7-16 May, attracting first professional Aboriginal potter, plus batsikis from the women at Utopia station.
FROM FRANCE JEAN-CLAUDE PICOT 19-23 May, oils, watercolours and lithographs. The artist will be present at the opening on Saturday 19 May, 2pm.
BOOK AUCI'O N 20-22 May, at the Caulfield Arts Centre, 441 Inkerman Road, Caulfield, phone 594 3277. Open 10am-5pm, Monday to Friday, 1-6pm, Saturday and Sunday.

AITEA WORKSHOP
A two day workshop on performance appraisal and performance management, for administrative staff with staff supervision responsibilities.
Wednesday and Thursday, 23 and 24 October. The workshop is limited to 30 participants. Applications close 9 August. For more information, contact the AITEA School, Assistant Registrar (Student Centre), La Trobe University.

ASTHMA
The Asthma Foundation of Victoria's Lilian Ross Memorial Asthma Research Travel Grant of up to $2000 is available to assist a medical or scientific researcher to travel overseas to continue research or to present a paper to a recognised international conference. Closing date: 31 May.

CHEMISTRY
Applications are invited for the 1985 Grimmade Prize in Industrial Chemistry, valued at about $2000. Candidates should submit an original thesis embodying results of research in some area of industrial chemistry within the past five years. Closing date: 1 March, 1986.

SCIENCE
David Syme Research Prize
Awarded for the most distinguished contribution to biology, chemistry, geology or physics during the past two years. The prize will be about $2000 in 1986. Closing date: 1 March 1986.

ELECTRONICS
Philips International Institute of Technological Studies offers opportunities for promising young graduate engineers and scientists with a high level of achievement in a field of study related to electronics.

Students completing a one year course receive the Philips International Institute Diploma, while those completing a three semester (17 month course) gain the Masters of Electronic Engineering degree from the Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Co-operation. In each area of study is English, air fares and living allowances are paid and further assistance may be provided.

Closing date 1 August.

HISTORY
The National War Memorial research grants scheme offers grants-in-aid of $3000/annum, the C.E.W. Bean post-graduate scholarship (conditions similar to the Commonwealth post-graduate scheme), and a Special Project Fellowship (approximately $25,000/annum) to a university post-doctoral fellowships. The Grants-in-aid and the C.E.W. Bean Scholarship are open to Australian citizens with a special interest in Australian military, national and international history, while the Special Project Fellowship is awarded for research into either military or Australian history. Applications for 1986 must be submitted by June this year.

PARTICIPATION, EQUITY AND TECHNOLOGY
The Federal Department of Education is seeking external consultants to undertake research on ‘Ways in which the new technologies can contribute to the goals of the Participation and Equity Program’. Proposals need to be in by 29 April.

POETRY
The Maltara 1985 Poetry Competition is being run by the University of Newcastle and the Hunter District Water Board offers a first prize of $2000 and other prizes of $1500 plus paid publication in the annual anthology for an unpublished poem or group of poems of less than 50 lines.

Closing date: 31 May.

For more information and application forms contact the Development Director, Dr Bill Briggs, in room A1.12 or phone ext. 2111, Caulfield campus.

Old dogs teaching each other new tricks is the aim of a people scheme now running in Melbourne under the name of ‘The University of the Third Age’ or U3A. Launched this year following stubbornly resisting the advance of wide variety of courses asked for means they are always on

way people in their 60s and 70s are taking to computing, Ms Whyte says. ‘They are showing less resistance to computing than many people in the middle age group I have seen who are stubbornly resistant to advanced computers despite pressure at work and from their children at home’. Computing is very much encouraged at U3A although nothing is compulsory, Ms Whyte adds because of its potential both as a teaching administrative and a teaching tool in enabling the project to operate. Ms Whyte says the U3A members have brought an enormous range of talent and expertise to the project, but the wide variety of courses asked for means they are always on

look out for more people. Anyone interested in joining can contact the School for further information by phoning Ms Whyte at the Hawthorn Community Education Centre, on 819 8824.

PUBLIC NOTICES
The Government of Victoria is seeking external consultants to undertake research on ‘Ways in which the new technologies can contribute to the goals of the Participation and Equity Programme’. Proposals need to be in by 29 April.

Caulfield campus.

U3A WHERE old dogs learn new tricks

CLASSIFIEDS
FOR SALE
Seiko Data 2000 digital watch
Comes with instructions and box. New in case, $120. Contact Jeff Hosegood extension 2121.

HOUSE TO SHARE
Chisholm Art and Design will also be on display at the State Bank gallery, at the corner of Market Street and William Street in Melbourne from 13-31 May. Five students, Michelle Hester, Nicki Hataley, Mira Mina, Rachel Stevens, and Lynn Wilmott have been selected to present their ‘Ceramic Institution’ as representatives of the Victorian Ceramic Group. The major work is designed to highlight the challenge they face. It will be seen by the 40,000 people who pass through the World Trade Centre in Melbourne each day.

The installation is planned to coincide with the Fourth National Ceramic Congress to be held at Melbourne University from 12-18 May. About 700 delegates from around the nation will attend the congress, hosted by the Victorian Ceramic Group.

U3A WHERE old dogs learn new tricks

PUBLIC NOTICES
FACULTY OF TECHNOLOGY ELECTION OF STAFF MEMBERS
I declare that the poll, which opened on Sunday 29 April, 1985, is now closed. The following persons were elected:

JEFFREY HANSON
P. K Rodan
Deputy Returning Officer

Conference Centre available.
The Institute of Educational Administration now has a residential conference centre at Geelong available for hire.
The centre caters for up to 200 people in the large conference room and dining room, and 84 people in motel style shared accommodation.

Administrative and teaching consultancy services available.
For further information phone the Centre at (052) 26 2121, or check File no. 58287.