



This is the **November 2008** E-Bulletin from FACE (Forum for Access and Continuing Education), offered to practitioners, policy-makers, researchers and others with an interest in access, widening participation and lifelong learning. This message is sent to colleagues in the sector, members and non-members alike. This FACE e-bulletin will be sent to you each month. If you would prefer not to receive it please contact Jim Tate at James.Tate@uwe.ac.uk and your details will be removed immediately.

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www.f-a-c-e.org.uk

Register NOW for FACE 2009

It's that time of year when we go live with the FACE conference website for the coming summer and we can all begin to look ahead to another great conference. We're really excited about the 2009 conference not least because FACE is in the perfect position to kick-start the debate about the need for a new agenda for lifelong learning. Executive member Pete Jones from Staffordshire University is leading the conference preparations and don't forget for those that book early there is a free publication - see the details below and get booking right away!

Conference 2009

Towards a New Agenda for Lifelong Learning: Access, Diversity and Participation

1st -3rd July, Staffordshire University

Full conference details are now available on the [FACE CONFERENCE 2009 web page](#).

Registration can only be made online

ONLINE REGISTRATION FOR FACE 2009

Papers and workshop presentations are sought on any or all of the conference themes. Papers and workshops should address the over-arching theme of a new agenda for lifelong learning.

ONLINE ABSTRACT SUBMISSION FORM



Go to

[Full programme details](#)

[Call for Papers](#)

[Conference Themes](#)

[Keynote Speakers](#)

[Early Bird Bookings](#)

All bookings made prior to the **28th February 2009** will receive a free copy of 'Marginality and Difference in Education and Beyond' edited by Michael Reiss, Renee Depalma & Elizabeth Atkinson published by Trentham books at £18.99

Conference Organisor, Peter Jones Telephone: 01782 294941 Email: pete.jones@staffs.ac.uk



Teaching English at the College of the Marshall Islands in the Pacific

There are currently opportunities to work at the College of the Marshall Islands, teaching English. The work at CMI involves students for whom English is a foreign language, and nearly all of our new students test into remedial (or developmental) levels, and it is especially challenging for them to be studying at their only local college (first-level university in the US system) at a US-accredited school with English as the primary medium of instruction. And there are cultural and economic constraints as well.

Teachers here must have a master's degree, or the equivalent, in a field related to this type of language work. Living in Micronesia can be a challenge, especially for anyone who is not accustomed to the tropics or to small-island life. Interestingly, in the past we have had other British working here. One English teacher, no longer with us, was from Sunderland, and one of our current IT specialists is from Newcastle. Both adjusted well.

The academic year here corresponds with the US August to May schedule. The spring term begins in early January, so anyone interested would have to get started immediately with email contact, documentation, etc. For full detailed information go to [job openings on the college website](#).

Best regards,

Ted Stepp

Instructor of English, College of the Marshall Islands

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Where are the Marshall Islands?



Speakers Corner



As a member-oriented organisation FACE would like to invite individual colleagues to have their say on any issue of concern in UK education policy and practice. This is a purely personal point of view and should not be thought to represent any institution, organisation, or official body. To have your say, email James.Tate@uwe.ac.uk

This month's contribution is from **Steve Lake** who comments upon the issue of **Faith Schools**.



Respect All Faiths *And* None.

I struggle with the fact that my daughter is forced to attend religious assemblies or be excluded from her peer group. I have argued with largely sympathetic members of the local authority about this to no avail. The continued requirement for religious observance is bad enough, but I was appalled recently by the railroading of a decision to award two new schools in my area to a religious group rather than an open and accountable partnership of universities, colleges and local businesses.

What is this obsession with 'faith' in schools? The arguments seem to stem from two premises: i. that faith schools (somehow) get better results and ii. that codes of conduct are stronger because they are faith based. Both arguments appear to be nothing more than unfounded assertions; faith not fact.

Do faith schools get better results? Dr Sandie Schagen, Principal Research Officer at the National Foundation for Educational Research told the Parliamentary Education and Skills Select Committee in 2003: "Our finding is that basically, when you apply value-added analysis [...] the difference is based on intake." In other words, the same socio-economic factors that apply elsewhere.

Similarly, there is no real evidence to suggest that student behaviour is improved in faith schools. Arguments for faith schools have also been put forward on grounds of parental choice. Yet this seems to be predicated on a crude notion of demand that still favours majorities over minorities, exclusion over inclusion.

The hierarchy of schools based on performance (heavily based on parental income in state as well as independent sectors) is set to continue and for many, the false equation: faith school = 'better behaviour, higher standards, greater achievement' is unquestionable. The subsequent distorting effects on local provision are as well known as the excruciating circus of the irreligious attending church to aid their application.

All parents should have the right to bring up their children in the belief system of their choice (hopefully providing the child with the right to freely decide as they mature). This should be an inalienable right for **ALL** parents and as such publicly funded schooling should not seek to provide this. Yet, this government is insistent in satisfying what is at best a limited demand to the exclusion of religious and non-religious minorities, individuals as well as groups.

With the seemingly inevitable decline of the secular comprehensive ideal, where can one really go to in the publicly funded education sector to ensure a good school that has an inclusive ethos, respecting those of 'all faiths and none'? As a committed humanist I find myself in a minority, without a large multi-national organisation (church) to lobby for me or a local community of fellow (non)-believers to look to for solidarity. And my choices are dwindling as every year passes.

Dr Steve Lake,
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New part time research degree in widening participation

Staffordshire University Business School is offering a new 4-year part time professional research degree - Wider Participation in Learning. The course will enable experienced education professionals working in the field of widening participation and related fields to obtain relevant training and new knowledge and skills. The programme will be of interest to those engaged in initiatives to support widening participation in HE, Extended Schools development staff in schools and Local Authorities, Youth and Community Development workers, Sure Start staff, LA Advisors with school or community responsibilities, senior school staff and teachers with responsibilities for community learning.

For further information contact Professor Jean Mangan (j.t.mangan@staffs.ac.uk or telephone 01782 294096)

What's in the News?

Have you seen John Denham's recent announcement about **major change for UK universities** ?

For the latest UK Education headlines and stories [go to the FACE News Feeds page](#) where you'll find the online news feeds of several of the sources listed below gathered together on one page for easy access.

The Guardian <http://education.guardian.co.uk>

The Independent <http://news.independent.co.uk/education>

The BBC http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/education/default.stm

The Times http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/education

The Times Higher Education <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk>

DCSF News Centre <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/newslist.cgi>

DIUS News Distribution Service <http://nds.coi.gov.uk/environment/dius/>

LSC News <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/News>

If you wish to respond to anything in this E-bulletin or contribute to the December issue, please email Jim at James.Tate@uwe.ac.uk