

# CEIC AROUND THE WORLD

Recent months have seen yet another busy period of Study Centre visits, with teaching taking place in Dubai, Vienna, Brussels, Bangkok and Shanghai. As ever, this could not have happened without the tremendous support of our local coordinators, so a very big heartfelt 'Thank You' to everyone concerned.

Upcoming visits are planned to Dubai between September 21-24 ('Managing Human Resources in Education') and Bangkok between 24-26 November ('Education in an International Context'). We also have plans to teach units in Singapore and Shanghai later this year so please watch our website for further details.

On 31 July Mike Fertig will be ending his period as Director of Studies for the Advanced Courses Programme, to be replaced by Dr Chris James (pictured below). Chris James has recently returned to the University of Bath, having been here previously before moving to the University of Glamorgan. We are delighted to have Chris back on the team and look forward to working with him again.



Thanks to Mike for all his work as Director of Studies; as regular readers will know, these administrative posts rotate regularly among academic staff—so we're pleased to say that Mike will continue to be centrally involved in Masters teaching and supervision across the various dimensions of the programme.

## **"Bye, Bye, Blackboard" (... and "Hello Moodle"!)**

After several years experimenting with virtual learning environments (VLEs), the University of Bath has decided not to continue using the Blackboard system (produced and licensed by a US company and used in many UK universities) and move to Moodle - an 'open source' (i.e. free!) system. This decision has major implications for the university as it responds to the challenges of e-learning in the 21st century. Apart from the short term issues of 'migration' of courses from Blackboard to Moodle, there is the need to develop a strategy for the longer term. In the Department of Education we have used Blackboard for a number of courses from PGCE through to EdD. The 'Technologies for Learning' MA unit makes key use of Blackboard in unit teaching - the medium is the message! - and we now have to develop a new Moodle version ready for Summer School this year. Moodle claims to offer significant advantages (apart from cost) in terms of interaction between users and its 'social constructivist pedagogy' - we will see how true these turn out to be in practice but initial student response is encouraging. It would be interesting to know how schools are responding to the increasing availability of VLEs like Blackboard and Moodle. We know of at least one international school that is abandoning all use of commercial software in favour of open source alternatives - Linux operating system instead of Windows and Open Office instead of Microsoft Office. This school is also using Moodle to develop e-learning. We would like to hear from those of you teaching in international school settings about what you are doing. Are VLEs being used? What does e-learning look like in your school? Perhaps you could write a short note for INTERCOM?!

## **FORTHCOMING STUDY CENTRES**

*See also next page*

**26 - 29 August 2006**

Tanglin Trust School, Singapore  
Assessment of Pupil Achievement

**21 - 24 September 2006**

The English College, Dubai  
Managing Human Resources in Education

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## Bangkok Study Centre



Students at the Bangkok Study Centre held in June with Mary Hayden

Between 3 and 5 June, Mary Hayden taught the Research Methods in Education unit at our Bangkok Study Centre. Located at the New International School of Thailand (NIST), this Study Centre is now one of our most well established, having first got off the ground in 1995. Popular with teachers based in a number of countries in the region (not least for the shopping available in Bangkok itself!), the NIST Study Centre continues to attract participants from a wide range of international schools. On this occasion 12 teachers from locations as far away as Ho Chi Minh City attended, as well as from a number of international schools in Bangkok itself. Since it was four years since my last visit to NIST, writes Mary, (when Jeff Thompson and I participated in a graduation celebration held at the J W Marriott hotel for those Bangkok-based teachers who had graduated with the Bath Masters), I was delighted to be able to return – and to see the very impressive developments to the NIST campus to emerge during that period. Our thanks to Malcolm Nicolson for his efficient organisation of all arrangements for this unit, and as ever to NIST for hosting it. We look forward to continuing collaboration!

### NEXT STUDY CENTRE AT NIST, BANGKOK

**24 - 26 November 2006**

New International School of Thailand, Bangkok  
Education in an International Context

## Shanghai Study Centre



Students at Shanghai on Understanding Learners and Learning unit taught by Paul Denley

*How can we understand how children learn?*

*What is 'brain-based learning'?*

*What part do learning theories play?*

These and other questions were addressed over a busy weekend in Shanghai in the second unit to be taught at the new Study Centre in China. The group of students came from schools in Shanghai and from other cities in China. For some this was the first unit; others were further on in their studies. The mix of backgrounds and experience was particularly valuable with this unit as different cultural perspectives are important in developing ideas about learning. The sessions were held at the Yew Wah International Education and Training Center, which is linked to the Yew Chung Education Foundation and its two international schools in Shanghai. The visit was organised by Yolanda Pu who is the Study Centre Co-ordinator. Paul Denley, the unit tutor, enjoyed his first visit to Shanghai and managed to visit a genuine Chinese teahouse among the modern high rise buildings and abundance of MacDonalds and Starbucks! Shanghai is a lively city and it is good to have a Study Centre there. Decisions are being made about future units to be taught at this Study Centre, so keep an eye on our website for dates.