

PLENARY STUDENT SPECIFICITIES

Questions/Discussion

For Adele – Beauty and the Beat

A question was asked about the Brownlow Medal winner and his partner who was wearing a 'provocative dress'. This is not clearly a competition – is it seeking acceptance?

Adele said that she doesn't agree that women seek acceptance in this way and believes that it is more complex, involving notions of desire and issues such television and sponsorship.

For Tim Hart – Resources For Students With Disabilities

Families and Disabilities

There was discussion about students with family members who have disabilities and the fact that there is no systematic way of addressing their issues in the university context.

Tim said that Disability by association is covered in the DDA. One family member may have high support needs which affects the normal functioning of the family. People like this should be considered in the same way as people with a disability.

Disabilities not uniform

It was observed that there is sometimes a tendency to see students with disabilities as a uniform category, when the reality is that different individuals have different experiences. This is represented by the responses that are offered by Universities. For example, students have experienced problems with the Disability Learning Unit (DLU), which has a blanket rule of two week extensions only.

A more flexible approach is needed. One-size solutions don't work, especially for students with disabilities.

Disabilities and Housing

Physical disabilities Australia has a checklist for housing.

RESSOs and Disabilities

It was highlighted that caseworkers often have little to no training in dealing with people with mental disabilities. There was a case at RMIT when one student is presenting to about 8 different caseworkers under two names. Another student has presented with extreme paranoia. In response, RMIT is trying to organise disability training.

For Liz - Student Accommodation (co-operatives)

Student organization accommodation provision versus University

The original project was for youth housing project which DUSA took on originally as a twelve month period. Now been running 6 years, charging students peppercorn rates-

(\$11 a year). This commitment is achievable by student organizations and can ensure students are not charged commercial high cost rates.

It was noted that when Sydney University Village was set up there was supposed to be allocation of low cost housing that didn't happen. Sydney University Village is run by a private company on University land.

Challenges

The biggest problem now is getting students to self identify as financially disadvantaged.

The future

DUSA is looking at provide housing to students who are eligible for the new Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarships but ultimately miss out.