

# Learning from each other

## Developing peer case studies to support law and language interdisciplinary teaching

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# Agenda

Origins and motivations

What we did

Implications and learnings

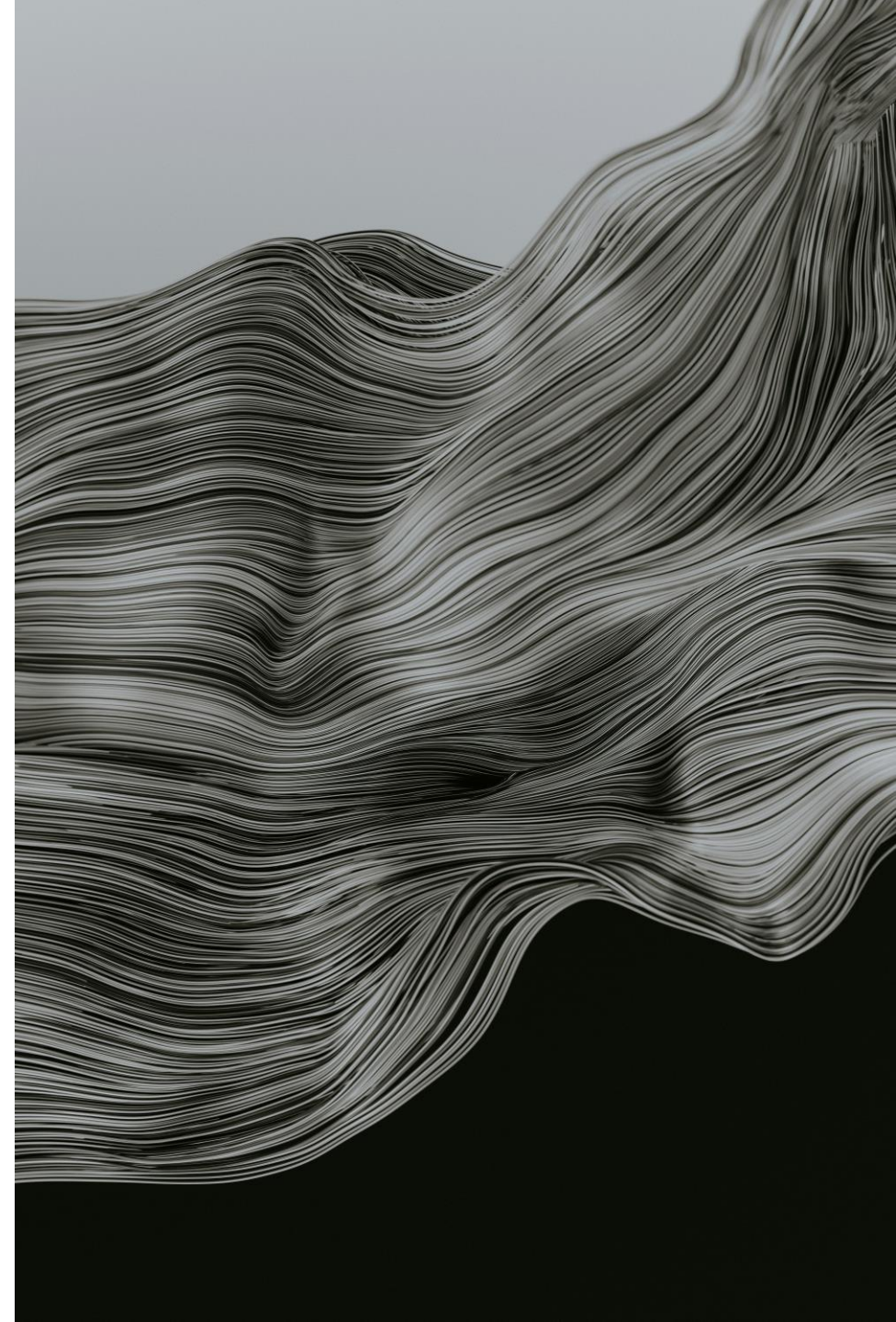
- teaching methods

- supporting and engaging diverse students

- innovative and critical curriculum development

The internship experience

Main takeaways and where to next



# Origins and motivations

- Law & Linguistics Interdisciplinary Research Network
- Est. 2019, now 270+ members, 46 countries
- Facilitate interdisciplinary language & law focus in teaching
- Activities:
  - NSW/ACT audit (Grey & Smith-Khan 2021a, b)
  - Conference panels, Network workshops
  - Blog post profiles (Smith-Khan 2025), anecdotal reports
- 2025 Internship Project
  - ANU LAWS4230: Self-Arranged Law Internship'



# What we did

## General and targeted call-out

LLIRN mailing list + targeted individual invitations

## Resource collection and development

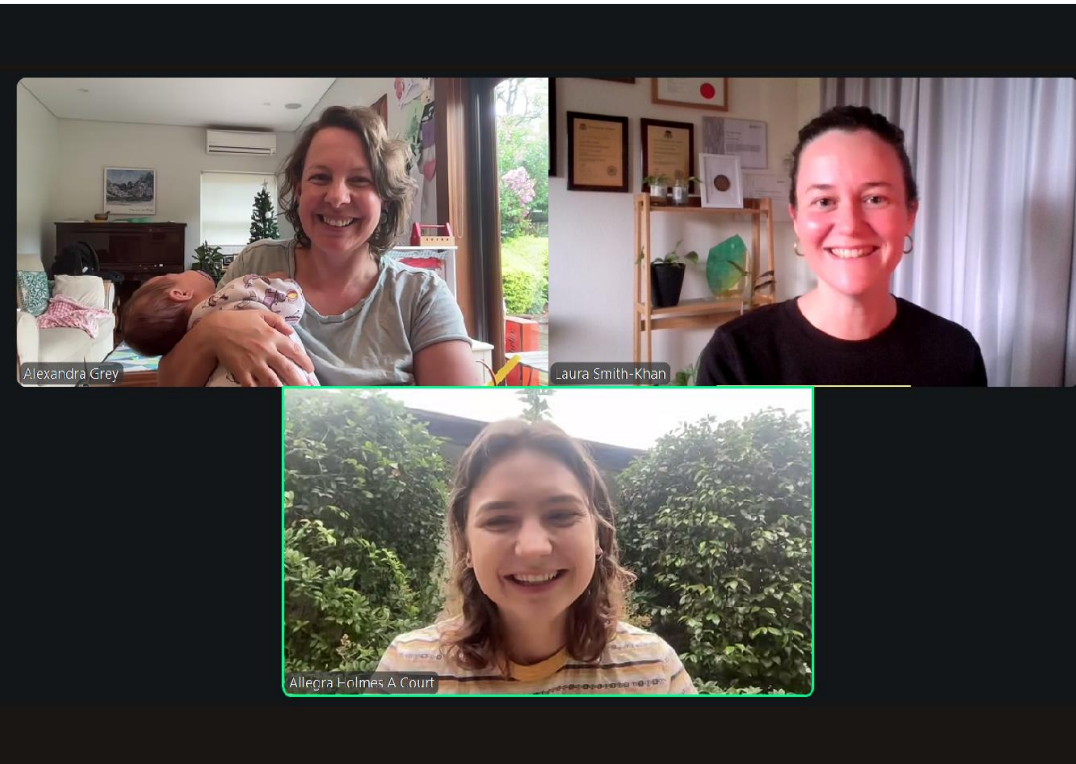
Semi-structured case study interviews + teaching material collection and collation

## Analysis and transformation

Bi-weekly team practical, analytical and critical reflection (de)briefs + case study drafting, feedback (participants and supervisors) and revision

## Internship assessment tasks

Internship report and reflection piece



# What we did

<b>Participant</b>	<b>University and Faculty</b>	<b>Course of Focus</b>	<b>Extent of ‘Law and Linguistics’ Focus</b>
Dr Harold Koch	Australian National University, Linguistics	LING2016: <i>Language and Society in Indigenous Australia.</i>	One week of course content titled ‘Language and Law’
Dr Shunichi Ishihara	Australian National University, Linguistics	LING3032: <i>Forensic Linguistics: Voice and Text Comparison.</i>	Dedicated Forensic Linguistics Course
Michael Carne	Australian National University, Linguistics	LING2105: <i>Language and the Law: Introduction to Forensic Linguistics</i>	Dedicated Forensic Linguistics Course
Associate Professor Joe McIntyre	University of South Australia, Law	LAWS 1032: <i>Torts</i> and LAWS 3006: <i>Administrative Law</i>	Compulsory Law Courses
Dr Cleo Hansen-Lowry	University of Tasmania, Law	LAW301: <i>Administrative Law and Applied Statutory Interpretation</i>	Compulsory Law Course
Professor Mehera San Roque	University of New South Wales, Law	LAWS2351: <i>Court Process, Evidence and Proof</i>	Compulsory Law Course
Dr Brett Todd	University of Technology Sydney, Law	78241: <i>Reading the Law: Language, Power and Ideology</i>	Elective Law Course
Professor Desmond Manderson	Australian National University, Law	LAWS4286: <i>Literature, Law and Human Rights</i>	Elective Law Course

# What we did

## Law and Language

Sharing research, news and events related to law and language

## Teaching Case Studies

In 2025, the LLIRN ran its first internship program, with the goal of developing a language focus into their teaching. To this end, Network intern, Allegra Holmes à Court, interviewed LLIRN members working in different disciplines across different Australian universities to develop a set of case studies. Interview participants also shared some of the learning materials they have used in their teaching. You can find these in the [Teaching Resources Library](#).

You can read the teaching case studies via the links below:

[Bringing a 'Language and the Law' focus into LING2016: Dr Harold Koch on Teaching 'Language and Society in Indigenous Australia'](#)

[Bringing an Awareness of Language to Legal Education: Dr Joe McIntyre on Teaching Law as a Discursive Enterprise](#)

[Discourse, Trust and Openness: Professor Desmond Manderson's Interdisciplinary Legal Pedagogy](#)

[Integrating Interdisciplinary Research into Evidence Law: Associate Professor Mehera San Roque's Collaborative Approach](#)

[Making the Implicit Explicit: Dr Cleo Hansen-Lohrey on Integrating Language Awareness into Legal Education](#)

[Teaching a Forensic Linguistics Minor: Challenges and Opportunities for Collaboration \(with Professor Shunichi Ishihara and Dr Michael Carne\)](#)

[Teaching 'Reading the Law: Language, Power and Ideology' — Dr Brett Todd on Building a Collaborative, Inclusive Classroom](#)



## Discourse, Trust and Openness: Professor Desmond Manderson's Interdisciplinary Legal Pedagogy

*Professor Desmond Manderson interviewed by Allegra Holmes à Court*

Professor Desmond Manderson ('Des') holds a joint appointment in the Australian National University College of Law, Governance and Policy and the College of Arts and Social Sciences. Des has over three decades of teaching both compulsory law and elective courses at an undergraduate and postgraduate level, and has developed a suite of electives such as [Law and Art](#), [Literature, Law and Human Rights](#), and [Leviathan, Art and Law: Constituting the Body Politic](#), alongside the compulsory [Legal Theory](#) course. Des describes interdisciplinarity as a "very strong and overriding influence," noting that "language and literature," while not part of every course, have been "really core" to his approach.



Professor Desmond Manderson

## Creating an Interdisciplinary Course

Des traces his first interdisciplinary course to an experiment in collaboration. "When I first started teaching courses of my own design," he recalls, "I taught a course called Law and Discourse, and that was really law, language and philosophy". Co-taught with a continental philosopher and friend, the course was framed around two central ideas: judgment and expression. "We thought, what is it that literature in particular and law in particular have in common? It was the idea of judgment and the idea of expression as the mode of speaking about these things. So that was our framework". The course drew on key continental philosophical texts — Derrida, Butler, and others — and established the foundation for Des's later interdisciplinary teaching.

## Teaching Resources Library

Below is a list of materials that colleagues report using in their law and language-related teaching. If you are looking for ideas for materials you can incorporate into your teaching, you may find these useful. To find out more about how some of them have been used, you can also explore our [Teaching Case Studies](#), where colleagues discuss their teaching experiences and innovations.

This library is a living and evolving resource: we'd love recommendations for more materials to include. Also please do let us know if you find these resources helpful – we'd love to hear about how you use them!

## Overview texts in law and linguistics

▶ [Click to see list of resources](#)

## Language in courts and tribunals

▶ [Click to see list of resources](#)

## Language in police encounters

▶ [Click to see list of resources](#)

## Language as forensic evidence

▶ [Click to see list of resources](#)

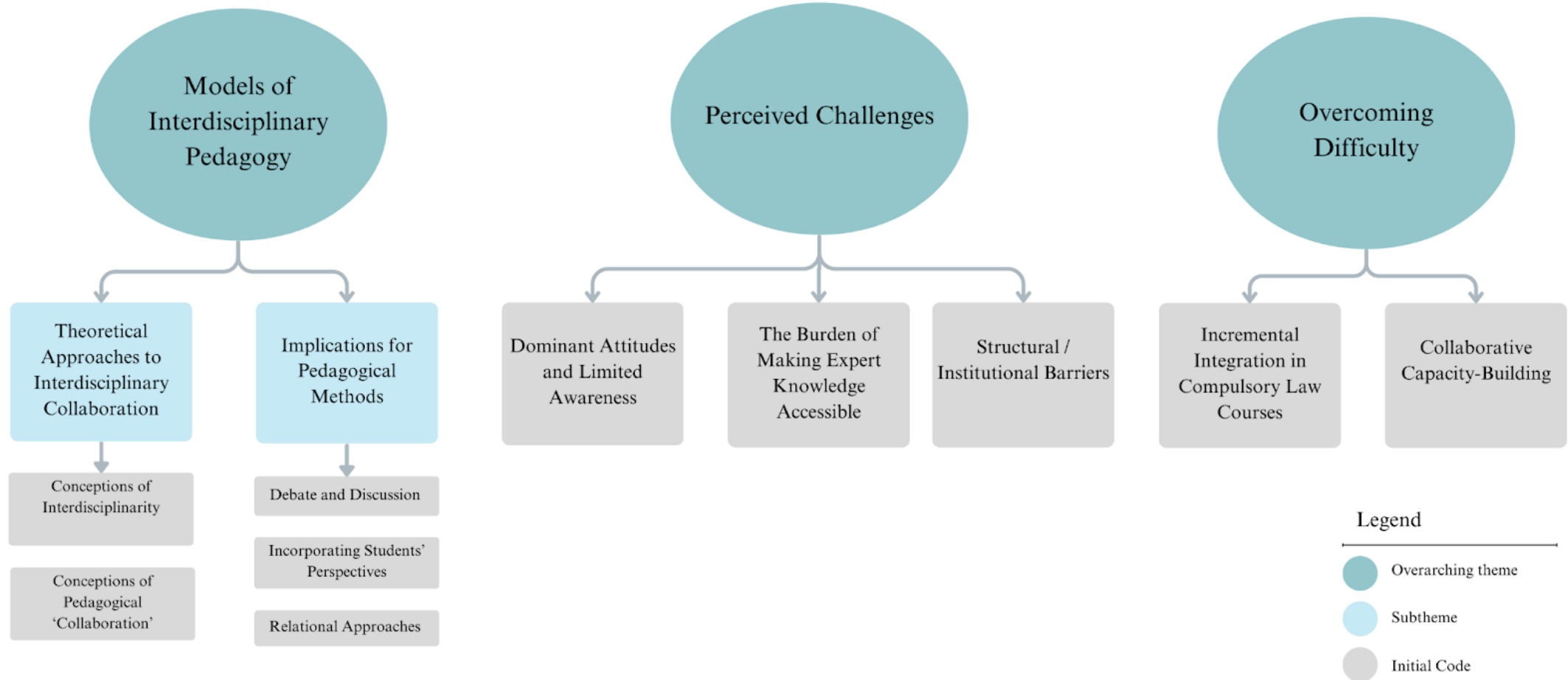
## The language of legal documents

▶ [Click to see list of resources](#)

## Language rights and policy

<https://lawandlanguage.org/resources/>

# Implications and learnings



# Implications and learnings

- **Teaching methods**

- Collaboration (differences in co-teaching vs guest lecturing)
- 'performing law' – *vocalisation*, repetition & mooting
- Integrating student experiences and linguistic repertoires

- **Supporting and engaging diverse students**

- Designing units to accommodate diverse disciplinary foundations
- Celebrating and mobilizing students' knowledge and lived experience

- **Innovative and critical curriculum development**

- Incremental integration in compulsory law units
- Collaboration and collective capacity-building

“The way that I’m addressing them, the way that I’m modulating my language, word choices, tonality, all of that becomes the performance of that learning space”



- Dr Joe McIntyre (Adelaide) on 'performing' law



“although this is a 3000-level course, I call it ‘introduction’... practically speaking”, he says. “You have to build up the knowledge and the skills from zero”

- Prof Shunichi Ishihara (ANU)

“Some students have class after class where they’re just excluded and minimised, marginalised. It takes really little to bring it in”

**-Dr Brett Todd (UTS)**



“there’s people in the room who might be able to speak to this with experience if not expertise, I think that validates their position”

- Assoc. Prof Mehera San Roque (UNSW)



“While we have support for interdisciplinary research generally – there’s a lot of talk around supporting that – the structures of the university sometimes make it difficult to do interdisciplinary teaching”

- **Dr Cleo Hansen-Lohrey (UTas)**





“there's no interdisciplinarity without collaboration, no collaboration without trust, and no trust without some kind of friendship”

- Prof Des Manderson (ANU)

# The internship experience

- Coming 'full circle' – getting to be involved in a field I've been interested in since early in my degree.
- Learning from discussions with Laura, Alex and the participants – connecting with academics at ANU and building new relationships (e.g. Joe McIntyre)
- Reflecting on different perspectives about interdisciplinary teaching, and the common challenges faced by the participants
- Qualitative research skills: e.g. interviewing, thematic analysis, writing a 4,000 word research essay

# Main takeaways and where to next

## Peer models can:

- Motivate and support innovative teaching practices
- Stimulate critical discussion and reflection
- Strengthen community-building

## Next steps:

- Develop and share formal outputs
- Replicate or extend initiative





# References

## **lawandlanguage.org**

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