



Society of Mining Professors
Societät der Bergbaukunde

20th Annual Meeting

Sydney, Australia

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Opening Address

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2008/09 SOMP President,
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Executive Director, Mining Education Australia



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Societät der Bergbaukunde





UNSW
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Welcome



- On behalf of the UNSW Mining Engineering staff; and the wider Mining Education Australia (MEA) academic fraternity –
- Welcome to Australia!



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In spite of the tyranny of distance for so many; and the global financial crisis,

We have here today:

- over 40 delegates
- representing 21 different countries
- from 6 different continents

- a true international meeting



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What is SOMP?

- The Society of Mining Professors/Societät der Bergbaukunde is designed to be a vibrant global Society, representing the majority of minerals academics. The purpose of the Society is to:
 - promote Mining Engineering as an engineering discipline,
 - to facilitate information exchange, research and teaching collaboration and joint action among its members.



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More specifically the Society will be committed to:

- Ensuring that university based education at the highest level in those disciplines concerned with the provision of mineral products from the crust of the earth continues to be available to those who wish to avail themselves of it.
- Ensuring that advancement, through research, of the scientific and engineering knowledge and processes in the areas of relevance to the provision of mineral products continues.
- Establishing a network of academics involved in achieving the above goals.
- Enhancing the image of the minerals-producing industries, promoting development of educational courses within these disciplines and fostering pride in the disciplines.
- Establishing and maintaining ongoing contacts with the global mineral industry players.
- Promoting co-operation in educational and research programmes and identifying co-operative research opportunities.



After 20 years, what is our
scorecard?



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Score

- Ensuring that university based education at the highest level in those disciplines concerned with the provision of mineral products from the crust of the earth continues to be available to those who wish to avail themselves of it. **? /10**
- Ensuring that advancement, through research, of the scientific and engineering knowledge and processes in the areas of relevance to the provision of mineral products continues. **? /10**
- Establishing a network of academics involved in achieving the above goals. **? /10**
- Enhancing the image of the minerals-producing industries, promoting development of educational courses within these disciplines and fostering pride in the disciplines. **? /10**
- Establishing and maintaining ongoing contacts with the global mineral industry players. **? /10**
- Promoting co-operation in educational and research programmes and identifying co-operative research opportunities. **? /10**



SOMP Report Card

- Lots of potential
- Could do better



Our theme for this meeting:

Looking to the future



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Looking to the future

- We need to become an active, and truly international network of mining academics
- Just as the minerals industry is made up of global companies and partnerships
- So too, the education sector must go global, and SOMP is the ideal vehicle to achieve this
 - More than just an informal network that meets once/year
 - We must make strategic, global initiatives in our education sector



How to move forward?

- It is one thing to look to the future,
- but we must move forward and embrace the future with both hands!

- In forming the program of SOMP 2009, we have tried to do this, but it requires commitment and involvement from ALL delegates



Some themes of our program

- Understanding industry needs
- How best to do this
- How to make our educational curricula dynamic and able to embrace these industry needs, for example
 - Automation
 - Sustainable mining practices (and all related issues)
 - Modern management approaches (people, risks etc)
- The power, or potential of university research to work with industry



Some themes of our program

- Attracting and retaining new, young academic staff
- Finding these people
- Attracting them
- Challenging them
- Rewarding and retaining them



Some themes of our program

- Educational challenges
- Regional capacity building and networking
- Very few mining departments have a full complement of mining skills and experience
- So why not tap into experience elsewhere
 - we should not work in silos
 - Share staff
 - Exchange staff
 - Block teach, or offer distance delivery
- Greater use of technology
- Opportunities for shared course development



Our Australian MEA example



- Interactive teaching facilities
- Use of podcast lectures
- Shared teaching tasks
- Offering teaching modules internationally
 - By direct involvement, or
 - By licensing teaching resource material
- Role for virtual reality (VR) as an effective teaching and learning media



Some themes of our program

- Research
- What is the true power/selling point of university research?
- What models are there for industry support/collaboration?
- What can we do as a collective of university researchers?



A common question for the meeting?

- What role could SOMP play in all these endeavours?
- This question will be asked in each of the individual workshop sessions, but will then be revisited on Tuesday morning.



Outcomes?

- The success of this meeting rests with all of you
- We are looking for total involvement and hard work over the next few days
- We then want to develop a roadmap to take SOMP forward into the next 20 years



Thank you, and may we have a successful meeting

Bruce Hebblewhite



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