

“As an Australian currently living in China, I’m evidence of CILIP’s growing international reach.”

K&IM Matters

# Educating knowledge managers

**I**’m very pleased to join the new committee for the Knowledge & Information Management (K&IM) Special Interest Group (SIG), having been introduced to CILIP last year by Luke Stevens-Burt, Assistant Director, Member Services. As an Australian currently living in China, I’m evidence of CILIP’s growing international reach.

CILIP has very quickly impressed me as an organisation because of its professionalism, membership strength, continuing professional development (CPD) activities, and effective advocacy.

## Accredited KM courses

I have a special interest in an aspect of CILIP’s CPD work – the potential accreditation of knowledge management (KM) courses. This interest comes from being both the Editor and Lead Writer of *RealKM Magazine* which recently launched the RealKM Open KM Syllabus, and a teacher at Shanxi University in northern China, where I’ve developed and taught an introductory KM subject as part of the undergraduate library and information science courses.

The RealKM Open KM Syllabus ([bit.ly/2CbQvJl](http://bit.ly/2CbQvJl)) is a new initiative which attempts to systematically describe the themes and topics required for a fully-rounded education in knowledge management (KM) theory and practice.

I developed the Shanxi University introductory KM subject using basic elements of the RealKM Open KM Syllabus, and taught it in the past semester (the first semester of the 2017-18 academic year). The subject was effective and well received. From feedback and my own reflections, I’m going to make some tweaks to the subject resources I developed and then make them available as open

educational resources (OERs) alongside the RealKM Open KM Syllabus.

I’ve also received approval from Shanxi University in regard to my proposal for a further subject for the coming second semester, addressing knowledge management and innovation. The role of knowledge in innovation, particularly in regard to the new open innovation paradigm, is emerging as an area of key focus for business, so is an area of growing importance for KM.

I’m also now looking at how I can facilitate the trialling of a full KM undergraduate or postgraduate course using the RealKM Open KM Syllabus. We hope that with further research and development, the RealKM Open KM Syllabus can form the basis of accredited KM courses.

## KM undergraduate courses

KM education has so far been primarily delivered through postgraduate courses, and I expect that there would be a continued emphasis on studies at this level. But I would also like to see the establishment of full KM major courses at undergraduate level. My concern is that unless KM education is established at undergraduate level, then KM studies will only ever be seen as a later career or supplementary education option.

So far, Shanxi University has provided great support for my KM education initiatives. However, KM is relatively new in China, and Shanxi Province is one of the least developed and most conservative areas of China. Because of this, it might be too soon for a full KM course here, so I’m keen to explore the possibilities in other universities throughout the world. If you’re working in or are aware of a university that might be interested, please feel free to contact me.



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## Evidence-based KM

Another of my special KM interests is evidence-based knowledge management. Unfortunately some of the decision-making in the KM discipline is opinion-based rather than evidence based, and there’s also a tendency for people working in KM to rely heavily on their professional expertise to the exclusion of other sources of evidence, in particular research findings (see [bit.ly/2BH65M8](http://bit.ly/2BH65M8)).

With this in mind, *RealKM Magazine* ([www.realkm.com](http://www.realkm.com)) was established in 2015 to provide up-to-date research-based information to assist knowledge managers with their work. Since then, *RealKM Magazine* has cemented a vital role in the international KM landscape, becoming a key go-to resource for KM practitioners and the managers and leaders of organisations. I invite you to subscribe to the *RealKM Magazine* Weekly Wrap e-newsletter (it’s free, as is access to our articles), or to follow our article posts on social media. **IP**