



Sustained Excellence
in Tertiary Teaching
General Category

Professor Hazel Tucker

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“Thanks mucho’ Hazel for introducing us to a new deeper way of thinking. After the initial shock, adjustment and healing, it produces in us something beautiful that will be treasured forever!” (student)

These words from a former student, accompanied by a gift of a pearl and a poem describing a pearl as a healed wound, alludes to Hazel’s teaching. This goes well beyond a ‘business as usual’ mode of commerce education, daring to challenge and instill in students a sense of responsibility and stewardship towards tourism. Hazel values education as a transformative force in the world and directs her teaching at challenging students so they become effective and responsible ‘leaders of tomorrow’. She tells her students that, more than simply helping them ‘get a job’, her aim is to set them up to go on to make a difference in the world and to fulfil their potential. She takes her students to visit alumni at their workplaces to show what effective leadership positions they have attained. The notion of ‘global citizenship’ is at the heart of the critical, reflexive and ethical thinking Hazel believes is important. She thus aims to develop not only her students’ understanding of tourism’s wide-ranging social and environmental implications, but also their own sense of *what matters* regarding tourism’s ethical complexities. Hazel’s classes are safe learning communities immersed in the practice of questioning self and others, so that students develop both a strong appreciation of self and a respect for others’ diverse worldviews.

Although she has been teaching Tourism at Otago for over twenty years, ranging from undergraduate courses to extensive PhD supervision, Hazel discovered her true passion for teaching after becoming involved ten years ago in teaching the Masters of Tourism (MTour) and working to design a curriculum which encompasses the qualities of ‘global citizenship’. The MTour was judged eighth in the world in the 2019 Top 50 Eduniversal Best Masters Ranking for Tourism Management. For her teaching in the program, Hazel won a University of Otago Teaching Excellence Award (2020).

Hazel encourages her students to shift away from a predominantly profit-driven business orientation and develop a concern for tourism’s social, cultural and environmental implications. She provokes them to think beyond what is in front of them and develop a critical consciousness. By creating a safe and comfortable environment, she encourages a ‘community of inquiry’. She introduces activities to develop students’ awareness of their own and others’ perspectives, such as constructing a ‘photo-essay’ on tourist behaviour during field trips. Hazel works hard to be inclusive and responsive to the wide variety of backgrounds and capabilities of her students. She has been Pacific student liaison, disability liaison and periodic acting Māori student liaison teacher in her department for several years. Thus, she is aware of educational disparities and barriers and is responsive to any students who are struggling. She endeavours to challenge the privileging of Western meanings in tourism education and uses the diversity of her students in sharing experiences and learning from each other, such as getting Chinese students to explain

a particular youth subculture in China after visiting a tourist attraction popular with Chinese tourists. This fosters a collaborative partnership approach to teaching-learning while also broadening students' cultural and global awareness.

Learning in Hazel's classes is highly student-led, interactive and dynamic, drawing on students' own varied backgrounds and experiences. She uses a recordable whiteboard to build notes from the discussion and, after each class, posts those notes onto the digital Blackboard site as a record and prompt for the next class. Rather than presenting a planned and fixed body of knowledge, she allows discussion to go where students' questions and points raised take it. This helps students understand the relevance of theoretical concepts in the real world, such as the *tourist gaze* and *tourism world-making* concepts which, while difficult for students to understand, are important regarding tourism's far-reaching social, cultural and environmental implications. To assist understanding, she uses red-tinted glasses to demonstrate filters through which we see people and places and demonstrates different mind-sets and ways to look at the world. Hazel's international field-school paper, taught over the past six years, provides a particularly rich environment for provocative, transformative learning experiences. Taking twelve or so students 'out of the (Dunedin) classroom' to Thailand for one month, this MTour paper involves fieldtrips/fieldwork activities, guided discussions and research exercises.

Hazel creates innovative ways to facilitate students' reflection and articulation of their own worldviews in relation to the 'big picture' of tourism. She helps students understand there are multiple ways of approaching and engaging with the Tourism field of study, and helps them find their place in that. For example, she has students read a short extract from two articles, which although focused on a similar aspect of tourism are written from vastly different paradigm perspectives. Students are asked to express their 'gut' reaction and gradually learn to understand, articulate and justify their own paradigm positioning.

Hazel led a major redesign of the Masters of Tourism (MTour) curriculum so that, through a process of graduate profile development and curriculum mapping, the MTour aims were rearticulated to not only prepare students for a career in a tourism-related field, but to enable students to become reflexive and responsible 'global citizens'. Hazel researches, supervises and publishes on transformative/deep learning, methodology 'training' and graduate outcomes' 'efficacy'. She also led a collaborative project on 'de-Westernising teaching' for the internationalised classroom and published the results in a leading international Tourism journal. As co-leader of the Otago Business School's strategic focus on 'global citizenship', she monitors sustainability and responsibility-related curricula content across the School. She has presented workshops to PhD students and supervisors on developing reflexive understanding of methodological positioning, and mentored junior colleagues in both supervision and teaching. She has delivered seminars on teaching in her department and University-wide via Otago's International Seminar Series and Higher Education Development Centre. International recognition has resulted in Hazel being appointed as Visiting Professor at Napier University, Edinburgh, and invitations to deliver classes to students in Switzerland, the Netherlands, China and, in 2022, Slovenia.

Many of Hazel's students have gone on to become excellent teachers themselves. Of her 28 PhD students to date, a significant number have gone on to obtain academic positions in NZ, Sweden, Japan, Uganda and Portugal. She mentors her PhD students in teaching, inviting them to observe and help with her classes, and continues collaborative relationships (e.g. co-supervising, co-authoring) with former supervisees, including those who have gone overseas.

"I love teaching tourism because I believe that if we can grow stewardship and interest in enacting positive change in relation to tourism's broader societal and global interconnectedness, then we are growing pearls, or sowing seeds, for a better future."