**Geoff Hocking – Graphic Design**

We specialize as a print-based course. We are very interested in print for magazines, newspapers and general communication at that level. We are also very interested in reflecting the interests of our region. We are well versed in all of the areas of advertising and publishing, editorial – we do digital media. We are doing illustration in a way that no other courses are doing it at the moment. We’ve combining it with design and the developing individual strengths. In the last three or four years we have had a number of students who have specialized and been published the minute they have been a graduate.

Most of them will do children’s books and stuff because that’s where kids want to go and I encourage that because its what I’ve done in my past and the other lecturers also are published children’s book illustrators and authors so we are very keen in that area. We took a decision to actually focus in the print area and it is actually because there is a lot of print production in this region, and other people aren’t doing it as much as we do it.

A lot of our projects are based around book production. We use local printers – we’ll go and visit them and watch them print the stuff that we do, so that we have a full understanding of how all that works.

Every week here at Bendigo in the local newspaper we have a double page spread in the paper done by students, and for the last couple of years I’ve had students doing a little comic strip. You’ve got to give students an opportunity to think, ‘Ah, I could be a Leunig’, or ‘I could be a Bruce Petty’. I have a student at the moment who has done work for quite number of rock and roll bands who have ended up on the Triple J charts and now have just been signed by the biggest company in Australia.

Our reputation I guess, in the community is such that our students are largely trusted – if they come from here they expect them to be able to do the work appropriately. As a result a number of our students have gone to work in magazines and newspapers.

Our focus is on regional issues but it doesn’t stop our students going wherever they want to go. Right at this moment I’ve got three or four graduates working in publishing in London. I’ve got a student at the moment who, as soon as he finishes will be going to New York at the end of the year, so they are able to go wherever they like.

The design degree can give you an opportunity really wherever you go – there’s something that can use your talents.