



Australia Awards



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Guest Lecture

'Learning in the Age of AI: Why Neuroscience Matters More Than Ever'

By: Associate Professor Minkang Kim & Dr Derek Sankey

Friday, 29 May 2026

02:00pm to 4:00pm (Jakarta time)

Indonesian graduates and scholars of Australian tertiary institutions who are interested in attending this event, please RSVP by Wednesday, 27 May, via this link:

<http://oz.link/rsvpGL29MAY>

**Due to the limited availability of places, early registration is recommended. A link to this event will be shared with you after registration.*

Lecture overview

Over the past 30 years, insights from neuroscience and complex systems have been converging to form what we now recognise as the science of learning and development, an area with far-reaching implications for education. This growing field is starting to challenge many long-held ideas and opening exciting (and sometimes uncomfortable) possibilities for how we think about teaching and learning.

Associate Professor Minkang Kim is a lecturer and researcher at The University of Sydney, specialising in educational neuroscience, human development and the science of learning. Her work examines how insights from neuroscience can inform educational theory and classroom practice, with a particular focus on the roles of emotion, empathy and values in learning and wellbeing. Over the past decade, A/Prof. Kim has focused on understanding how developmental processes shape students' cognitive and emotional growth within real-world social and educational contexts. She is also the co-author, with Derek Sankey, of *The Science of Learning and Development in Education* (Cambridge University Press), which bridges neuroscience and pedagogy to support evidence-based education.

Grounded in Dynamic Systems Theory (DST), A/Prof. Kim's research views learning and development as complex, evolving processes shaped by multiple interacting factors. Her empirical work combines innovative methods such as electroencephalography (EEG), eye-tracking, microgenetic observation and State Space Grids (SSGs) with more traditional approaches to examine how the brain and behaviour adapt through learning. Through this interdisciplinary approach, A/Prof. Kim aims to translate scientific insights into practical educational strategies that foster empathy, engagement and well-being across diverse learning contexts.

Yet, many researchers are still holding on to twentieth-century theories, even as the ground shifts beneath them. Rapid advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) are adding another layer of change to the education landscape.

This session makes the case that every teacher, everywhere, should have a solid understanding of the science of learning and development as part of their professional toolkit. Importantly, this means engaging with rigorous, evidence-based neuroscience rather than speculation or pseudoscience. It also calls on education researchers and teacher educators to take this body of knowledge more seriously.

But applying the science of learning isn't just a technical exercise. It needs to be deeply human. Students aren't just learners in the abstract; they are neurobiological, social and emotional beings. So, any meaningful application of this science must also prioritise their wellbeing and lived experiences.

Ultimately, the session presents a view of education as inherently valuable, guided not just by what works, but also by what matters. These ideas draw on over fifteen years of educational neuroscience research at The University of Sydney, Australia.



★ / Associate
Professor
Minkang Kim
Associate Professor
of Human
Development, The
University of Sydney





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Dr Derek Sankey is a distinguished educator, philosopher of education and practitioner whose career spans more than 35 years across multiple countries and institutions. He has worked as a teacher educator in four nations, including at the Institute of Education, University of London in the UK and the Hong Kong Institute of Education (now the Education University of Hong Kong), and currently serves as an Honorary Associate at The University of Sydney, Australia.

Dr Sankey's research sits at the intersection of educational philosophy, neuroscience and human development, reflecting a sustained commitment to bridging theory and practice. His collaborative work with Minkang Kim on neuromyths in teacher education, including 'Philosophy, neuroscience and pre-service teachers' beliefs in neuromyths: A call for remedial action', highlights his focus on strengthening educators' scientific and philosophical understanding of how children learn and develop. Central to Dr Sankey's work is the belief that all teachers should be equipped with a robust, evidence-informed understanding of learning and development, grounded in a holistic view of education in which values, cognition, emotion and human development are deeply interconnected.



★ / **Dr Derek Sankey**
*Department of
Philosophy, The
University of Sydney*

