

Robert (Bob) Bucat was born in the same year as Dimitri Mendeleev. He is an Honorary Teaching Fellow in the School of Chemistry and Biochemistry at the University of Western Australia. His scholarly activities in chemistry education are motivated by an intense curiosity about what happens “on the other side” of the lectern or lab bench. He has been driven to understand the teaching and learning process from the student perspective.

Bob’s research interests are primarily on undergraduate students’ understandings of chemical concepts and relationships, and their origins in curriculum structure, the complexity and interdependence of chemistry concepts and relationships, the language usage, the demands of the macroscopic/submicroscopic/symbolic triplet, the need for appropriate imagery at several levels, and the balance of understandability and rigour. Along with these is the recognition that challenges for students present challenges to teachers. His passion is the umbrella that includes all of these: *pedagogical content knowledge*. PCK is specific knowledge about the teaching and learning of particular subject matter.

He is the author or co-author of several books, book chapters, and instructional software.

In 1988, Bob was awarded the inaugural *Distinguished Teaching Award* of the University of Western Australia. At the national level, Bob has received several awards: in 1987, the *Medal of the Royal Australian Institute Chemical* (RACI = Education Division); in 2007, the *Carrick Award* from the Australian Government as a member of the *Advancing Chemistry by Enhanced Learning in the Laboratory* (ACELL) project team; and in 2010, the inaugural *Fensham Medal, The RACI Award for Outstanding Contribution to Chemical Education*. In 2011, in celebration of the International Year of Chemistry, the RACI proclaimed him a *Living Luminary of Australian Chemistry*.

Bob was a member, from 1994 to 2002, of IUPAC’s *Committee on Chemical Education*. For his international contributions, in July 2012 he was presented with the IUPAC *Distinguished Contribution to Chemistry Education Award*.

He is the mentor of a PhD candidate at the University of Split, Croatia.

He is graced by six children, as well as by 13 grandchildren – to whom he is *GrandBob*.