Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

IN THE CENTRE,
IN THE MARGINS,
IN-BETWEEN

Te wero - the Challenge: Creating an Aspirational Learning Environment for Māori and Pasifika Students in their First Year of University Study

Margaret Henley
University of Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand

Immigration and internationalization have contributed to greater diversity in our student demographics. However, the benefits of diversity cannot be realized if a significant proportion of the students struggles to integrate with their academic community (Chang, Denson, Saenz, & Kimberly, 2005; Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002). Problems that English as a second language (ESL) students face are well documented (Fox, 2005). Students who cannot cope end up on probation or suspension, and then are referred to remedial attention.

Feed a man with fish, he will live from day to day, teach him how to fish, he will live forever

First Nation peoples, whether Australian, Canadian, American, Pasifika or Tāngata Whenua Māori have long struggled to plant their own flag with confidence in the tertiary territory of settler society. In their respective homelands, despite a history of ongoing government directives and educational programs, the belief that tertiary (post-secondary) institutions are now more suited to meet the learning needs of all students is still a shaky waka (canoe) to paddle. The reality is that many indigenous students still enter tertiary study with well-founded trepidation and many become dispirited or lost along the way. This is certainly the experience for many Māori and Tāngata Pasifika (people of Pacific descent) in tertiary education in Aotearoa New Zealand.

For nearly a decade, the Department of Film, TV & Media Studies (FTVMS) at the University of Auckland has run a separate tutorial stream for Māori and Pasifika students enrolled in their two first-year core courses which cater each semester for 500 plus students from a wide range of ethnic and language backgrounds. This optional equity structure was developed in direct response to the relatively high non-completion rates for Māori and Pasifika students in comparison to all other ethnic groups in the university and in accordance with the wish of the department to meet its Treaty of Waitangi obligations in a systematic and constructive way.

Two students in the Maori and Pasifika weekly tutorial hard at work!

Tuakana Mentor, Stallone Vaiaoga-Ioasa, is the Tuakana Mentor in the Department of Film, TV & Media Studies. Stallone is Samoan and is now working as an independent film maker. He is currently focusing on his first feature film about the debt that Pacific Island families have to carry when they pay a tithe to their church. The film is told through the eyes of the New Zealand born children in the family who have difficulty coming to terms with the hardship that this traditional island custom places on already struggling families.
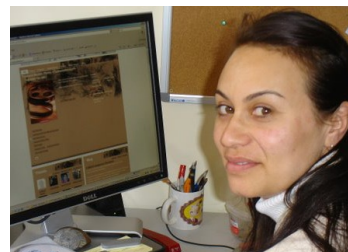
Tuakana Mentor, Marina Alofagia McCartney, keeping in touch with Maori and Pasifika students through the Bebo Social Networking site.

Pasifika students have the lowest Student Pass Rate (SPR) of the major ethnic groups at the University, with Māori students producing a lower SPR than Pākehā (European) and Asian students. The most telling statistic is the annual DNS (Did Not Sit) rate where, in comparison to Pākēha students, Māori are twice as likely to fail through not sitting examinations and Pasifika students just over two and a half times more likely to return a DNS grade. This trend is corroborated in a 2007 government report (Ministry of Education, 2007), which notes that Pasifika students contribute the greatest growth in the tertiary sector, increasing by 22% since 2001, but that these students are less likely to "stay enrolled and/or complete their tertiary qualifications than any other ethnic group." There is a similar concern with regard to the level of academic achievement for Māori. Frequent Ministry of Education Reports call for educational institutions and teachers to move away from the "deficit model which locates Māori underachievement in the shortcoming of the student" (Earle, 2008). The FTVMS Māori and Pasifika tutorial system is designed to challenge this "deficit model".

All students enrolled in FTVMS first-year core courses who identify themselves as Māori or Pasifika (between 70-90 students per semester) are invited to attend the weekly FTVMS Tuākana tutorial, which is promoted as assisting Māori and Pasifika students to achieve academic success in an

environment wherein they feel comfortable. Tīkanga Māori (customary practice) is acknowledged by always providing a token offering of kai (food) to welcome the students to the room. Considerable efforts are made to ensure that this learning space is never considered remedial, but rather an opportunity for the students to achieve much more than just a pass mark. They work hard and enjoy the environment of academic discipline that they choose to create in their room each week.

Their tutor, always of Māori or Pacific Island heritage, is trained alongside the mainstream tutors. The tutor must have completed or nearly completed his or her undergraduate major in Film and Media and have a strong academic record. The Tuākana Tutor always teaches another 2-3 tutorials in the mainstream, which has proven to be a highly effective means of role-modeling academic success for Polynesian students. There is high student appreciation that their tutor, seen to be valued as an equal member of the departmental teaching team, was once a student just like them, sitting in the same tutorial group.

A Tuākana mentor, also of Polynesian descent, attends the weekly tutorial with the Tuākana tutor to help run the session and to provide ongoing academic and pastoral care. The mentor is responsible for providing outreach for the other Māori and Pasifika students in the mainstream tutorials and connects them to the additional learning support if required. It is imperative that the tutor and mentor develop a close working relationship and provide a culturally aware and welcoming environment. The mentor also facilitates informal online discussion through a public social networking site favoured by Polynesians. This creates a virtual cohort for these first-year students, an environment in which they can share social information and survival tips outside of the university intranet structure.

Throughout nearly a decade of modification and annual analysis of pass rates, the FTVMS Tuākana tutorial has proved to be a culturally appropriate teaching structure which returns positive results and consistently performs to or slightly above the general class median. The students in the Tuākana tutorial are 20% more likely to hand in all coursework and sit the examination than their counterparts in the mainstream tutorials.

This scheme should in no way be interpreted as the only answer, but it does work. There is high approval of this learning environment among those who enroll in the tutorial and Polynesian students who perform competently in the mainstream indicate they like knowing it is there. The waka (canoe) may still be a little unsteady but small gains made in this way add collective pākahukahu (strength) to the stroke of the paddle.

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[i] Māori whakatauki (proverb).
[ii] Pasifika refers to people of indigenous Pacific descent who are citizens or permanent residents of Aotearoa New Zealand. The main Pacific Island groups represented are from Samoa, Tonga, Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau and Fiji.
[iii] Māori or Tāngata Whenua – indigenous people of the land, Aotearoa New Zealand.
[iv] The Treaty of Waitangi, signed in 1840 between Tāngata Whenua Māori and the Crown is the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand which recognizes the unique partnership between both parties to have equal share in the resources of the land. Modern interpretation of the treaty requires the Crown and by association, educational institutions to seek ways in which to honour the principles of the Treaty to benefit the aspirations of all Māori.
[v] The concept of Tuākana (older siblings) symbolizes the way in which family members learn from each other.

"Meeting Neil":
the 2009 STLHE Alan Blizzard Award Team Presentation, University of New Brunswick

John Thompson
University of Saskatchewan

Fellow teachers from across Canada and beyond enjoyed celebrating and learning together in Fredericton at the STLHE annual conference which was marked by extraordinary Maritime hospitality, friendliness, and planning. One highlight was the outstanding plenary presentation of the 2009 Alan Blizzard Award team on June 19, where more than 350 delegates "met Neil."

(left to right) Pippa Hall, Beckie Walbourne, Lynda Weaver, Tim Willett, Peter Barnes, Susan Brajtman, and Richard Clarke. (not present) Brad Genereaux, Patti O'Brien, Daniel Mroz

Photography: Rob Blanchard UNB Photo

TOTAL PAIN v0.4.3.3 – Talking with Neil

You have 57:40 min left with the patient and 6:52 min until he feels ignored.

ADMISSION (click below to return)

ADMISSION

Were you one of the people who was around when I was being admitted last night? I can't remember. I was in too much pain, and I was too busy crying and trying to find someone who would help me die. I probably scared the people in the emergency room.

The 2009 Alan Blizzard Award team comes from the University of Ottawa, St. Paul University, and Bruyère Continuing Care. The team's project, "Complex Care, Complex Issues: Innovation in Development and Content for Effective Team Learning On-line," was chosen from among nine excellent applications.

Collaboration is at the heart of this team and its project of interdisciplinary, interprofessional education of health care professionals in palliative and end-of-life care. The project builds on a face-to-face course begun in 2002, Death Made Visible, which employed the power of narrative using film, art, literature and storytelling, based on small group interaction, with palliative care providers as facilitators. In 2005, an interdisciplinary team began developing an online "total pain" module with a concluding face-to face component in order to reach more health care professionals in this critical area. Project funding was provided by a 2005 University of Ottawa Interdisciplinary Initiative Fund and a 2006 Health Canada Interprofessional Education for Collaborative Patient-Centred Practice grant.

Discussion groups at Allan Blizzard Plenary, Friday morning, 19 June. Rob Blanchard

At the plenary session, Pippa Hall, team coordinator, introduced Richard Clark, while draping a rose-coloured scarf around his shoulders. Next, introducing Susan Brajtman, Richard placed, around her shoulders, a light purple scarf tied to his own scarf. This symbolic performance continued with Peter Barnes, Tim Willett, Lynda Weaver, Beckie Walbourne and, finally Pippa, receiving coloured scarves around their shoulders. This dramatic gesture showed the cohesion of this collaborative team, whose distinctive contributions created a shared initiative for interprofessional collaborative education of health care teams in end-of-life care.

Members of the team discussed their contributions to the project, supported by a graphics presentation, developed by Tim Willett, using Prezi (www.Prezi.com).

By video, Alan Rock, University of Ottawa President, congratulated the team members, recognizing their significant collaborative contributions. Also by video, medical student Kate Strasburg described her collaborative role in the project and participation in the first of three pilots.

Participants in the plenary session then virtually met Neil in a short video narrative. Neil is a composite account created by the drama and literature members of the team and four students, based on interviews and review of the palliative care literature. Admitted to emergency the night before and suffering excruciating pain from HIV and cancer, Neil, looking directly at the camera, spoke to participants as he would have to a health care professional entering his hospital room. All attendees went silent in the intensity and starkness of Neil's words and emotions.

This virtual conversation with Neil allowed the Alan Blizzard Award team to engage the more than 350 participants in interactive small group discussions. Each table was given a set of short narratives from different conversations between Neil and various health care professionals. The task of each small group was to draw up an integrated care plan for Neil. Thus, STLHE participants sampled first-hand the way in which collaboration among different health care professionals is integral to their learning together as a team, to ensure effective and holistic end-of-life care.

The team then explained how assessment had been integral in the construction and revisions of this twelve-hour on-line module. The data and analysis showed the module's

effectiveness in developing collaborative approaches among students in health care professions and highlighted the distinctive expertise contributed by each health care professional to holistic and patient-centred end-of-life care.

The team showed its future plans for diffusing this collaborative innovation in teaching and learning including synchronous webinars, scoring rubrics, a reusable e-learning shell, and availability to other institutions. STLHE participants, impressed with the engaging format of the presentation, gained new insights into the use of this collaborative approach in their own teaching and research

I am certain that I speak for many participants in expressing a collective thank you to the 2009 Alan Blizzard Award team for an inspiring and effective presentation of the project, "Complex Care, Complex Issues: Innovation in Development and Content for Effective Team Learning On-line." It is important to recognize that end-of-life care is integral to living all our days as fully as possible.

Those who wish to learn more about the 2009 Alan Blizzard Award collaborative project can read the 2009 Alan Blizzard Award paper online at the STLHE Blizzard website and can also contact Jo-Anne Dusseault at Bruyère Continuing Care: JDusseault@bruyere.org.

Those who wish to view the STLHE presentation, including the videos, can download the file: http://www.criedunet.net/Total_Pain/ Total_Pain_STLHE_2009-06-16b.zip.

Presenting of certificate at Opening Welcome Wednesday afternoon, 17 June. Rob Blanchard

Getting to Know You:

Statements from the 2009 3M National Teaching Fellows

David Barnet
University of Alberta

I primarily teach and direct BA Liberal Arts Drama Majors, and seniors and students in an inter-generational theatre company. For me, the core of teaching, whether it be community-based theatre or Shakespeare, is playfulness, followed quickly by rigour, ownership, disruption and reciprocity.

Playfulness comes easily to the theatre company, GeriActors and Friends, aged 20 to 90, because they enjoy each other, tell stories, have elegant coffee breaks, and love performing their original plays. However, before advanced acting students can really play, they must do their homework and accept responsibility for their independent journeys.

Playfulness creates community and the ownership of process and product. It also provokes the creative elements of disruption and discomfort (which is OK in the theatre but I don't know about the laboratory!). By reciprocity, I mean mutual learning; my journey must parallel those of the students. For this to happen, humility is required, even if it is challenged by awards!

Finally, I believe teaching involves interlocking communities: the theatre company and its audiences; the class and the teacher; all of the other teachers the students have or have had, whose work flows through them; and our immediate colleagues, who challenge, share and celebrate.

Ken Cramer
University of Windsor

The goals we set for our students –mastery of material, personal growth, self-discovery – can only be realized if students trust their instructors. In addition to believing instructors possess sufficient knowledge of the content, trust involves respect, a conviction that instructors have a solid vision of the academic goals, with a roadmap to get there. Whether students feel anxiety with a new year or whether they question who they are, they need to trust in their instructors as shepherds through their educational travels.

This trust reaches beyond confidence and assurance, and quietly ushers in the essence of possibility, where students may embrace their own understanding, growth, and self-discovery – in short, trust cultivates students' courage to learn.

Trust is earned, slowly, over the course of a semester, and can even transfer from one semester to the next. Trust also protects students faced with new ideas (e.g., quantum theory) or frightening ideas (e.g., the possibility that we, as a society, can never eliminate prejudice). But without it, an instructor who attempts to move the class too quickly into frightening waters will meet disaster. We must remember too that in our attempts to establish it, we should not demand unwavering trust; a student who has surrendered all questioning, doubt, and scepticism is keenly vulnerable. While we applaud classroom agreement, we have a duty to encourage disagreement in order to foster students' counter-arguments, because with disagreement comes growth. So too, both sides in a debate have to trust that their instructor will protect them and respect them in their views.

Carolyn Eyles
McMaster University

As an Earth scientist, I consider myself very fortunate to work in a discipline that requires an understanding of physical places and spaces that lie outside of the classroom. It is easy to be a teacher when you have fascinating material to work with and you can operate essentially as a tour guide. The classroom becomes a place of journey and exploration—both physical and intellectual.

My first teaching experiences involved teaching Geography to classes of fifteen-year-old high school students who really did not want to be there. I soon learned that the most effective way of engaging these students (and avoiding chaos) was to treat our classes as journeys, or classroom-bound field trips in

which I could take them to exciting and interesting places. Some of these places were exotic and others lay in their own backyards. My role was to serve as a tour guide to help them see the interesting aspects of these various environments.

I use the same basic approach in my teaching today. I introduce my students to many new places, both in space and time, by taking them on virtual (through visual, oral and written media) and real (out there, getting dirty!) field experiences. I tell my students to look around, to think about relationships and connections, to see these places in their minds. My aim is to help them understand the interactions between many different components of the environment and provide them with the tools to reassemble these interactions in other situations. This approach seems to work and I wholeheartedly enjoy the journeys I take with my students.

Nick Bontis
McMaster University

My teaching philosophy is pretty simple. I treat every single student with personal care, and it is my responsibility to make sure their investment while in my classroom is getting the highest possible return. If class time does not satisfy a student's needs, I have a full-service policy 24 hours a day, 7 days a week as long as I am awake. This is also true for all of my TAs who must respond to every e-mail within 24 hours. In my opinion, students will embrace me as a teacher if they clearly see that I am passionate about teaching. I typically concentrate on removing all negative energy from my mind (and my face!) before I enter the classroom. When I teach, I am committed to energizing my students and sharing my passion with them for three full hours. That is when I am in my zone. My barometric test for this is when the three hours are up and students do not want the class to end.

Today's students have grown up in the digital generation and are multi-taskers with limited attention spans. Therefore, I use the Socratic method to stimulate rational thinking and thereby illuminate new learning. Participation in my class is mandatory and worth at least one quarter of the final grade. I endeavour to provide students with the analytical framework of thinking and the confidence necessary to rip

through any strategic situation and to do it in an innovative way that is fun and entertaining. I want students to develop both their individual and group learning skills in an environment that challenges them. My goal is to have all of my students remember me as an outstanding instructor who also taught them the toughest course they ever took. When those two statements go together, that is when I believe a true educational impact has been made.

Glen Loppnow
University of Alberta

There is a student for whom we, as teachers, yearn: analytical, critical, courteous, curious, enthusiastic, motivated and engaged. In short, we want a student citizen. How do we encourage students to achieve this level of learning maturity? Well, in most post-secondary science classrooms, we put them in large lecture theatres and tell them what they should know.

Hmmm....There seems to be a bit of a contradiction here. Anyone know what the problem is? Yes, you with your hand sheepishly raised at half mast. That's right! Students are smart! Students are learning exactly what we teach them: be passive, take notes, don't ask questions.

This conflict was my revelation, at the end of a long personal journey. With the support of colleagues, mentors, funding sources and administrators, this strange dichotomy is what I have tried to change at the University of Alberta. I try to give students the opportunity to construct their learning by experiencing their disciplines, by keeping them active in the classroom, by giving them time to learn without so much teaching, and by giving them the duty to apply their learning to their world; these are the ways in which I try to encourage students to become the students we wish to have.

Sarah Keefer
Trent University

One of the aspects of my teaching that I most enjoy is opening the way for my students to take a different kind of responsibility for their learning, by using Peer Review. I explain to them that this models what goes on in the real world in academic discourse, and that it operates on mutual trust that they will follow the

process through honourably, and will review as they would be reviewed, with positive and constructive criticism. With very few exceptions, from first-year undergrads to graduate Masters' students, they have never let me down.

The Peer Review process that I have developed is more or less formal, depending on the skills and sophistication of the group working with it, but it has common features for all levels of student ability which constitute a win-win situation. This process requires students to do a draft which is reviewed by peers, and then revised before I ever see it: in this way, students learn how to develop a piece of writing instead of dashing it off the night before the deadline. It enables me to match strengths and weaknesses to the advantage of students: weaker students get to read work by stronger writers, thus allowing new imaginative models to develop, and strong reviewers often find the language and the means to communicate what is needed to improve a weaker draft more effectively than an instructor's authoritative words can convey. Finally, the Peer Review process builds a wonderful sense of classroom community inter-support, all through the slightly forbidden fruit of Reading Another Student's Work Legitimately (those capitals are deliberate). And because it all comes in under the radar, the students learn a whole array of new skills without realising it.

Baljit Singh
University of Saskatchewan

Learning is an individual responsibility and an individual act. The role of teachers is to inspire and challenge students, to leave them free to explore and learn the content, and to foster a sense of trust in their relationship with the students in an environment conducive to learning. My ideal environment is inspired by the ancient tradition of Gurukul in India in which children experienced a deep engagement with life and learning, spending months and years living with the teacher and learning while performing daily chores. The learning proceeded in formal and informal settings during this period. My teaching methods are based on this old tradition to engage the students in a variety of formal and informal environments (classroom and residence halls), and to integrate the learning material in a broader context of its use and the society because I believe that the "role of schools is not to create idiot

specialists" but "to send out into life thoughtful people capable of thinking about the wider social, historical, and philosophical implications of their specialties" (A Dream for Czechoslovakia, Vaclav Havel). The increasing complexity of society demands one teaching, which is integrative teaching across programs, disciplines and physical boundaries.

Sylvain Robert
Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières

Dans ma vie professionnelle, trois grandes passions m'animent : la chimie, l'enseignement et l'informatique. Je considère que l'apprentissage de la chimie doit être vécu comme une quête virtuelle dans un jeu vidéo. L'enseignant programme un ensemble de séquences qui illustrent les étapes pour réussir à comprendre comment fonctionnent divers systèmes ou comment se déroulent divers phénomènes. Pour le professeur Les outils informatiques sont de précieux alliés pour favoriser cette compréhension et pour amener l'étudiant, d'une part, à manipuler un modèle et, d'autre part, à effectuer diverses simulations lui permettant d'éprouver ses hypothèses explicatives. L'étudiant peut ainsi renforcer sa compréhension et imaginer de multiples applications.

La modélisation guide mon enseignement dans tous les cours de chimie, et pas seulement dans mon cours de simulation et de modélisation moléculaire. La modélisation illustrative est un adjuvant remarquable qui rend visibles aux étudiants des systèmes invisibles et qui révèle les liens avec leur quotidien. Ainsi, je cherche beaucoup à utiliser toutes sortes de réalités bien connues des étudiants pour illustrer les concepts enseignés : des phénomènes de la vie quotidienne, des actualités scientifiques et environnementales, des films à succès, etc. Enfin, la modélisation fait appel à deux outils très importants pour stimuler l'apprentissage : le jeu et le rêve.

La passion, celle de la science et de l'enseignement, c'est ce que je désire partager avec mes étudiants.

In my professional life, I am driven by three great passions: chemistry, education and computing. I consider that the learning of chemistry should be seen almost as a quest in a virtual video game. The teacher programs a set of sequences that illustrate the steps necessary for students to successfully understand how various systems or phenomena work. The tools are, for the teacher, valuable allies to promote this understanding. They enable the

students to handle a model and to perform simulations that allow them to experience their own explanatory hypotheses and thus to enhance their understanding and to imagine many applications.

Modeling guides my teaching in all chemistry courses, not only in my course in simulation and molecular modeling. Modeling is also a remarkable illustrative auxiliary to make the invisible systems visible and to allow the students to see the relationship with day-to-day life. For this reason, I use many contemporary references to illustrate the concepts I teach, including everyday life events, science and environmental news, popular movies, etc. Finally, modeling uses two very important tools to stimulate learning: games and dreams.

What I most want to share with my students is my passion for science and education.

Hamzeh Roumani
York University

We scientists are so fascinated by the "how" that we treat formalism as a hallmark of science and let reductionism define our sense of beauty. But while the glorification of "how" is arguably what makes us good scientists, it is also the very trait that tends to make us bad teachers!

Having been lost helplessly in the land of the "what," observing disparate phenomena and collecting seemingly random data, it is a joy to finally meet the "how:" a mechanism that explains and fits everything together. The "how" not only makes us understand, it also gives us the power to predict, a pinnacle for any scientist or engineer. As teachers, we are so eager to share the "how" with our students that we are willing to forgo the "what" and delve into formalism. When asked to teach students about cars, we find nothing interesting to say about driving or steering wheels, but rave about the torque equation of the axle. We think that by exposing the cause-effect façade, students will better understand the subject. For them, however, this bottom-up path is complex, too long, and boring.

What if our lectures focused only on the higher abstraction levels? And rather than teach mechanisms, what if we set up learning environments in which students can explore, make connections and discover the "how"? Perhaps

they would then learn to deal with the unknown, and dare to contemplate "what can be" rather than be locked in "what is."

John P. Smol
Queen's University

My overall goal as a Queen's University professor is to channel ambition and vision in the creative process we call science. At the same time, we must continually demonstrate, by example, the importance of maintaining a strong moral compass in what we do. Science and other forms of scholarship can and do make a big difference in the world. For a democracy to function effectively, it needs an educated and an active citizenry. In universities, we transform lives.

Most students do not fully appreciate their strengths and potential. I believe that the main job of a teacher or mentor is to help identify and tap the students' strengths and capabilities. Our task is to keep asking probing questions and providing challenges until the full potential of each student is achieved. My goal is to challenge complacency, to ensure that the students reach their potential, and to make sure that I can take their academic training as far as they can possibly go, not only as far as they think they can go.

Like other areas of scholarship, science is a creative process. It is driven by vision, clearly thought-out ideas, and the discipline of hard work to see these ideas brought to fruition. However, without stifling their creativity, we must also impress on students that it is more important to be correct than to be interesting. There is a fine balance one must strike between allowing creative ideas to flourish, and the simple facts of observations and data that must (ultimately) constrain our conclusions. I am becoming more and more concerned that, at times, it is becoming more important in my field to be interesting than to be correct. We do not have the luxury of being wrong for frivolous reasons in environmental science – the stakes are now simply too high. And yes, we also need to have to courage to, at times, throw stones at giants.

Finally, my teaching philosophy also includes this final requirement: always make time to laugh out loud with your students at least once (and preferably more times) a day.

President's Report

Joy Mighty
STLHE President
Queen's University

This is the first opportunity I have had to welcome you to the 2009-2010 academic year after what I hope was a rejuvenating summer. This year, I am particularly excited as we look forward to several STLHE initiatives and partnerships.

The following are examples of the many initiatives that we are eagerly anticipating:

- The launch of our new bilingual electronic Journal, the *Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*.
- The publication of a book co-edited by the immediate past and current STLHE presidents and sponsored by the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO). Based on a 2008 symposium that was itself a HEQCO/STLHE collaboration, the book (*Taking Stock: Research on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*) highlights past research that has important implications for the practice of effective teaching and learning in post-secondary institutions today.

- The implementation of a new teaching award that recognizes innovation in teaching and learning by faculty from any post-secondary institution.
- STLHE's continued and enhanced collaboration with Magna Publications, our current sponsor of the Christopher Knapper Lifetime Achievement Award. A new feature of our partnership this year will be STLHE's involvement in the popular Magna online seminars.
- The celebration of the 25th anniversary of the 3M National Teaching Fellowship, the Society's oldest award for excellence in teaching and educational leadership.

- Our 30th annual conference, the biggest event in the STLHE calendar, on the theme "Exploring, Shaping, Knowing: Creative Teaching and Learning". The conference will be jointly hosted by Ryerson University and the Ontario College of Art and Design from June 23 to 26, 2010, in Toronto.

These are just a few of the many initiatives that various members are already working hard to implement this year. We will in due course learn more about other exciting activities being planned by our two Constituencies – the Council of 3M National Teaching Fellows and the Educational Developers Caucus – as well as by our three Special Interest Groups (SIGs) – the SIG for Canadian Writing Centres, the College Sector Educators Community, and the SIG for Teaching Assistant and Graduate Student Advancement. We are also gratefully looking forward to continued and increased support from colleges and universities whose institutional memberships are crucial to the Society's ability to implement these activities. The continued endorsement from institutional members, especially during the current economic downturn, is indicative of their administrators' recognition of STLHE's critical leadership role in sustaining and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, despite the challenges of resource constraints. As we look ahead to the new academic year, it behoves us to reflect on our experiences from the past year. Prominent among those reflections is the joy experienced at the conference hosted last June by the University of New Brunswick (UNB). I take this opportunity to thank our colleagues at UNB for their exceptionally warm hospitality and the intellectually stimulating conference they hosted with such incredible efficiency. Their innovative program structure with its focus on dilemmas provoked discussions about the numerous challenges currently facing teaching and learning in higher education and helped STLHE to begin to frame creative national solutions to these challenges. Thanks UNB and congratulations on a very enjoyable and successful conference! During the conference, we acknowledged the Society's debt of gratitude to Russ Hunt of St Thomas University who recently retired as the moderator of the STLHE listserv for almost two decades. I want to take this opportunity to reiterate our appreciation for Russ' voluntary contribution to an important communication medium that is often perceived as the public face and the life of the Society. The listserv has grown to almost 1000 subscribers from all over the world. Thanks again to Russ for tirelessly and effectively serving as the STLHE listserv moderator! In the meantime, many of you have probably already noticed changes to the STLHE website which is now under new management by the University of Saskatchewan who will also be responsible for the listserv. Finally, I wish you all a happy, successful and rewarding 2009-2010 academic year!

Rapport de la présidente

Joy Mighty
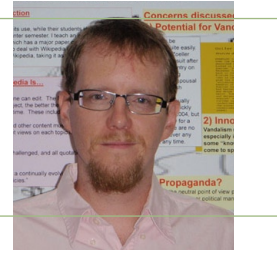*Présidente de la SAPES*
Université Queen's

C'est la première occasion que j'ai de vous souhaiter la bienvenue en cette année universitaire 2009-2010, après un été qui, je l'espère, vous a permis de refaire le plein d'énergie. Cette année, je suis particulièrement enthousiaste à l'idée d'aller de l'avant dans plusieurs initiatives et partenariats à la SAPES.

Voici quelques exemples parmi les nombreuses initiatives dont nous attendons la réalisation avec impatience :

- Le lancement de notre nouvelle publication électronique bilingue, la *Revue canadienne sur la science de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage*.
- La publication d'une monographie coéditée par la dernière présidente et la présidente actuelle de la SAPES et commanditée par le Conseil ontarien de la qualité de l'enseignement supérieur (COQES). Inspiré d'un symposium tenu en 2008, qui était en soi une collaboration entre le COQES et la SAPES, ce livre (*Taking Stock: Research on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*) met en évidence les recherches effectuées précédemment ayant aujourd'hui des répercussions importantes sur la pratique efficace de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage dans les établissements postsecondaires.
- La mise en œuvre d'un nouveau prix d'excellence en enseignement qui souligne l'innovation en enseignement et en apprentissage du corps professoral de tout établissement postsecondaire.
- La collaboration continue et améliorée de la SAPES avec Magna Publications, notre commanditaire actuel du Prix Christopher Knapper pour l'ensemble des réalisations en carrière. Cette année, notre partenariat amène un nouvel élément en la participation de la SAPES aux populaires séminaires de Magna offerts en ligne.
- La célébration du 25e anniversaire du Prix 3M national pour l'excellence en enseignement, le prix le plus ancien de la Société qui souligne l'excellence en enseignement et le leadership scolaire.
- Notre 30e congrès annuel, l'activité la plus importante inscrite au calendrier de la SAPES, dont le thème sera «Exploration, formation et savoir : créativité en enseignement et en apprentissage». Le congrès sera présenté conjointement par l'Université Ryerson et par l'Ontario College of Art and Design, du 23 au 26 juin 2010, à Toronto.

Ce ne sont là que quelques-unes des nombreuses initiatives de cette année, dont la mise en œuvre fait déjà l'objet d'un travail acharné de la part de divers membres. En temps et lieu, nous en apprendrons davantage sur les autres activités stimulantes planifiées par nos deux organisations constituantes – le Conseil des récipiendaires du Prix 3M national pour l'excellence en enseignement et le Réseau de formateurs en pédagogie de l'enseignement – ainsi que par nos trois groupes d'intérêt spécial (GIS) – le GIS pour les Centres de rédaction canadiens, le GIS pour la communauté des éducateurs au collégial et le GIS pour le per-

Tackling *Wikipedia* as a Learning Opportunity on Sources for History

fectionnement des assistants à l'enseignement et des étudiants des cycles supérieurs. Nous nous réjouissons également avec gratitude du soutien continu et croissant de collèges et d'universités, dont les contributions à titre de membres institutionnels sont essentielles à la mise en œuvre de ces activités. L'appui soutenu de nos membres institutionnels, en particulier dans le contexte de ralentissement économique actuel, est un signe que les administrateurs de ces établissements reconnaissent le rôle crucial de pionnier de la SAPES dans le maintien et l'amélioration de la qualité de l'enseignement et de la pédagogie, malgré les difficultés occasionnées par le manque de ressources.

Tandis que nous avons entamé la nouvelle année universitaire, il est de notre intérêt de réfléchir aux expériences de l'année dernière. Au centre de ces réflexions se trouve la joie que nous avons ressentie à l'occasion de notre congrès, dont l'Université du Nouveau-Brunswick (UNB) a été l'hôte en juin dernier. Je profite de cette occasion pour remercier nos collègues de l'UNB pour leur hospitalité remarquablement chaleureuse et pour avoir organisé avec une efficacité incroyable un congrès qui nous a stimulés sur le plan intellectuel. Leur structure de programmes innovatrice axée sur les dilemmes a provoqué des discussions sur les nombreux défis actuels de la pédagogie et de l'apprentissage dans l'enseignement supérieur. Grâce à cette structure, la SAPES a pu commencer à esquisser des solutions nationales créatrices en réponse à ces défis. Merci à l'UNB et félicitations pour ce congrès des plus agréables et fructueux!

Au cours du congrès, la Société a exprimé sa reconnaissance à l'égard de Russ Hunt de l'Université St Thomas, qui a récemment pris sa retraite à titre de coordonnateur de la liste de diffusion de la SAPES, rôle qu'il a assumé pendant près de deux décennies. Je veux profiter de l'occasion pour lui exprimer de nouveau notre gratitude pour sa contribution bénévole à un important moyen de communication, qui est souvent perçu comme le visage public et le reflet de la vie de la Société. La liste de diffusion compte maintenant près de 1000 abonnés de tous les coins du monde. Encore une fois, merci à Russ d'avoir rempli de façon inlassable et efficace le rôle de coordonnateur! Par ailleurs, vous êtes probablement nombreux à avoir remarqué les changements apportés au site Web de la SAPES. Le site est maintenant administré par l'Université de la Saskatchewan, qui se chargera également de la coordination de la liste de diffusion.

En terminant, je souhaite que l'année universitaire 2009-2010 continue à être heureuse, enrichissante et couronnée de succès pour vous tous!

Fred Mason
University of New-Brunswick

Wikipedia is an online encyclopedia that students love and that many instructors love to hate. Some instructors ban its use entirely, while their students continue to use it anyway. Herein lies an opportunity – discussing *Wikipedia* with students can provide a learning opportunity focused on the use of quality sources and the pitfalls of online information.

Each winter in an introductory-level course in the History of Sport and Recreation, I hand back paper outlines, a number of which invariably reference *Wikipedia*. Using this as a lead-in, we spend twenty minutes of class time engaging with *Wikipedia* pages on the history of sport. This activity fosters a discussion on issues with *Wikipedia* from a historian's perspective and, ultimately, a consideration of sources for history more generally.

Wikipedia operates in an open-source format: anyone with computer access is allowed to edit pages. The philosophy lying behind this collaborative approach is that the more people involved in a knowledge-based project, the better the end result. Over time, *Wikipedia's* contributors, who call themselves its "editors," collectively developed key policies and guidelines, including the maintenance of a neutral point of view and decision-making by consensus. Articles that do not meet these guidelines are flagged with warnings.

Despite the work from within, there are issues with the nature of open source wikis that can serve as discussion points with students. First, because literally anybody can edit articles, the potential for vandalism is high. One sporting example (among others) is the 2007 incident where the *Wikipedia* entry on golfer Fuzzy Zoeller defamed him as a wife abuser and drug addict (Jay, 2007). More troubling is the possibility of political manipulation or willful misrepresentation, despite *Wikipedia's* neutrality policy. The *Globe and Mail* found that many edits to *Wikipedia* pages on Canadian parliamentarians originated from government IP addresses (George-Coish, 2007). Regardless of the underlying intent, such edits raise serious questions about accuracy and the potential for propaganda.

Open access means that unintentional mistakes are also a possibility. Research on *Wikipedia* shows that vandalism is typically reverted quite quickly, but that more innocent mistakes may persist. There is also a first-mover effect, where inaccurate information added early in a page's life tends to stay around (Luyt, Aaron, Thian & Hong, 2007). A sporting example serves here, as well – we probably all know some know-it-all sports fans who are not as knowledgeable as they themselves would

believe. There is nothing to stop this type of misguided contributor from editing *Wikipedia* articles and introducing errors. These simple issues show that while information on *Wikipedia* may be of good quality, a key problem from a scholarly point of view is that open source means there are no guarantees over any page at any given time.

Usually, during our class discussions, at least one student points out that Wikipedia entries often have many references at the end. Does that not, then, answer the concerns highlighted above? If articles have references, then are the facts not verifiable? Since many *Wikipedia* articles rely heavily on other electronic sources for references, this question provides an opportunity for looking at other forms of online information. For example, using the *Wikipedia* articles on the 1972 Summit Series or on 1970s hockey player Bobby Clarke, we link to external pages. The differences between sites belonging to the National Archives, quality journalism sources, and less independent sites such as official team and fan pages, quickly becomes apparent as we go through them with students. We discuss how netizens often privilege other electronic sources, sometimes of dubious quality, over more traditional source material. Looking specifically at some of the references on a *Wikipedia* article demonstrates that articles are only as good as their sources.

Ultimately, we approach this as a case of "buyer beware" – *Wikipedia*, like other encyclopedias, may have a place at the beginning of the research process when students are looking for ideas, but it should not be taken as authoritative. An exercise such as this helps students realize the importance of using multiple, reliable sources. While the examples discussed above are mostly specific to sport history, instructors in other fields could easily find similar examples in their own disciplines by quickly trolling though relevant *Wikipedia* pages. Students will surely appreciate a serious encounter with such a well-known and frequently consulted resource, rather than denial or dismissal.

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Educational Development and Academic Practice: Relationship to the Social and Economic Expectations of Governments

International column for HERDSA/POD/STLHE-SAPES Newsletters

Geoffrey Crisp
HERDSA President

A nation's higher education system is an integral part of its social, cultural, economic and political fabric. All governments are keen to assure their communities that they are monitoring the use of public funds, especially in the areas of expenditure for post-secondary education and fundamental research. Major reviews of higher education have been undertaken in Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa in the last few years. The reports from these reviews have many features in common, especially around the rhetoric concerning the purposes of higher education and the management of institutional activities. Educators may have various opinions about the efficacy of such reviews, the impact of their recommendations and the motivation of governments in initiating them, but we would all acknowledge that they eventually have a significant impact on individual academic practice and professional development in universities. The predominant reason for this impact is that public funding inevitably aligns with the recommendations adopted by the government. Academics are mainly involved in enriching their educational and research practices. In so doing, they work to enhance student outcomes. What is the responsibility of the academic to align his or her practices and professional development with national priorities? What impact can individuals have on the complex and interrelated social, cultural and economic aspirations of their governments? What is the role of the educational and research developer in implementing the national educational agenda?

Individual academics will work to improve their educational practices through critical and scholarly reflection, the creation of more engaging learning environments, professional development and discourse with colleagues. The recent Review of Higher Education in Australia suggested that "[i]f we are to maintain our high standard of living, underpinned by a robust democracy and a civil and just society, we need an outstanding, internationally competitive higher education system." Academic development programs will certainly encourage their faculty to use good learning designs and indicate that they should align their assessment tasks with their course objectives, but how are these activities related to the maintenance of a "civil and just society"? Professional organisations such as the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA), the Professional and Organizational Development (POD), the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE), the Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) and International Consortium for Educational Development (ICED), share common goals to improve the student experience and student learning outcomes, as well as the quality of educational practice and research in higher education. We can draw inferences about how these goals can be related to the national agendas of our governments, but how explicitly can we demonstrate a causal relationship between the underlying epistemologies of educational and professional development approaches and the expectation that participation in higher education will result in a "civil and just society"? Most governments are seeking appropriate means of increasing the overall participation rate in higher education. It is likely that we could measure a causal relationship between our development activities or educational practices on the one hand, and improved student completion or performance rates on the other hand, but individual academic staff or academic developers are unlikely to have a significant impact on access issues because of the complexities surrounding the financial, social and cultural aspects of higher education participation. Will constructive alignment of learning activities and assessment tasks improve participation rates of under-represented groups in higher education? Do the priorities of our academic development programs and their epistemic foundations translate into demonstrable outcomes that impact on national priorities?

Should there be an alignment between discipline cultures and the agenda proposed in many of the recent higher education reviews? Do our professional development programs facilitate discourse between discipline academics and the national agenda? Once again, we can consider whether our approaches to academic development assist with a constructive alignment of discipline practices with the complex social, economic and political realities of higher education. However, there is often dissent in academic circles about the need for such an alignment.

Recent reviews into higher education (see references below) have emphasised the need for more formal approaches to benchmarking and the setting of external standards to ensure accountability. Will the setting of government-sanctioned standards and public benchmarking reports really enhance the participation rates of under-represented groups in higher education or lead to a "civil and just society"? The recent global financial downturn has highlighted the extraordinary impact that external factors, seemingly unrelated to discipline practice and academic development, have on the key outcomes sought by governments for higher education. This article hopes to encourage reflection and debate amongst higher education and professional organizations. We are concerned with the complex relationship between, on the one hand, academic development priorities, as espoused by educational researchers, educational developers and professional organisations; and, on the other hand, the social, economic and political priorities for higher education as recommended or demanded by the governments of many countries.

This article is part of an ongoing international exchange among the presidents of the societies for teaching and learning from Australia (HERDSA), the United States (POD) and Canada (STLHE/SAPES).

i   http://www.deewr.gov.au/Higher-Education/Review/Documents/PDF/Higher%20Education%20Review_one%20document_02.pdf

ii   http://www.dfes.gov.uk/hegateway/uploads/White%20Pape.pdf

iii http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/hiedfuture/reports/final-report.pdf

iv   http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/PSE/2009/PSE2008_English.pdf

v   http://www.oecd.org/datao-ecd/20/46/36441052.pdf

vi   http://www.che.ac.za/documents/d000146/Review_HE_SA_2007_Complete.pdf

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www.podnetwork.org

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Pédagogie différentielle, variable sexuelle et rectitude politique

Claude Lamontagne
Université d'Ottawa

La rectitude politique ne donne pas force de loi à la tolérance; elle ne fait qu'organiser la haine.
Jacques Barzun

Je m'apprête à prendre ma retraite. Avec 34 années d'expérience d'enseignement et de recherche universitaires, j'ai évidemment dans mes bagages, comme tout le monde à ce stade, toute une gamme d'hypothèses me permettant d'interroger les multiples aspects de la problématique universitaire devant lesquels l'expertise officielle choisit de rester muette. Un de ces aspects est celui du rôle joué par la variable sexuelle (entendez «sexuelle» dans son acception la plus large, du naturel au culturel en passant par la psychologie «de surface» ou «des profondeurs») dans l'arène universitaire. Au fil des ans, la proportion hommes/femmes dans le milieu universitaire au sein duquel j'ai œuvré est passée de 85%-15% à 15%-85%. La constatation à l'origine du présent témoignage, et qui s'est progressivement imposée à mon esprit au cours de l'accumulation d'une expérience professionnelle plus que significative avec et les hommes et les femmes, est que le milieu universitaire vit dans un état de déni, que je qualifierais de pathologique, du rôle crucial qu'y joue la variable sexuelle. Ce rôle, je suis maintenant persuadé qu'il se joue tous azimuts; je me limiterai à m'y référer ici dans ses rapports avec la pédagogie universitaire. Dans tout ce que vous avez entendu proférer, par l'expertise officielle, comme consignes ou suggestions d'amélioration de votre rapport pédagogique avec vos étudiants, vous souvenez-vous avoir jamais entendu mentionner l'hypothèse selon laquelle enseigner à des femmes ou à des hommes puisse faire une différence? Et combien de fois, sur la base d'un plaidoyer scientifique convaincant, avez-vous entendu mentionner la possibilité qu'être un enseignant ou une enseignante puisse faire une différence? Moi, je n'ai jamais rien entendu de la sorte… alors que mon expérience m'a amené 1) à conclure que cela fait toute la différence du monde, et 2) à agir sur mon enseignement en conséquence. Pourquoi ce silence? N'a-t-on jamais écrit sur le sujet des différences entre les hommes et les femmes? Ou bien a-t-on réglé la question une fois pour toutes en «expliquant» la variable sexuelle de façon telle qu'elle n'ait aucune place dans la valse des déterminants de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage?

À l'analyse, il s'avère que si, d'une part, il semble bien y avoir consensus sur le fait que la question est loin d'être réglée, il y a en fait, d'autre part, une quantité importante de recherches sur la question (PsycINFO donne 1015 occurrences de «femininity and masculinity» dans le titre ou le résumé d'articles spécialisés entre 2000 et 2009 seulement). Alors pourquoi ce vide référentiel dans le monde de l'expertise en enseignement supérieur? Un recours aux acquis de la philosophie des sciences contemporaine permet certainement d'envisager la possibilité d'une absence de prise en compte conséquente à un verdict de naïveté (sinon d'ignorance) méthodologique prononcé contre le positivisme aussi galopant qu'épistémologiquement inconsistant caractéristique de la très dominante approche psychométrique, d'où la vaste majorité des résultats de recherche en question sont issus (en Amérique du Nord tout au moins). Mais cette logique emporterait du même coup l'essentiel des références aux recherches portant sur ces autres déterminants, qui sont précisément ceux auxquels on fait appel pour étayer la prétention à l'expertise. À mon sens, il ne reste qu'un seul facteur plausible pour expliquer le mutisme: le politique, ou plutôt le tabou politique, ou plus précisément encore, les impératifs de la rectitude politique, ou plus honnêtement encore, la censure exercée par la rectitude politique!

«Trop facile, de se limiter à critiquer!» diront certains, avec raison. Je me suis donc attelé à la tâche. Devant l'absence totale de théorie testable portant sur les spécificités respectives de la féminité et de la masculinité (toute tentative de réfutation de cette affirmation étonnante est évidemment bienvenue!), j'ai travaillé à une première conjecture, que j'ai pu amener à un niveau de précision permettant la mise à l'épreuve empirique. Je vous laisse les graphiques des scores bruts de ce test, administré à un premier échantillon de 67 femmes et 67 hommes, et traité à l'aveugle par 4 juges, avec un accord inter-juges se situant au-delà de .90. Pour en savoir plus long sur comment cette évidence de différence dramatique entre féminité et masculinité pourrait déboucher sur une gamme d'implications pédagogiques significatives, veuillez contacter l'auteur: claude.lamontagne@uottawa.ca.
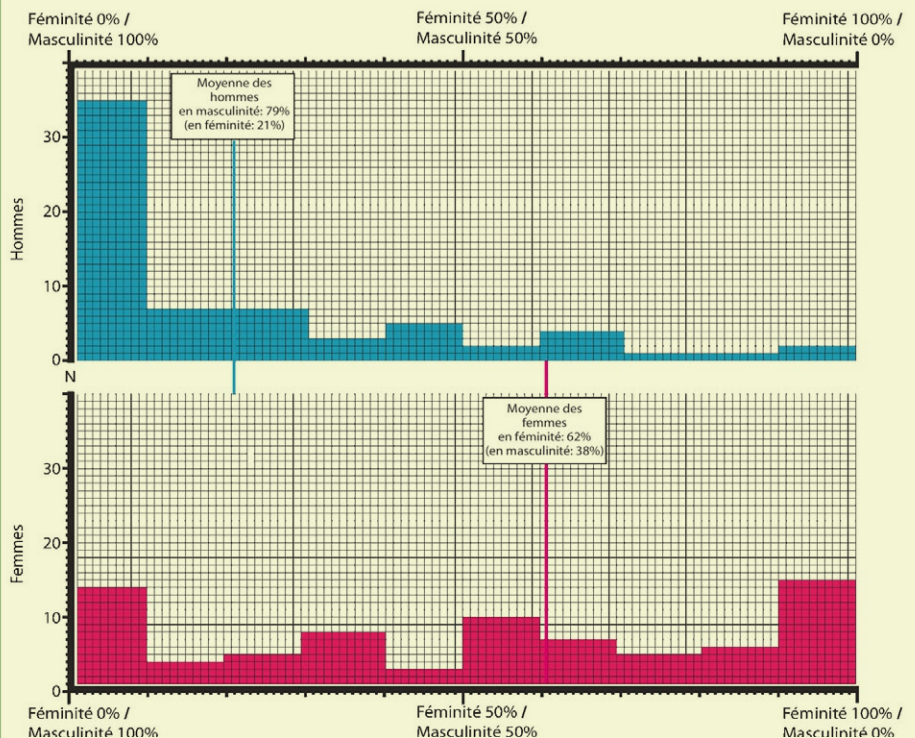
Robert J. Menges Award for Outstanding Research in Educational Development

The Robert J. Menges Award for Outstanding Research in Educational Development was established and first awarded at the 2000 POD conference in Vancouver. The award was established in recognition of Bob Menges, an honoured scholar, whose long years of work and contributions to teaching and learning and faculty development in higher education can be characterized by his spirit of caring consultation, active participation, and rigorous research. Bob was a consummate mentor - challenging, guiding, and deeply involved. It was in his nature to share what he knew and to help others find their own wisdom.

This award recognizes original research, quantitative or qualitative, that leads to systematic investigation and evidence-based conclusions. This year's recipients are:

Dieter Schönwetter,
Director of Educational Resources, Faculty Development and Dentistry Computing Services, University of Manitoba Faculty of Dentistry

Donna Ellis,
Interim Director, Centre for Teaching Excellence, University of Waterloo

in recognition for their book:

Taking Stock: Contemplating North American Graduate Student Professional Development Programs and Developers

Dieter and Donna's research makes an important contribution to the serious work we do in preparing graduate students. Where most disciplinary educational organizations have identified and codified the core competencies essential for successful practitioners, Dieter and Donna have done that for graduate student professional development. Their survey shows us what competencies we have been emphasizing collectively, and what faculty developers need to help graduate students develop those competencies.

The Committee admired the rigour of Dieter and Donna's research and its importance to the field of graduate student professional development.

Dieter and Donna, please accept this Robert J. Menges Award for Outstanding Research in Educational Development.

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2009
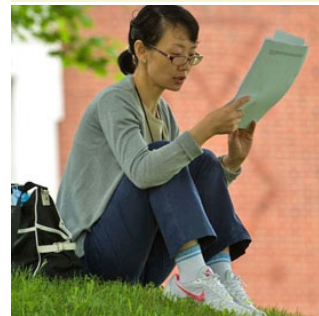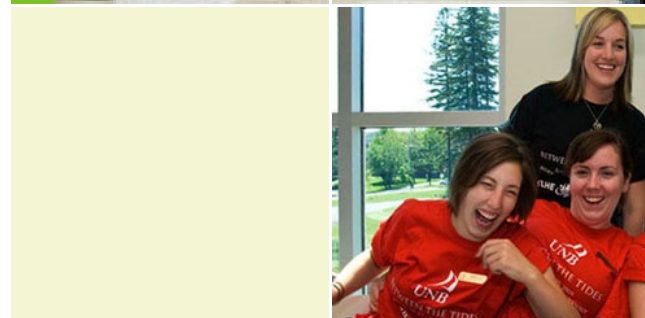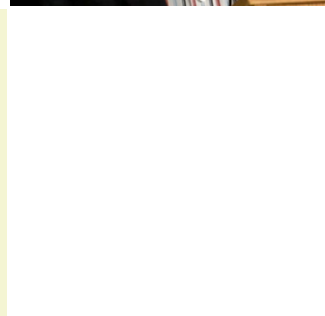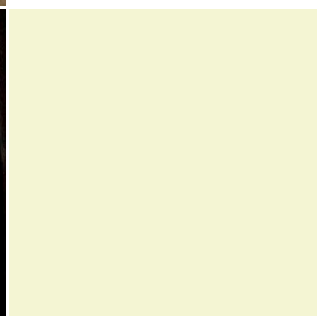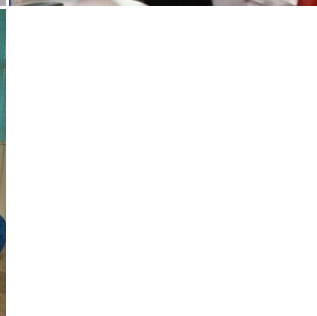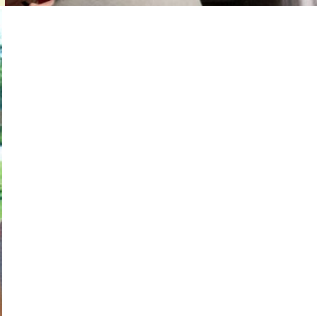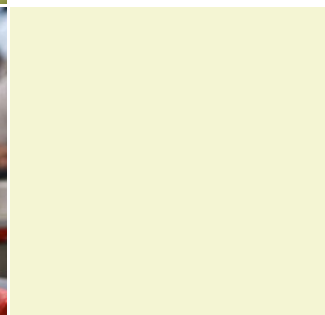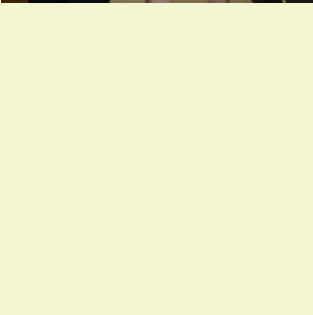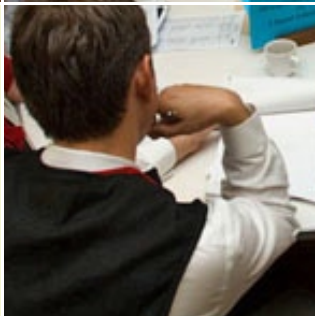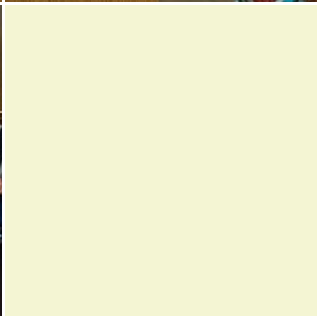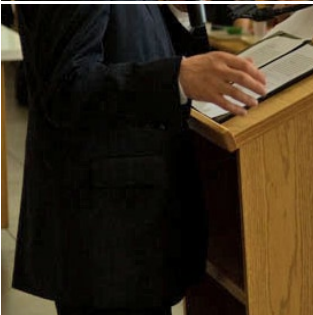
Liberal and Disciplinary Education: No Dilemma at All

D. Bruce MacKay
University of Lethbridge

Ask a group of first-year students why they are attending university or college and someone is sure to pipe up with: "I want to get a good job." Is there a dilemma between this goal-oriented approach to learning and the traditional values of liberal education?

I believe not. However, there has been much debate over whether education should focus on developing students' abilities to consider ageless problems of beauty and truth or whether it should centre on teaching the knowledge and skills required to work productively. The Greeks themselves were divided over this issue; should liberal education teach the skills of the thinker or the skills of the pragmatic orator?

In my view, these are not mutually exclusive aims. A liberal education can do both. Indeed, I think a liberal education is the best approach for teaching the skills that will enable students to succeed in the world of work and to contribute to the communities in which they live.

The University of Lethbridge (U. of L.) has maintained a tradition of liberal education since its inception in 1967. The university's breadth requirement compels students to take courses in sciences, social sciences, humanities, and fine arts, no matter what their specialization or major. In order to examine the value of this type of under-graduate liberal education experience, my colleague Dr. Jennifer Mather (Psychology) and I developed an on-line questionnaire which was emailed to alumni of the U. of L. in autumn 2008. We asked respondents to rate the importance of their liberal education experience for developing particular skills and attitudes (for example global awareness, ability to work cross-culturally, confidence in dealing with challenge) relating to employability success as defined by the Conference Board of Canada.

Alumni generally viewed their liberal education experience favourably (Fig. 1). Overall, 70% of the 780 alumni who responded rated the value of their liberal education experience on the important side of a 7-point Likert scale. 19% rated the value as very important. Only 16% of respondents selected the lower categories of importance.

We also collected data in a comment field. A respondent who graduated with a degree in accounting and who works for an oil company in Calgary wrote:

"… the main difference is general analytic skills. The folks without the liberal education requirement tend to think almost mechanically and don't like to step back and see how things can be done better or easier. Honestly, it is a huge difference and when I was required to do my GLER (General Liberal Education Requirement) at the U. of L., I thought it was a waste of time; it isn't. It's quite likely the most important part of my education as a management graduate."

This statement, others like it, and the data we collected from our survey suggest that liberal education is far from impractical. In fact, the skills most valued in the workplace are best developed through a liberal education. In my view, there is no dilemma between liberal and disciplinary education and when students say they attend university or college because they want a good job, I tell them they have come to the right place.
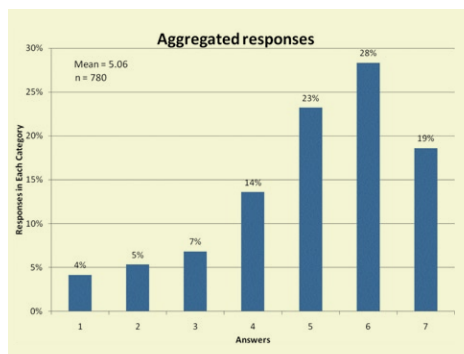

Figure 1

The aggregate responses were collected from twenty-four separate questions which asked alumni to rate the importance of liberal education for developing skills in three categories: individual cognitive / intellectual skills, self-reflection skills, and individual management skills.

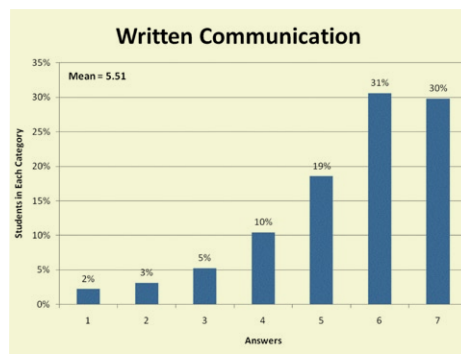Written communication was the skill that was assigned the highest level of importance by respondents (Fig. 2).

Figure 2

In total, 61% of respondents rated the importance of their liberal education experience for developing their proficiency in written communication in the top two categories of importance (80% rated it above the mid-point). Only 5% of respondents rated their liberal education experience in the bottom two categories of importance (10% rated it below the mid-point).

At the other end of the spectrum, numeracy received the lowest overall rating of importance (Fig. 3).
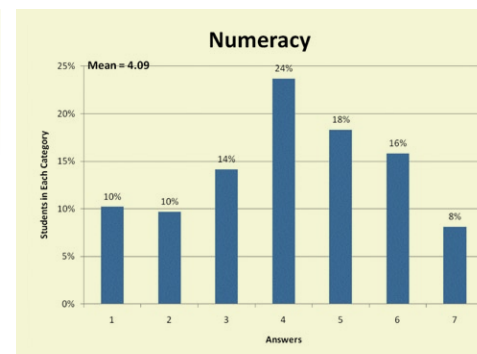

Figure 3

For this question only 24% of respondents selected the upper two categories of importance (42% selected above the mid-point). On the lower side of importance, 20% of respondents selected the lowest two categories (34% selected below the mid-point). In this case, it seems that liberal education may not contribute as much as it could to the development of students' numeracy skills.

STLHE and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL): What Next?

Nicola Simmons
University of Waterloo

In 2006, the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE) identified four primary strategic directions, often referred to as our four "pillars." The first of these is *Advancing the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.* To the extent that Advancing SoTL serves as a foundational pillar of STLHE, it is also a pillar in an ever-changing landscape, and must therefore be not only strong but also flexible.

Internationally, SoTL is entering a new era of visibility and growth. In recent years, many institutions and national organizations have seen programs that support and even fund SoTL work (for example, the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) program in the US). Canada's experience is similar but also different. Certainly, SoTL is gaining greater recognition and a number of institutions (e.g., The University of Western Ontario, University of British Columbia, University of Waterloo) have strong SoTL programs. Work by Canadian SoTL scholars such as Christensen Hughes (2005); Poole, Taylor and Thompson (2007); and Cassidy and Poole (2008) strengthens the national SoTL foundation. However, challenges remain in some areas such as support and funding outside the institution, particularly at a national level. Overcoming these challenges will require national levels of advocacy.

Given this specifically Canadian context, it is interesting to consider the roles that the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE) plays in the advancement of SoTL work.

For example, earlier this year a sub-committee provided feedback to the Tri-Council Policy Statement for Ethical Guidelines for Research Involving Human Participants. Our comments and recommendations focused on the sections regarding multi-jurisdictional research, and in particular, on the use of listservs and conference sessions to collect participant perspectives. We hope our input will allow these processes to be streamlined for researchers while still following guidelines of ethical care for participants.

Our new journal, *The Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CJ SoTL)*, will provide a Canadian venue for SoTL scholarship and peer collaboration. *The Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario* (HEQCO) Taking Stock symposium in April 2008 focused on what we know about student learning and identified the gaps in our knowledge and research to date, resulting in a book co-edited by STLHE past and current presidents Julia Christensen-Hughes and Joy Mighty. At the 2006 International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISSOTL) conference, a group convened to discuss possibilities for a Canadian SoTL agenda; at the 2008 ISSOTL conference, Richard Gale organized a session that allowed Canadian SoTL scholars to further this goal.

Most recently, the STLHE Board created a SoTL Advisory Panel to consider how we might best move SoTL forward as a national initiative. Members of this Panel are: Arshad Ahmad, Teresa Dawson, Richard Gale, Anne Marie Grandtner, Pam Gravestock, Eileen Herteis, Annemarieke Hoekstra, Ken Meadows, Tom Miller, Gary Poole, Nancy Randall, Nicola Simmons (Chair), Lynn Taylor, Elaine Van Melle, and Margaret Wilson.

These are some of the steps we have taken thus far. As STLHE moves forward in its leadership role in SoTL work, we must focus on gaining recognition of SoTL as important scholarly work in Canada while advocating for funding and other supports. I look forward to reporting on our activities, and welcome your input. Please email me at nsimmons@uwaterloo.ca with any comments or suggestions regarding our future directions.

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Educating for Understanding: The Role of Imagination

This article was inspired by the poster presented by Michael K. Potter (developed with Peter Marval and Beverley Hamilton) at the 2009 STLHE Conference in Fredericton, which received the second prize for best poster in the 2009 Pat Rogers Poster Prize Competition.

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The most common goal university and college teachers share for their students is, most likely, understanding. But understanding has acquired a poor reputation because it is slippery, difficult to capture and define. In order to grasp what it is to understand, we should strive for a broad definition that takes into account the concept's rich philosophical history and suggests ways in which we can educate for demonstrable understanding.

We propose three theses:

1) To understand (as a verb) is to combine multiple sources of information – facts, assumptions, values, arguments, perspectives, consequences and implications, conflicts, attitudes, methods, skills, experiences, relationships – about an object into a coherent whole (see Kant, 1781). This practice can be likened to creating three-dimensional models out of photographs taken at multiple angles.

2) The result of this process is understanding (as a noun), a new object that we take as a more complete representation of the same object with which we began.

3) The process of imaginative synthesis facilitates comprehension – an understanding of the whole in which one is able to evaluate the adequacy of an imaginative synthesis, and explain both the relationship of the parts to the whole and the meaning of the whole.

Given these premises, if our goal is understanding, we should prioritize pedagogical approaches that require students to:

- Gather multiple items of information of various types from various perspectives
- Relate those items to each other as a coherent whole
- Explain the relationships they have drawn, and
- Evaluate the veracity of the information used, the logic of the connections between them, and the relation of the object to the wider world.

How could these implications play out in practice? Let's explore this question with an amusement park metaphor. We will call it "Verstehen Valley" in honour of the verstehen method of subjective understanding developed by Dilthey in the 1880s and refined in

the early 20th century by Weber. In the verstehen method, the subject seeks to understand another by imaginatively stepping into his or her life, by taking on his or her beliefs, values, experiences, fears and hopes.

In Verstehen Valley, each ride represents a different sort of teaching, but in a very general sense. You will need to call upon your own imagination to figure out how each of these rides could be enjoyed by your own students, in the development of their understanding.

1. Merry Go-Round of Simple Pleasures – Start small, with a cycle of practice and feedback on easier, relatively non-threatening tasks, before moving on to more frightening experiences. Have students imaginatively synthesize information about something they know well, so they can evaluate the meaning of that synthesis with confidence.

2. The Cooperative Paddleboats – Students cooperate, paddling together in order to race across the pond. Here, the imaginative syntheses of at least two people must coalesce into one; there will be no progress unless they work as a unit. They may attempt to cross the pond as many times as they need.

3. Emotional Roller Coaster – As students move through each of these experiences, they will face emotional highs and lows, some predictable, some unpredictable. Expect bouts of delight, terror, satisfaction, frustration, anger, disbelief and pride.

4. The Kolb Wheel – Students move through the various Kolb (1984) stages – concrete experience (feeling), reflective observation (watching), abstract conceptualization (thinking), and active experimentation (doing) – in all of these rides.

5. The Corkscrew Conundrum – As students are whisked up and down, back and forth, right-side up and upside-down in the corkscrew, the disequilibrium leads them to see

treasured assumptions and other information in a new light. Still dizzy when the ride is over, they reflect upon the experience, using it to inform a revised synthesis.

6. The Giant Swing of Limit Testing – As students spin round and around, centrifugal force tests the limits of each swing's strength. Students are encouraged to push those limits as far as they can go, until the chains begin to snap, then integrate their discoveries about the swing's limits into their syntheses.

7. Bumper Car Wars – Various syntheses come into conflict, opposing views smash into each other, then bounce away, again and again. Through debate, discussion, reflection and revision, students learn to navigate around intractable conflicts – or meet them head-on.

8. House of Mirrors – Students experience uncomfortable cognitive dissonance as they make sense of the distortions projected back, incorporating reflection and introspection on these destabilizations into a more informed, challenging and problematized synthesis of their own identities.

9. The Drop of Assumption Testing – Students are taken up to a peak from which they can survey the entire park, confident in their assumptions. Then, the foundations drop away and they plunge to the ground. How do they cope? What lessons can be drawn from the disconcerting experience of losing one's bearing? And how can those lessons prepare them for the next drop?

Through skillful and imaginative adaptation, amalgamation, rearrangement of the methods suggested to us by these rides, we may come to bring students to piece together their own understandings. We may even lead them to discover the unsettling thrill inherent in emerging understanding, a thrill that creates, in its turn, a thirst for more.

Invitation for Contributors

HERDSA: Special Issue

Contributions are invited for a special issue on the topic "Critical thinking in Higher Education," to be edited by Dr W. Martin Davies from the University of Melbourne. Papers should be submitted by **December 30th, 2009** for an issue to appear in June 2010 or to meet the production date to be scheduled by the publishers.
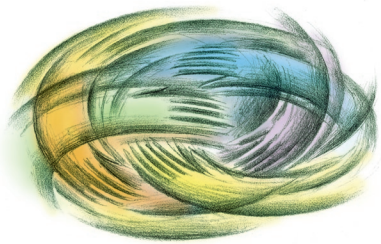
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Deadline: January 15, 2010

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Papers should be no longer than **7000 words** inclusive of references and follow the stylistic conventions of the HERD journal. All papers will undergo peer review. Papers should be submitted to the guest editor, Dr W. Martin Davies by email: wmdavies@unimelb.edu.au or via ordinary mail to the following address:

Teaching and Learning Unit
Faculty of Economics and Commerce
198 Berkeley Street, Parkville 3010
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

For **manuscript guidelines** see: http://www. informaworld.com/smpp/title~db=all~content=t713423834~tab=submit~mode=paper_submission_instructions

Papers should be original, previously unpublished papers. They can be comparative reviews, empirically-based papers or reflective case studies. For the **HERD Editorial Policy**, see: http://www.herdsa.org.au/?page_id=189

Contributions for this special issue can cover, but are not limited to, the following areas:

Philosophical Issues

- What constitutes critical thinking in the higher education context?
- The nature of critical thinking as a graduate attribute/generic skill, i.e., what does it mean to produce graduates that can "think critically", and how is this best achieved?
- Culture and critical thinking: is the skill of critical thinking culturally invariant? The generalist-specifist debate in critical thinking: is critical thinking a general skill, a subject-specific skill, or both? What are the implications of this for teaching and learning?

Educational Practices, Pedagogy and Training for Employment

- Critical thinking as a form of inquiry in higher education: what does it mean to expect graduates to demonstrate "critical thinking" in assignments, theses and term papers?
- How can critical thinking be best embedded in the disciplines, and is this desirable?
- How can the skill of critical thinking be best taught to students in the tertiary context? What pedagogical strategies can be used?
- Critical thinking and new technologies, e.g., computer-aided mind mapping, concept mapping and argument mapping. Are these new technologies evidence-based and effective?
- Critical thinking, university graduates and employment-readiness: trends and prospects for the future.

Empirical Considerations

- Critical thinking, psychology and the human developmental sciences: what do these tell us about the educational aspects of critical thinking?
- Critical thinking and cognitive science: What does work in multidisciplinary fields—Artificial intelligence, computer science, neurology, etc.—teach us about the educational aspects of critical thinking? What are the implications of this for teaching and learning?

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Associate Editor:
Higher Education Research and Development

Le rôle du professeur dans une classe de phonétique corrective de niveau débutant et intermédiaire : bilan d'une expérience vécue

Svetla Kaménova
Université Concordia

Dans notre cours de phonétique corrective, l'objectif minimal est l'atteinte d'une intelligibilité confortable permettant à l'apprenant de comprendre et de se faire comprendre dans des situations impliquant l'usage oral de la langue cible. Devant cet objectif pédagogique et dans un paysage éducatif actuel qui 1) utilise de façon poussée les Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication pour l'Enseignement (TICE) et 2) qui encourage l'auto-apprentissage, nous avons adopté la plateforme interactive CAN-8. Ce laboratoire virtuel doté d'un système de rétroaction auditive et visuelle accorderait la possibilité à l'apprenant, détaché du rapport à l'enseignant, d'évoluer dans un environnement multimédia en suivant un cheminement personnalisé. Est-ce bien le cas ?

Limites pédagogiques des ressources multimédias pour l'enseignement et l'apprentissage de la phonétique corrective

L'apprentissage de la prononciation est fondé sur l'interaction entre la langue native acquise depuis la toute jeune enfance et la langue cible. La perception et la production de la parole sont fortement contraintes par l'organisation phonologique et prosodique de la langue de l'auditeur. Ainsi, un étudiant de niveau débutant et intermédiaire, tributaire du phonétisme et de la musique de la langue maternelle, aurait tendance à calquer la langue étrangère sur la langue native. À cet effet, les différents logiciels disponibles sur le marché seraient censés aider l'apprenant à améliorer sa prononciation, car si celui-ci ne prononce pas correctement, le logiciel ne reconnaît pas la parole. Ainsi l'utilisateur devrait-il persévérer jusqu'à ce que la machine le comprenne. En même temps, le logiciel ne fournit pas d'analyse des erreurs. Comment l'étudiant peut-il donc s'expliquer par lui-même où son erreur réside et comment la corriger ? Une telle pédagogie basée sur l'apprentissage naturel de la phonétique est, nous semble-t-il, d'un optimisme gigantesque.

Le rôle primordial de l'enseignant

Le fait de vouloir offrir à tout prix un auto-apprentissage assuré par le numérique, ne risque-t-il pas d'instaurer plutôt l'ennui et la frustration que le plaisir et la satisfaction, de légitimer plutôt l'erreur et l'approximation que la prononciation correcte ? C'est pour éviter un scénario semblable que nous tenons à souligner le rôle de l'enseignant qui, avec son dynamisme et sa créativité, assure un environnement d'apprentissage stimulant et agréable. En même temps, il effectue la correction instantanée de l'erreur, il fait prendre conscience à l'apprenant de son degré d'intelligibilité, il propose des solutions de correction. Son rôle est d'autant plus incontournable que la plupart des produits multimédias se limitent à proposer des exercices d'audition et de répétition de modèles sans effectuer de correction.
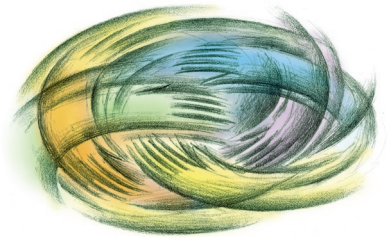
Un réel entraînement phonétique

Rappelons également que c'est la pratique assidue qui amènera l'apprenant à de réels résultats. Le travail sur la prononciation est sans nul doute exigeant. Après les activités en classe, les étudiants sont donc encouragés à effectuer des exercices de renforcement en laboratoire sur CAN-8 : ils peuvent alors enrichir leur grille de perception de la langue cible grâce à une exposition de plus en plus importante à la langue seconde. Cet environnement multimédia leur assure un cheminement personnalisé avec rétroaction sonore et visuelle immédiate. Ainsi après s'être enregistré à l'ordinateur, l'apprenant entend et visualise la bonne réponse et la compare à sa production. Il peut réécouter ses énoncés autant de fois qu'il le désire.

Conclusion

L'enseignement de la phonétique corrective repose donc en grande partie sur un engagement actif du professeur dont le rôle est de créer et d'entretenir la motivation et l'exigence phonétique, de donner informations et explications, de veiller au bon déroulement des activités et de favoriser la créativité, l'expressivité, le jeu et le plaisir dans l'apprentissage. Il serait faux de limiter l'entraînement phonétique à des exercices virtuels, et contre-productif de condamner ainsi l'étudiant à une interaction artificielle avec l'ordinateur. Néanmoins, l'auto-apprentissage en environnement virtuel a aussi sa place dans un cours de correction phonétique de niveau débutant et intermédiaire. Il est certain que le multimédia permet à l'étudiant de se retrouver dans un environnement interactif, d'avancer à son propre rythme, de gagner en autonomie et en confiance pour l'expression orale. Il ressort donc que l'enseignant a tout intérêt à proposer un environnement virtuel dans son cours de prononciation. Or, cela doit se faire de façon très mesurée, car l'auto-apprentissage en phonétique corrective en environnement multimédia est inévitablement contrarié par la spécificité de la matière enseignée. Même si un certain pourcentage des étudiants de niveau débutant et intermédiaire en bénéficie, force est de constater que la majorité nécessite l'intervention systématique de l'enseignant. Par conséquent, le multimédia dans un domaine aussi particulier que la phonétique corrective doit rester un outil au service de l'enseignant et il ne doit en aucun cas en devenir son substitut.

[i] Ce logiciel complètement ouvert permet au professeur de décider comment organiser les contenus d'enseignement et dans quel type d'apprentissage les proposer. À l'Université Concordia, nous l'utilisons comme outil de renforcement de l'apprentissage fait en classe.

Call for Newsletter Submissions

Please submit your articles, book reviews, photos, and other teaching and learning news to the co-editors for consideration in the STLHE Newsletter.

Submissions must be in accordance with STLHE Newsletter Writing Guidelines and must relate to the issue theme.

The themes are as follows:

Winter (March):
Assessment and Evaluation   Submission due date: January 3, 2010

Spring (June):
Interdisciplinarity   Submission due date: April 16, 2010

Protocol for Revision of Submissions to the STLHE

1 The editors closely read and scrutinize all submissions and make changes in order to reduce errors, improve sentence structure, and to improve the quality of expression in the submission;

2 Authors have the opportunity to review the submission (quick turnaround) as modified;

3 Authors have the opportunity to seek explanations of the editors and to withdraw the submission should they (the authors) not approve the proposed changes;

4 The editorial team maintains the right to reduce the length of a submission to meet the stringent space requirements of the newsletter; and

5 The editorial team posts the policy on the STLHE website as part of the instructions for authors.

STLHE Newsletter Writing Guidelines

Articles will be reviewed by the co-editors and Editorial Associates, including the President of STLHE and the Chair of Publications. As a general rule, there are some changes for consistency of text within an issue, and for length. Previous issues are available at: www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/publications/newsletter.html

1. Remember the focus for audience is the STLHE Membership.

a. The membership is primarily faculty and Educational Developers/Instructional Developers, but there are also other members such as Administrators.
b. The focus of all material is teaching and learning in Higher Education.
c. The audience background is very diverse (ex. many discipline areas, different countries, different levels of experience, etc.).

2. Topic

a. Each issue has a theme. Articles related to the theme will be given preference within an issue, however, some articles of general interest may be included even if they are not related to the theme.

3. The tone should be appropriate for a newsletter.

a. Preference for practical articles with elements that people can use.
b. A strong, catchy beginning to an article is more effective.
c. Paragraphs are generally short, to help with visual scanning.

d. Sentences that are short and in the active voice are generally preferable.
e. Use bullets, charts or figures when they will help a reader with scanning an article.
f. Headings and sub-headings are helpful, particularly in articles that are over 300 words in length.
g. The article should be easily read by people from a variety of disciplines, so jargon specific to one discipline should be avoided.
h. Spell out all acronyms the first time: ex. Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE)

4. Length

a. 300 words to a maximum of 800 words

5. Reference Style

a. Some references can be included as appropriate (they are not required), but this is not a scholarly paper.
b. Use APA style for consistency within the issues.

6. Include a picture (300 dpi) if possible

a. Pictures of the author or of a topic relevant to the article are helpful to readers.
b. Pictures are best submitted as electronic files.

7. Title

a. Include a draft title. This may be adapted, but it is helpful to the co-editors.

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Electronic Discussion
Discussion électronique

The STLHE electronic mail forum, active since October 1988, supports the exchange of opinions, ideas and experiences concerning teaching and learning in higher education. To subscribe, contact the list coordinator: Russ Hunt, email hunt@stu.ca or visit Communication at www.stlhe.ca.

If you have a recent publication you would like to reference, or if you have suggestions regarding the new format of the Newsletter, please contact the co-editors. We would like to hear from you!

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