

Teaching Matters

Great Teaching . . . by Design

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Challenging ‘teaching’

This article’s title may suggest that my focus is hard or frustrating teaching. In short, it’s not. Rather, I aim to confront beliefs and perceptions about what constitutes ‘teaching’ and who is involved in it. Why is this topic important? Well, I’ve been hearing a fair bit of buzz lately about our systems of evaluating teaching. The heavy reliance on course evaluations has some people wanting to redesign the instruments used or at least branch out to add peer reviews of teaching. One underlying issue, though, may be a felt lack of fit between how teaching is being conceived in our systems versus what happens in practice. Let’s explore this idea a bit.

What constitutes ‘teaching’ and do faculty members and students share a definition? Virtanen and Lindblom-Ylänne (2012) collected qualitative data from 73 first-year students and 47 faculty members in the biosciences to determine how these two groups defined teaching and learning. Overall, they found that the definitions between the groups were misaligned, with the overwhelming majority of students (90%) defining ‘teaching’ as the transmission of knowledge and facts and the practical use of that knowledge (p.363). This ‘knowledge-centred’ category far overshadowed the two other categories of ‘teacher-centred’ (focused on the teacher’s ability to organize the content and their personality) and ‘student-centred’ (focused on connections between teachers and students and students’ activity in the teaching process) (p.362). The teachers’ descriptions tended to be multi-dimensional, combining all three categories.

If ‘teaching’ could be conceived of as ‘helping others to learn’, then our systems for evaluating teaching would focus on activities that both faculty members and students do to teach a course. So, if you solicit questions in class, run groupwork activities, use problem-based learning, or have students teach their peers via seminar presentations or workshop activities, you are engaging your students not only in learning opportunities but also in the teaching of the course. These more constructivist ways of teaching are captured on our teaching evaluation instruments, aren’t they? Typically they are not.

Marks (2012) addresses this issue as part of her study about course evaluations at uWaterloo. On the instrument that she analyzes, seven items are about the instructor while three focus on the course. Of the instructor items, three ask about teaching skills – presentation skills, ability to maintain interest, and organizational skills – but Marks argues that what is missing “is any recognition of an active role for students in the teaching and learning enterprise... what this posits is the expectation of a didactic role for the instructor and a passive one for the student” (p.13). No questions appear about the use of student-driven activities. Similarly, the teaching attitudes on the instrument focus on instructors as the sole agents of teaching. The faculty members whom Marks interviewed suggested that teaching is more of a joint project “in which instructors actively create an environment for students to learn, and students actively participate in learning” (p.15). However, such practice is not captured on the evaluation forms.

Perhaps an even more troubling question is: What do such instruments suggest to our students about the act of teaching? Marks (2012) questions whether the instrument she studied socializes its users into seeing transmission-oriented instruction as the accepted and expected way to teach (p.14). Equally relevant, what do such instruments suggest to our colleagues who need to interpret evaluative data about our teaching to determine advancement through the ranks? I think these are important questions to ask. It’s time to reconsider how teaching is defined at uWaterloo. It’s time to be more inclusive of alternative ways of

teaching. And it's time to clearly identify students' roles in instruction as well. I'm up for these challenges – are you?

References

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Donna Ellis

Rachel Campbell Murdy – CUT Award Winner



CTE is pleased to announce that Rachel Campbell Murdy, a recent graduate from the Department of Chemical Engineering, has been selected as this year's Certificate in University Teaching (CUT) Award recipient. This award, funded by an anonymous donor, is given annually to an outstanding CUT participant who has completed the program within the past three terms. Rachel was selected for her commitment to developing her teaching skills, significant progress made in her teaching observations and the successful publication of her CUT research paper in the International Journal of Engineering Education.

Teaching Matters has the pleasure of interviewing Rachel just as she started her post-graduation job as a lab coordinator at the University of Guelph.

Q: Why did you decide to pursue the Certificate in University Teaching?

My supervisor, Dr. Raymond Legge, was instrumental in my decision to join the CUT program. Not only did he inform me of the program itself, he highly recommended I pursue this certificate as a future benefit to my academic career.

Q: Which components of the CUT program were the most useful?

I found two components of the CUT program particularly useful. The first was the teaching observations. I appreciated the opportunity to have my teaching evaluated by an instructional developer from CTE, and the feedback was always constructive. The second most useful component was the development of my teaching dossier, which helped me articulate my teaching philosophy and bring together all my teaching experiences. I trust it will be a powerful resource whether or not my career follows an academic path.

Q: How did the CUT program help you to develop your approach to teaching?

The CUT program helped me understand the large spectrum that exists with respect to student learning and cognition. I learned that teaching is an adaptive process and a certain degree of flexibility is required to be an effective teacher.

Q: Did you have an opportunity to try any ideas or techniques that you learned in the CUT in your own teaching?

I used most of the teaching strategies I learned during the workshops throughout my teaching assistantships and guest lectures. I think the most useful information was the importance of setting and reviewing the intended learning outcomes (ILOs). I believe that establishing ILOs early and revisiting them throughout a term improves a course outline and lecture material in two ways: by assisting the students in better understanding my expectations as their teacher, and by allowing me to recognize and address issues with comprehension of course material early on.

Q: Could you tell us a little bit about your CUT project on concept maps and the subsequent publication of the paper with you as the lead author in the International Journal of Engineering Education?

I was briefly introduced to the idea of concept maps as a metacognitive tool during one of the CUT workshops and I decided to research them further for the research project component of the CUT. My supervisor and I encouraged students of a first-year engineering biology course to prepare concept maps for their final exam in lieu of the traditional cheat sheet. When we analyzed the data on student performance in the course, we found that a strong concept map was positively correlated with higher exam marks. In fact, we determined that this correlation, based on the statistical analysis of the data (exam grades), would be a significant tool in education. We submitted the results of our study to the International Journal of Engineering Education, which accepted our paper based on very positive feedback from reviewers. The paper, co-authored with my colleagues Kela Weber and Ray Legge, was published in 2011 under the title, [Exploring Concept Maps as Study Tools in a First Year Engineering Biology Course: A Case Study](#).

Q: What advice do you have to graduate students about developing their teaching skills while in grad school?

I believe the CUT program presents a unique opportunity to University of Waterloo graduate students to develop their teaching skills in an organized and guided approach. I strongly recommend the program to graduate students in any department. It requires quite a bit of time, but it is worth every minute.

Q: What would be your dream course to teach?

I would love to teach a first- or second-year university or college course combining biology and engineering. I feel that first-year students have a steep learning curve going from a high school to post-secondary school learning environment, and an effective teacher can have a strong impact on their overall university experience.

Q: What's next for you in terms of teaching?

I just started an appointment as a laboratory coordinator with the Bioproducts Discovery & Development Centre at the University of Guelph. I will definitely take advantage of any teaching opportunity that may present itself to me in the future, whether that be on the Guelph campus or teaching evening college courses.

In recognition of receiving the CUT Award, Rachel's name will be added to the CUT plaque displayed in the CTE office in EV 1. She will also receive her own plaque and a cash award. Congratulations, Rachel!

Svitlana Taraban-Gordon

2013 Distinguished teacher award recipients

Kelly Anthony
School of Public Health and Health Systems
Recipient of the 2013 Distinguished Teacher Award



Kelly Anthony has been a lecturer for the School of Public Health and Health Systems since 2005. Recently, she has been appointed the teaching fellow for Applied Health Sciences. Her teaching can be best described as a character and perspective building experience, underscoring a level of accountability and connectivity to the community. One student claims that Anthony has been a “catalyst to opening my perspectives of the world”, and another has developed “a unique belief set regarding our moral obligations to the KW community” thanks to her instruction. Ultimately, her students not only gain knowledge but become equipped with a sense of awareness and motivation to be better and more informed participants of the world. Like the best teachers, she intuitively cultivates interest and genuine enthusiasm in her students, “[lighting] up the fire” and stirring their dormant appetites. Anthony’s interactive teaching style stresses discussion-based classes and experiential learning, deftly eluding the passive transfer of facts. These discussion-based lectures “provoke conversations that guide learning and respective epiphanies... engaging [her students] in intellectual spars fostered by an environment that was facilitated by her open nature”. Under her mentorship, several undergraduate students have developed research projects and participated in independent studies abroad. “Her passionate disposition, superior critical acumen and moral sensibility” confirms her place as a “distinguished teacher” at the University of Waterloo.

Jeff Casello
School of Planning and Civil and Environmental Engineering
Recipient of the 2013 Distinguished Teacher Award



Jeff Casello, an associate professor in the School of Planning and cross-appointed to the department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, began his career at Waterloo on July 1, 2004. He is also the associate dean for undergraduate studies in the Faculty of Environment. Students laud his delivery skills, describing him as an “easy lecturer to listen to: easy-going and passionate at the same time”. His lectures are suffused with a

supportive energy and a “commitment to environmental protection and social justice”. As one student claims, “by the end of the term, a sense of social responsibility has been grown in many of my peers”. The depth of his commitment to teaching is evidenced by his mentorship of both undergraduates and graduates, despite his many responsibilities. Casello’s guidance with his students’ academic and professional endeavours, and his salient efforts to engage his students cement his status as a “distinguished teacher”.

Duane Cronin
Mechanical and Mechatronics Engineering
Recipient of the 2013 Distinguished Teacher Award



Duane Cronin, an associate professor in the department of Mechanical and Mechatronics Engineering, has been a member of the University of Waterloo since 2001. He is widely known for his ability to trigger student interest in the driest topics by constantly relating abstract ideas to real-world applications, like using a “bicycle pedal to show material fatigue”. Fostering critical analysis and a meaningful engagement with concepts, Cronin has a “unique way of challenging students to develop independent learning strategies”. One student cites him as the catalyst for his “newfound joy in engineering”. His teaching extends beyond the classroom as Cronin is a source of guidance to many students. Under his supervision, students participated in various extra-curricular activities such as the mini Baja team and the SAE (Society of Automotive Engineers). Cronin’s passion for teaching and commitment to his students truly makes him a “distinguished” teacher worthy of praise.

Richard Ennis
Psychology
Recipient of the 2013 Distinguished Teacher Award



Richard Ennis has been a lecturer in the department of Psychology in the Faculty of Arts since 2003. Infusing lectures with humour and stories, Ennis has cultivated a reputation as an engaging and “legendary” teacher. Students applaud his ability to incorporate amusing anecdotes to elucidate the most abstract concepts. His dynamic teaching style “made an early morning class hard to miss”, “kept [students] at the edge of [their] seats” and, as one student extolls, is “more of a performance... [transforming the university classroom] itself into a theatre”. Many students cite his infectious enthusiasm as the deciding factor in their choice of majors. Others too, owe their newfound appetite and curiosity for psychology to his direct influence. Perhaps more significant is Ennis’ “exceptional empathy for the learning needs of his students”, offering academic, as well as personal support well past office hours. In sum, his “unique blend of humour and professionalism” in combination with the breadth of his knowledge and years of experience make

Richard Ennis truly a “distinguished teacher”, and is, as an undergraduate notes, “without a doubt the jewel of the psychology department”.

Keemo Delos Santos – Co-op Student

2013 Amit & Meena Chakma award for exceptional teaching by a student

Jonathan Eyolfson

Electrical and Computer Engineering

Recipient of the 2013 Amit & Meena Chakma Award for Exceptional Teaching by a Student



Jonathan Eyolfson, a graduate student in Electrical and Computer Engineering, has been a teaching assistant and instructor for various courses for several years. His deep understanding of the material and dedication to teaching are noted by students in his department. They described him as “a knowledgeable and approachable teaching assistant who really understands our confusion.” The course instructor noted his contribution in re-working the format of the course and appreciated the challenging assignments he created. The help sessions he conducted before midterms and final exams were always well attended. His professor complimented those sessions in his nomination letter: “Students came into his sessions confused and left enlightened; I sometimes feel that I understand the material better for seeing him explain it.” Jonathan’s drive for constant self-improvement makes him an exceptional teaching assistant.

Kyra Jones

Biology

Recipient of the 2013 Amit & Meena Chakma Award for Exceptional Teaching by a Student



Kyra Jones, a graduate student in Biology, has been a teaching assistant and instructor for various biology courses. She is described as a person who can “shine in the classroom”. Her naturally calm and approachable personality creates an open and relaxed environment where students are encouraged to express their own opinions and ask questions. Her students regarded her as “a very strong, capable person who contributed greatly to the learning success of the class” and are immensely grateful to her for the coaching and study methods. Kyra is seen as “a regular source of guidance and mentorship” by her colleagues; one of them stated: “her leadership demonstrated her preparedness and insight into the topic. I could always look to her for an interesting opinion and good critical analysis.” Kyra is recognized as an exceptional student instructor and a wonderful role model for her peers.

Alex Shum

Applied Mathematics

Recipient of the 2013 Amit & Meena Chakma Award for Exceptional Teaching by a Student



Alex Shum, a graduate student who is completing his PhD in the field of Applied Math, had shown his gift of teaching since he first joined the University of Waterloo in 2008. Students acknowledged his ability to “turn abstract concepts into simply understood yet thought provoking examples”. His well-prepared lectures incorporated with various teaching methods are highly regarded by his students since it turned learning the challenging calculus course into an enjoyable experience. His students also remarked on his genuine concern for each student’s progress and cheerful positive attitude. “Alex does not just teach math,” wrote one of his students, “he creates an understanding of the uses and applications of calculus with examples which has an impact on the rest of our careers.” Alex’s passion and unique ability of teaching is admired by many other teaching assistants and has inspired them to seek improvement of their own teaching.

In addition to this award, Alex was recently awarded the inaugural [Feds Teaching Award](#).

Shuntaro Yamagishi

Pure Mathematics

Recipient of the 2013 Amit & Meena Chakma Award for Exceptional Teaching by a Student



Shuntaro Yamagishi is currently a PhD student in the field of Pure Math. He has been a teaching assistant for numerous math courses and has established a high reputation among students. His exceptional communication skills and great passion for teaching are highly regarded by his students and colleagues. In his well-planned tutorials, Shuntaro goes beyond the traditional teaching methods by developing various games to interact with students, encouraging them to challenge themselves academically. “Shuntaro helped us become interested in the topic and achieve a better understanding of the material”, stated a student, “My friends and I never missed even one of his tutorials.” Shuntaro’s encouraging and approachable nature makes him an exceptional teaching assistant.

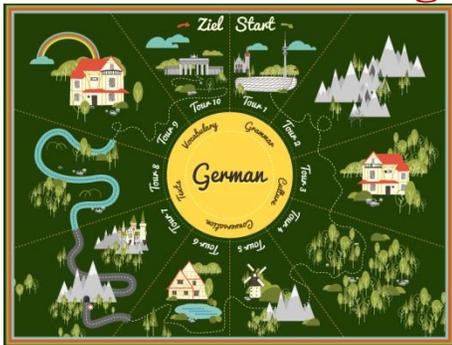
Cathy Huang – Co-op Student

2014 Teaching Award Nomination Deadlines

Amit and Meena Chakma Awards for Exceptional Teaching by a Student: Friday, February 14, 2014

Distinguished Teacher Award: Friday, February 7, 2014

Online language course development: overcoming challenges with new technologies



Language courses are structured around interaction. Regardless of how the class itself is taught, who the instructor is, or what the general make-up of the students is, we know that to learn a language, one has to engage in interaction and speak the language. Pedagogically, this makes language classes rather ideal: while we stress that interaction is ideal for deep learning, the language class in its essence requires interaction for communication, and thus, traditionally, the language class has been an excellent example of strong teaching.

Yet with the trajectory of university education moving towards the online sphere, language courses must too be developed to fit within the digital confines of a learning management system (LMS). Communication and interaction is inherently limited, but there are means by which we can still engage language learners in interaction and find innovative means to develop their proficiency. Currently, the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies is in the process of redeveloping its elementary and intermediate online course offerings to take advantage of a new textbook and the affordances of the Desire2Learn (D2L) LMS.

The effect of an engaging and inspiring instructor cannot be overstated, as this motivates the student to remain engaged in the course content. The online environment lacks this personal connection, but there are means by which to imitate this experience. Our online language courses are situated within a travel metaphor, taking the language learner on a journey across Germany and experiencing many of the same challenges and successes that come with travelling. Each module begins with an *Auftanken*, which means that the learner has to fill his/her car up with gas for the impending language learning journey. Along the way, the learner completes *Etappen*, or laps, and tours the countryside, learning new things about the language. He/she finally ends the journey at the *Anreise*, which is the destination where the learner must prove his/her understanding of the module's material through an exercise.

Rather than just present the learner with a digital version of the textbook's material, each module is appropriately sequenced to ensure a strong learning trajectory. We have opted to replace activities designed for group-work with online activities through discussion boards where the learner can still communicate with fellow classmates. Using D2L's functionality, we can ask the student to record his or her own voice, and we can respond in turn with oral feedback on specific aspects of the learner's pronunciation. We have also personalized the experience as much as possible, incorporating narrated PowerPoint slides to explain grammatical concepts, as well as having a variety of different German speakers (both native and non-native) explain concepts so that the student can hear the variety of different accents of speakers, realizing too that one need not be a perfect native speaker to be a proficient German speaker.

These online course implementations are still certainly a work in progress, and much future iteration is required to accomplish our goals, but we believe that these courses demonstrate the effectiveness of the online platform as a means to encourage second language learning without diminishing the experience itself.

Course internationalization news: SOC 226 juvenile justice

SOC 226: Juvenile Justice provides an overview of the Canadian youth criminal justice system and helps students gain an understanding of our responses to these behaviours from a social and legal perspective. The differences in intervention strategies globally are astounding. Exposure to this knowledge can foster a more culturally literate educational experience while challenging students on a personal and intellectual level to appreciate cultural diversity and to recognize social injustices. To achieve this objective, I worked with the graduate research assistant to redesign the course using the international and comparative lens. The course revision process involved several steps.

First, we reviewed the literature to locate sources focusing on international juvenile justice legislation, practices, and responses to youth crime. These sources were used to modify lectures and readings, and to create comparative frameworks that highlight global similarities and differences. Second, we conducted extensive internet search to create a multimedia database. These publicly available videos present the viewpoints from practitioners, advocates, media, and youth themselves who are in conflict with the law from over forty countries. These videos are strategically inserted into lectures to facilitate discussion on the role of cultural values within the juvenile justice system and differential responses to common challenges faced internationally. Finally, we used both written and multimedia sources to create case studies in the form of in-class small group assignments used to further develop students' international perspective and to reinforce course material.

Our course revisions employ the curricular infusion internationalization strategy whereby the course structure, content, and learning outcomes are revised to develop students' intercultural knowledge. The new learning outcomes address cognitive and knowledge-based perceptions and attitudes on responses to criminal behaviour. Lecture material challenges students' default assumptions on cultural differences. Case studies and explicit comparisons are built into the lectures to help students gain a better appreciation of global diversity when it comes to how and why we respond to youth crime in various ways. Finally, assessment techniques are revised to better detect the quality of student learning and extent of content integration. For instance, essay topics for the applied term paper incorporate a global perspective by asking students to integrate international approaches within specified circumstances such as responding to gang-related offences, juvenile murderers, or sex offenders.

Course internationalization is a pedagogical journey. It isn't simply a question of inserting substantive material from other countries. It requires a shift in pedagogical philosophy, objectives, and learning outcomes to reflect a more holistic approach to the topic with an international lens geared towards increasing cultural sensitivity and knowledge. For me the challenge was depicting the social construction of delinquency within a cultural milieu and how interconnected components of justice systems respond to youth crime in a variety of ways. The course revisions are not subtle; however, I am now more confident the course better reflects the diversity of interests and students at the University of Waterloo.

The purpose of the course internationalization grants is to encourage uWaterloo faculty members to infuse international perspectives into existing courses and to incorporate an international component in their teaching and learning activities. Funding is provided by Waterloo International.

For more information about the course internationalization grants, please visit CTE's [Course Internationalization](#) webpage.

Jennifer Schulenberg

Celebrating five years of opportunities and new directions in teaching and learning at uWaterloo



The Opportunities and New Directions (OND) 2013 Conference took place Thursday, April 25. With over 165 participants from the University of Waterloo and other local Universities, the fifth anniversary of the Conference was truly a celebration – a celebration of the commitment to enhancing teaching and learning shared by everyone present.

The theme of this year's Conference -- "Barriers and Breakthroughs: Accounts of Change in Teaching and Learning" – reminded us that one of the most important things we can do to facilitate teaching and learning is to talk to each other, to exchange honest accounts of the teaching strategies that have worked and those that have failed. Presenters included faculty and staff members, graduate and undergraduate students from across the disciplines who explored obstacles and frustrations faced, but also breakthroughs experienced – pivotal moments when new possibilities for teaching or learning became evident.

During the Presidents' Colloquium keynote address, David Pace and Leah Shopkow from Indiana University Bloomington led us through the "[Decoding the Disciplines](#)" model – a framework for helping to identify and "decode" the "bottlenecks" that students experience in their learning, and to determine how we might motivate learners and assess their understanding of those often tricky conceptual stumbling blocks. Their ideas left us with a new lens with which to examine the design of our courses.

Another highlight of the day was the "Igniting Our Practice" plenary session during which Jean Andrey, Carey Bissonnette, and Troy Glover – three of uWaterloo's outstanding faculty members – taught us concepts for their own courses. We learned about a bit about Chinooks, a bit about Chemistry, a bit about assessing outcomes, rather than outputs, and a lot about how to teach with expertise, panache, and a good measure of humour. It was evident why these three instructors are beloved by their students.

The Conference closed with a wine and cheese reception and, as befitting an anniversary celebration – a cake. It was a time to eat, relax, connect with colleagues, and to thank the many people who had contributed to the success of the Conference. We're particularly grateful to the current Associate Vice President, Academic, Mario Coniglio, and the past Associate Vice President, Academic, Geoff McBoyle, for lending their vision and financial support to the Conference. And, once again, FAUW generously sponsored refreshments following the Presidents' Colloquium.

And now, it's time to pursue the ideas that were sown at the Conference. We look forward to learning about the ways in which those ideas have developed at next year's OND.

For an overview of the Conference, please visit the [OND 2013](#) website.

Julie Timmermans

Freeing your voice workshop

On Tuesday, April 30, Anne-Marie Donovan facilitated a voice workshop for instructors that focused on voice quality and command. As a performer and teacher (both at the University of Waterloo in the Drama Department and at Wilfrid Laurier University in the Faculty of Music), Anne-Marie was able to appreciate the concerns about voice strain and voice projection that many of the participants expressed. She guided the 18-strong group through a series of relaxation techniques to aid in opening of the chest and to assist in diaphragmatic breathing. Through various exercises, Anne-Marie helped the participants to undo inhibitions and physical tensions that were sabotaging a free and expressive voice. Everyone in the group was encouraged to find *their* voice and use that voice to command the space they were working in. Participants left with an awareness of their own breathing and vocal tendencies and some practical exercises to assist with continued improvement.

Monica Vesely

New faculty programming

It has been a full year now since the launch of our New Faculty Programming. Started in the Spring term of 2012, the new faculty initiatives centre on two pillar activities; namely, the *Learning About Teaching Plan* (LATP) and the *New Faculty Teaching Days*. This programming is offered to all new faculty members, but two faculties – Applied Health Sciences and Engineering – have chosen to make participation mandatory.

The Centre for Teaching Excellence (CTE) follows a learning-centred model of reflective practice and development. CTE recognizes that new faculty members, whether limited term or tenure-track, face a balancing act in their new jobs at Waterloo. Our role at CTE is to provide assistance in the new faculty member's development as a teacher. Depending on prior experiences elsewhere, new faculty will enter our programming with varying learning needs. To address these differences, the development of an individualized *Learning About Teaching Plan* begins with a needs assessment followed by a planning meeting with a CTE staff member to collaboratively develop a personalized plan. One aspect of the LATP is to identify which of the four core new faculty workshops should be completed.

The four workshops that form the foundation of the New Faculty offerings are (1) Who Are Our Learners, (2) Classroom Dynamics and Engagement, (3) Assessment for Learning and, (4) Course Design Fundamentals. These workshops are offered during our *New Faculty Teaching Days* and are based on feedback from many cohorts of new faculty and consultations with the Deans.

The Teaching Days take two forms. In August, the Centre for Teaching Excellence offers all four core workshops in a concentrated two day format at a timely point before the start of the fall term. The dates for this year's August *New Faculty Teaching Days* are Wednesday, **August 7**, and Thursday, **August 8**. At two additional times during the year, in January and June, CTE hosts a one day *New Faculty Teaching Day* for those new faculty members that arrived after (or missed) our August Teaching Orientation Days. During these one day events, new faculty members are able to complete three of the four core new faculty workshops all on one day (Who are Our Learners, Classroom Dynamics and Engagement and Assessment for Learning) and attend a New Faculty Welcome Luncheon hosted by the New Faculty Planning Committee where they have the opportunity to meet members of some key Academic Support Units. The fourth core workshop, Course Design Fundamentals, is offered as a part of CTE's regular programming multiple times each year. The next *New Faculty Teaching Day* is scheduled for Wednesday, **June 12**. To learn more about our New Faculty programming, please visit [CTE Support for New Faculty](#). If you would like to start the process of developing an individualized **Learning About Teaching Plan** (LATP),

please feel free to contact me, Monica Vesely, to arrange a needs assessment and planning meeting (mvesely@uwaterloo.ca or ext. 31721).

Monica Vesely

Announcing newest recipients of the learning innovation and teaching enhancement (LITE) seed grants

In collaboration with the Office of the Associate Vice President, Academic, the Centre for Teaching Excellence is pleased to announce that two new LITE Seed Grant projects were funded through the February 2013 competition. Congratulations to all the recipients!

Project Title	Names of Applicants	Institution/Faculty and Department or Unit of Applicants
21st Century German Studies: A Collaborative Open Online Coursespace	James Skidmore Christina Kraenzle	ARTS, Germanic. & Slavic Studies YORK University, Canadian Centre for German and European Studies
Automated Assessment and Feedback of Computer Programming Assignments	William Bishop George Freeman	ENGINEERING, Electrical & Computer Engineering

The purpose of the LITE Grants is to provide support for experimenting with and investigating innovative approaches to enhancing teaching that aim to foster deep student learning at the University of Waterloo.

Two kinds of grants are available: LITE Seed Grants for projects up to \$5,000, and LITE Full Grants for projects up to \$30,000. Both grant formats emphasize the contribution of the project to the University of Waterloo learning community.

Please note that there are now two, rather than three annual application deadlines for Seed Grants: February 1 and June 1. The one annual deadline for LITE Full Grants is October 1.

For more information about the grants, please visit the [Centre for Teaching Excellence](#).

To register for an upcoming LITE Grant Information Session, please visit the [Centre for Teaching Excellence](#) website. The next session will be held on Thursday, May 16, 2013.

If you and/or your colleagues are considering applying for a grant and would like to discuss your project, please contact Dr. [Julie Timmermans](#) at the Centre for Teaching Excellence.

Julie Timmermans

Teaching Excellence Academy 2013



The Teaching Excellence Academy was held at St. Paul's University College from April 17-19, and April 22, 2013. Thirteen uWaterloo instructors engaged in both small-group and individual activities as part of the course design process. Each participant created a revised course outline that aligns intended learning outcomes, teaching activities, and student assessment.

Verna Keller

New Graduate Instructional Developers (GIDs) join CTE

Maxwell Hartt



As a Graduate Instructional Developer for the Centre for Teaching Excellence (CTE), Maxwell is excited to share his enthusiasm and experiences in teaching with fellow graduate students. In his role as a Graduate Instructional Developer, Maxwell will be facilitating workshops and microteaching sessions. He will be providing constructive feedback to participants to help them create positive, engaging teaching environments and to improve their teaching abilities and develop new skills. He has improved his teaching and communication skills through his experience as an adjunct lecturer, a four-time teaching assistant, a guest lecturer, a tutor and through teaching development activities. Maxwell also worked alongside instructors in the re-designing and updating of courses. Maxwell brings energy and passion to the classroom and is always interested in new teaching methods and techniques to engage students.

Maxwell began his doctoral studies at the University of Waterloo's School of Planning in Spring 2012. His research interest lies in the emerging field of shrinking cities where he concentrates on population projection

models, as well as the incorporation of the planning response to alleviate pressing concerns for the remaining citizens. Maxwell is a member of the Shrinking Cities International Research Network (SCiRN) PhD Academy and the *Population Change and Lifecourse Strategic Knowledge Cluster*. He holds a MSc in Systems Science from the University of Ottawa and an Honours BSc in Mathematics from Saint Francis Xavier University.

Kyra Jones



As a Graduate Instructional Developer, Kyra will be involved in the CUT program in addition to facilitating workshops and providing feedback to graduate students to help develop their teaching skills in the classroom. Kyra is excited to be able to share her ideas, knowledge, and experience with graduate students interested in learning more about teaching. In addition, Kyra sees her experience as a Graduate Instructional Developer as a learning opportunity to improve upon her own teaching skills and style. Kyra has been a teaching assistant for multiple courses in the Department of Biology as well as an adjunct instructor and completed the CUT program through the CTE. She also gained valuable experience providing constructive feedback as a part-time marker in the Waterloo Professional Development Program here at uWaterloo. She enjoys mentoring students interested in learning about molecular biology and protein crystallography in the laboratory through supervising co-operative education students and hosting high school students over March Break through the Gene Researcher for a Week program.

Kyra has been pursuing her PhD in the Department of Biology since the fall of 2009. In her research, she studies starch digestion at the molecular level. Her research focuses on two enzymes in the mammalian small intestine involved in the final step of starch digestion: releasing free glucose molecules from starch. This has implications in human nutrition as well as disease states such as diabetes, obesity, and congenital sucrase-isomaltase deficiency. Previous to this, Kyra received a BSc from the University of Waterloo in 2009. Outside the lab, Kyra has been involved in graduate student government, acting as Chair of the Biology Graduate Student Association in 2010. She also enjoys participating in science outreach programs by participating as a judge at science fairs and visiting elementary school classrooms to give science demonstrations. Kyra is looking forward to her time at CTE.

Maxwell Hartt and Kyra Jones

GID News

With the end of the winter 2013 term, we said goodbye to Mihaela Vlasea and Alex Shum. Both are continuing their PhDs, Mihaela in Mechanical and Mechatronics Engineering and Alex in Applied Mathematics. We wish them all the best!

Congratulations to CTE Winter 2013 grads!

The following 12 students completed the [Certificate in University Teaching](#) (CUT) program in Winter 2013: Alireza Akhlagh Moayed (SCI), Azin Ashkan (MATH), Joshua Armstrong (AHS), Brian Chow (SCI),

Laura Dindia (SCI), Sepideh Hariri (SCI), Drew Higgins (ENG), Samira Masoumi (ENG), Carlos Moreno (ENG), Plinio Morita (ENG), Kyle Scholz (ARTS), Alex Shum (MATH).

In addition to CUT graduates, 40 graduate students completed the [Fundamentals of University Teaching](#) program in Winter 2013. The numbers by faculty are: Applied Health Sciences 3, Arts 5, Engineering 20, Environment 3, Mathematics 5 and Science 4.

We would also like to congratulate the 17 postdoctoral fellows who completed our Teaching Development Seminar Series this term. Since its inception in the spring of 2011, a total of 104 fellows have completed the series.

Darlene Radicioni

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