

Optimal Experience: My Flow and Ebb at TRACE

By the time you read this, my five-year term as Director of TRACE will be over and I will have resumed my duties as a faculty member in the Department of Psychology, where I'll be until my early retirement on December 31. I had trouble deciding what to write for my swan song in *Teaching Matters*. It would be appropriate to write about TRACE's progress over the past five years, but it might make for a rather dry read. I wanted to leave you feeling enthusiastic about starting a new term, so decided to be a little more personal, and reminisce about why I was exuberant and full of energy when I came to TRACE, and why I still am.

It was easy to be upbeat about taking on the directorship of TRACE in the fall of 2001. My

letter of application reads, in part: "I have come to believe quite strongly that the lasting legacy of many, if not most, professors is to be found in their influence on students, be it in large or smaller teaching situations. Most of us cannot contribute more than a brick or two, or a bit of mortar, to the edifice of knowledge...". It has been wonderfully fulfilling to work, together with the great TRACE staff, to provide help to the teaching staff, faculty, and graduate students at UW, and most especially to get to know both some of the new faculty members, through the New-Faculty Programming, and also some of our graduate students, through our Certificate in University Teaching. Indeed, when walking across the campus amidst students and fellow faculty members, I often get into a sort of 'flow'¹ thinking how fortunate I am to have been able to work in such a place as this. Being with keen, bright young (and older!) colleagues and students is such a privilege. Also, in our jobs we can, pretty much, do research and teach about what interests us. How cool is that? There are financial resources available to help us do our research, and people to help us with our grant-writing, teaching, and the pedagogical and technical aspects of developing courses. In my opinion, we get good salaries and benefits, and live in an area that is dynamic, culturally rich, and a nice size, if a tad

intemperate at times!

I'm enthusiastic now, too, about having more time to myself in retirement – to read, exercise more, learn to cook better perhaps, do volunteer work, entertain our friends, and visit our three sons and their families (none of whom lives in this area). I certainly plan to keep in touch with happenings at UW, and to be an active member of the UW Retirees Association. Furthermore, organizing a large Neuropsychology conference will keep me around the office a good deal of the time next year. My husband, Syd, is looking forward to my retirement, as he has recently become Chair of the Math Department at WLU, so will appreciate a more traditional wife!

Finally, I'm delighted to have handed over the reins of TRACE to such a knowledgeable, capable, and fine person as Catherine Schryer. Over the last several months I have come to know her well, and I am confident that she will lead TRACE to even better things. Good luck, Cathy, and thanks to present and former TRACE staff and the able administrators who have made my years here in the TRACE Office such pleasant and fruitful ones.

Barbara Bulman-Fleming

¹Concept of "optimal experience" described by 1999 Hagey lecturer, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi
<http://www.bulletin.uwaterloo.ca/1999/oct/05tu.html>

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A Day Away to Talk about Teaching



Hard to find time to reflect on your teaching or find out about different ideas to use in your courses? Want to engage with your colleagues about teaching issues? TRACE reminds departments about the availability of “teaching spa days,” when a department sets aside anywhere from a couple of hours to a whole day to focus on teaching within its own discipline.

Great idea, but how do you make it happen? I spoke with Gord Stuble, Professor and Chair of Engineering Education in Mechanical and Mechatronics Engineering, to find out more details about the teaching retreat day they held in April 2006.

Gord acted as a departmental coordinator to help arrange the day’s events at the request of his Chair. To set objectives for the day he spoke to the recently hired new faculty before meeting with Tracy

Penny Light, a TRACE consultant at that time. His informal needs assessment resulted in an agenda that mixed concrete tips with theory about teaching and learning. Gord presented a tentative outline for the day at a departmental meeting about a month before the retreat, and all faculty members and teaching staff received invitations to attend the retreat in MacKirdy Hall at St. Paul’s College. The department’s and TRACE’s support staff organized registrations and the catering provided by St. Paul’s College.

Tracy spent the morning facilitating activities and presenting ideas from the higher education research literature on topics such as articulating a teaching philosophy, engaging learners, and designing learning activities. In the afternoon, Gord arranged for a panel of five department members to present example activities from their courses which went beyond traditional “chalk and talk” activities. More than 80% of the department members attended the event, and they found that the most helpful parts were hearing the experiences of colleagues and discussing various approaches to teaching.

One outcome from the day was an expressed desire to continue the conversation, so Gord initiated monthly “Teaching Forums” to be held on the second Friday afternoon of each month of active lecturing for discussing current teaching and

learning issues. To date, three forums have been held: Measuring Learning Outcomes, The Millennial Generation, and Properties of Graduate Courses. Attendance has typically been a third of the department’s faculty.

One key benefit that Gord attributes to these events is that he and his colleagues are learning to talk about teaching and learning in more productive ways and are working in groups to discuss issues and share ideas, both about current practice and future directions. The initial support from TRACE was crucial to initiate this renewal and focus on teaching and learning issues. Other factors that help to sustain these events include the enthusiasm of a strong group of new faculty members and the recent Departmental commitment in its Vision 2010 Plan to make teaching excellence a key component of the Department’s identity. Gord also acknowledges that you need a champion to focus the enthusiasm and keep the events moving forward, but is quick to add: “If you bring good faculty members together then good ideas and practices will follow.”

If your department is interested in planning a “spa day,” please contact Donna Ellis at TRACE at ext. 35713 or by email at donnae@uwaterloo.ca or speak to a Teaching Excellence Council member in your Faculty.

Donna Ellis

Instructional Development Grants Available

Instructional Development Grants (ID Grants: up to \$1,000) are administered through the TRACE Office. The ID Grants are designed to help instructors improve teaching effectiveness. The next deadline for proposals is **November 1, 2006**. Information and the application form can be obtained from the TRACE website: <http://www.trace.uwaterloo.ca/>.

A Revised CUT

UW's Certificate in University Teaching (CUT) is designed primarily for UW doctoral students who are interested in pursuing an academic career. The CUT, run by TRACE and co-sponsored by the Graduate Studies Office (GSO), comprises three courses that work together to provide a comprehensive teacher-development experience. The program was recently reviewed by TRACE and the GSO and has undergone some major changes that were approved by Senate Graduate Research Council on June 19. These changes came into effect on September 1, 2006.

The CUT has been a runaway success in terms of satisfaction and enrolment, so much so that it became clear over the past year that we needed to address the issue that our resources are finite and cannot meet the climbing demand. We also recognized that not all participants were finishing the entire Certificate. Our intentions were to find a way to: deliver the program within our means, maintain the quality and integrity of the Certificate, and help participants to complete all three courses and receive their Certificate.

The principal change to the CUT

is the registration procedure, which will allow us to cap our enrolments. Registration will be handled by the Quest system at the beginning of each term, and the numbers will be restricted so that we can maintain the quality of our service. There are other changes, too, designed to provide more support to participants as they move through the program.

Past CUT participants will be given the opportunity to either complete the CUT under the old rules, or switch to the revised program. Three-quarters of the spaces will be maintained for doctoral-program candidates, and one-quarter will be available to Master's-level students. See the table on page 4 for a brief synopsis of the main changes. However, if you are a CUT participant or are interested in the program, be sure to consult the following website and follow the links to learn specific details about all of the CUT components: <http://www.trace.uwaterloo.ca/CUT.html>.

For current participants, there are distinct advantages to switching to the revised program. First, all CUT participants registered through

Quest will receive **priority access** to both the required TRACE workshops for GS 901 and observation bookings for GS 903. For GS 902, more hands-on support will be provided to assist these participants in completing this course. And fewer workshop response papers are required in GS 901.

Information sessions are scheduled later in September to provide more details and answer questions. For current CUT participants, the session is **Thursday, September 21, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** in Needles Hall, room 3001. New CUT participants, or those interested in learning more about the program, should plan to attend a session on **Thursday, September 21, from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.** in Needles Hall, room 3001.

We recognize that change does not come without some bumps. To make the transition as smooth as possible, we have tried to anticipate and address as many of your questions as possible via our web-based materials; however, we ask for your patience as we all learn to work with this revised program.

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Welcoming New Faculty to UW

On September 5 and 6, UW welcomed nearly 100 new faculty members to UW.

The events kicked off with a barbecue at Chatterbox Farm on Tuesday evening, where President Johnston and his wife hosted new faculty members and their spouses. The Faculty Association of the University of Waterloo co-sponsored this event.

On Wednesday, new faculty enjoyed a full day of events. They began the day with coffee and an e-

orientation. Working in small groups, they searched for UW resources online and sought to find interesting websites to share with other groups. Catherine Schryer and Mark Morton facilitated this session.

At lunch, the new faculty members were joined by their Chairs, Directors, and Deans in a networking event. Amit Chakma provided opening remarks and Donna Ellis acted as emcee of the luncheon.

A panel discussion on being successful at UW while maintaining a sense of balance followed lunch. Gail Cuthbert Brandt served as moderator. Panelists Terry McMahon, Christine McWebb, Romy Shioda, and Roydon Fraser shared strategies and advice with the new faculty members and responded to a number of questions.

Thanks to all who helped to make these events a success. Remember: "Community begins with you!"

A Revised CUT... *Continued from page 3*

Current CUT Components	Revised CUT Components
GS 901 Requirements:	
6 workshops	6 workshops
1 required workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Dossiers 	2 required workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the Learner • Course Design
6 reflective response papers	4 reflective response papers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 per required workshop • 2 others
Workshop Attendance Form (NEW)	Workshop Attendance Form
GS 902 Requirements:	
2 workshops	2 required workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Dossiers • Research Projects
2 reflective response papers	2 group-consultation sessions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Dossiers • Research Projects
1 research project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 1: research paper, or • Option 2: mini-workshop 	1 research project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 1, Option 2, or • Option 3: research poster
1 teaching dossier	1 teaching dossier
GS 903 Requirements:	
Minimum of 3 observed teaching events	No change
3 reflective response papers	
Other Key Changes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration is required through Quest at the beginning of each term, when spaces are available • GS 901 is a prerequisite for GS 902 • <u>Maximum</u> time limit to complete each course is 1 year • Primary focus is on doctoral students who plan to pursue an academic career • Support for English-as-a-Second-Language participants is offered through Renison College courses • Courses will appear on transcript from time of registration as In Progress (IP), and will show as a Credit (CR) when completed or a No-Credit Note (NCR) if not completed • Continuation criteria have been approved to enable TRACE to remove participants from the CUT who are unwilling to demonstrate continuous improvement and/or to incorporate the formative feedback given by TRACE consultants 	
Check the CUT web site for specific details and to review the FAQs.	

Internationalizing the Curriculum: A Report

From May 14 until May 19, I attended an academy on internationalizing the curriculum at Malaspina University. The experience broadened my understanding of internationalization and its relevance to curricular issues.

According to Betty Leask (2003), one of the keynote speakers, internationalizing can mean the recruitment of high-fee-paying foreign students or the exporting of costly university programs to foreign shores in order to ensure economic survival in the face of ever dwindling public funding. But she warned that a focus only on the economic benefits of internationalization can prove both limiting and disastrous. For example, some universities have attracted large numbers of foreign students only to have them abruptly leave when the services they required to succeed were not provided. Other universities have had to dismantle their programs that they offered abroad when they discovered that they could not ensure the quality of their

course offerings.

Leask and the other speakers asked us to consider the wider academic and cultural implications of internationalization. They pointed out that many of our classrooms now host not only foreign students but first- and second-generation Canadians representing a rich diversity of cultural backgrounds. For instance, in my own first-year class last year I discovered that English was the second language for close to two-thirds of my students and that every continent except Antarctica was represented in my classroom. In other words, many of our classrooms are already internationalizing. And these students are bringing different and complex expectations to the teaching and learning arena.

The conference organizers also pointed out that this growing diversity within the student population offered universities opportunities to foster cross-cultural understanding and to develop more global citizens. As Leask put it, "Universities have a clear responsibility to prepare gradu-

ates with international, cross-cultural perspectives, who can be active and critical participants in world society." We are living in a globally more interdependent world – students who understand their own culture and other cultures will be better prepared to deal with the technical, cultural, economic and political implications of this more interdependent world.

Of course, this change both in the student body and in focus does have curricular implications. As Hanneke Teekens (2003) pointed out, faculty who want to include a more international focus need to have some knowledge of the different teaching and learning expectations that foreign students or first-generation Canadian students bring to the classroom. For instance, I have sometimes had students from the Far East tell me that they deserved extra credit because they worked "so hard". I now know that this is a legitimate basis for grades in their educational system. Some faculty might want to take this expecta-

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LT3 Fall 2006 Events

(Centre for Learning and Teaching Through Technology)

The "Spirit of Why Not?" in Course Design: Using UW-ACE to Teach On-Campus and Distance Education Students Simultaneously

Presented by Dr. James Skidmore, Department of Germanic & Slavic Studies, University of Waterloo
Thursday, September 28, 12:15 – 1:15 p.m.

Special Event: Square Pegs in Round Holes: Fitting an Undergraduate Medical Curriculum into a Learning Management System

Presented by Dr. Michael Clarke, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ottawa
Thursday, October 26, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.

All events are held in the FLEX Lab, LIB 329

For more information on other LT3 Events, or to register for an event, please go to:
<http://LT3.uwaterloo.ca/events>

Please note that the E-Merging Learning Workshop will once again be taking place in the Fall 2006 term. The workshop aims to assist instructors in using learning technologies in pedagogically informed ways. For more information, please visit the following web site: <http://LT3.uwaterloo.ca/programs/ELW/>

Internationalizing the Curriculum...

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tion into account as part of their course planning. Of course, students bring a host of other expectations to courses as well. The academy organizers emphasized that one of the best ways to address these concerns was for faculty to be clear about their own expectations. Many of our syllabi could be based on tacit assumptions and expectations that make sense to us but could be very confusing to foreign students. Consequently, organizers advocated clearly articulating course objectives as well as assignment expectations.

Other factors can also work to make a course more international. Teekens suggested that faculty simply consider bringing more international content into their curriculum. Not all courses could do this, but perhaps more could and in the process broaden their students' view of their discipline. Finally, of course, all the speakers were strong advocates for respect for cultural diversity within classroom settings.

Although I enjoyed the academy, it also left me wanting to learn more – especially about the different educational expectations that students bring to our classrooms.

Consequently, TRACE will be collecting resources on this topic for interested faculty members.

References

Leask, B. (2003). Beyond the numbers—levels and layers of internationalization to utilize and support growth and diversity. 17th IDP Australian International Education Conference. Melbourne, Australia.

Teekens, H. (2003). The requirement to develop specific skills for teaching in an intercultural setting. *Journal of Studies in International Education*. 7(1): 108-119.

Catherine Schryer

Announcing Fall 2006 TRACE Events

TRACE will be offering many workshops this term, which are open to all UW faculty members, staff instructors, and graduate students.

<i>Teaching Large Classes</i>	September 26	12 - 1:30 p.m.
<i>Consultation Session: Research Projects</i>	October 27	12 - 1:30 p.m.
OR	November 24	12 - 1:30 p.m.
<i>Consultation Session: Teaching Dossiers</i>	October 6	12 - 1:30 p.m.
OR	November 3	12 - 1:30 p.m.
OR	December 1	12 - 1:30 p.m.
<i>CVs & Cover Letters</i>	October 30	12 - 1:30 p.m.
OR	November 9	12 - 1:30 p.m.
<i>Teaching Dossiers</i>	October 25	9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
OR	December 5	9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
<i>Research Projects</i>	October 10	1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
OR	November 23	1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
<i>Designing Exams</i>	November 13	12 - 1:30 p.m.
OR	November 16	12 - 1:30 p.m.
<i>Understanding the Learner</i>	December 6	9:30 - 12:30 p.m.
OR	December 7	12:30 - 3:30 p.m.
<i>Course Design</i>	December 13	9:30 - 12:30 p.m.
OR	December 14	12:30 - 3:30 p.m.

For more specific details, watch for notices in your department and via the Workshop and Certificate listservs. To join either listserv, email trace@admmail.

Certificate in University Teaching (CUT) participants, please note that all of these workshops partially fulfill CUT requirements for GS 901 and 902. **Required CUT workshops will be offered each term. Check the CUT website for details about which workshops you require.**

To register for workshops, go to:

<http://www.trace.uwaterloo.ca/workhp.html>

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