

## Many “New”s

In thinking of what to feature in this lead article of the new academic year, I found it hard to pick one topic, as there seem to be so many new things going on – most importantly, of course, a new group of undergraduate and graduate students and faculty members joining our University but also new initiatives having to do with teaching and learning on our campus and, finally, new people (big and small)

in our office.

First of all, on behalf of all the staff here in the Teaching Resources Office (TRACE) and at LT3, our partner office that deals with the R & D of teaching and learning, I’d like to offer a very warm “Welcome!” to our new faculty and graduate students.

We will probably have met many of the new faculty members at the welcoming-day events scheduled for September 7<sup>th</sup> (see page 6 for more details on this event), and look forward to seeing you at the “Lunch-and-Learn” sessions specifically designed for new faculty that will take place over the course of the next academic year. Reflecting the importance of recruiting and retaining top-flight faculty, UW and several other Canadian universities now employ faculty-recruitment officers whose job it is to provide information about the university and the community to potential new faculty, and to help ease the transition once new faculty members and their families arrive on campus. This includes providing information concerned with moving, helping to find doctors and schools in the area as well as providing information on immigration policies. Our recruitment officer is Fran Hannigan, who works out of the office of Bruce Mitchell, UW’s Associate Provost, Academic & Student Affairs. In the June/July issue, the magazine *University Affairs* featured an article on this relatively new activity of universities and the people who are doing these

jobs (including Fran), as well as some of the faculty members who have benefited from these efforts ([www.universityaffairs.ca](http://www.universityaffairs.ca)).

We look forward to meeting the many new graduate students who will join the ranks of those taking part in our Certificate in University Teaching (CUT). We are justifiably proud of the CUT program, which is flexible, practical, and challenging. It has been running for about seven years and is designed for UW graduate students (both master’s and doctoral-level) interested in honing their teaching, and oral and written communication skills; there is no cost to graduate students. For more information about the fall organizational meeting on Sept. 14th, see page 5.

Our Teaching Excellence Council (TEC), a group of about twenty dedicated and celebrated teachers, has been working hard on several new fronts: The first Teaching Excellence Academy took place in early August; several academic units have had custom-made Teaching “Spa” Days designed for them by TRACE and LT3 staff, and more are planned for the future; and we have plans to open up the classrooms of great teachers so that other faculty members can learn from what they do (see page 4 for more details on recent TEC activities).

Some of the ‘newness’, of course, stems from my having been away from the action around here, having only recently returned from five wonderful months in New Zealand

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## “...An Energizing Experience!”



This is one of the phrases BJ Rye, who teaches Psychology at St. Jerome's, uses to describe her experience at the inaugural session of UW's Teaching Excellence Academy (TEA - see page 5). I recently interviewed BJ about the Academy, which ran Aug. 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> and part of the 11<sup>th</sup> this summer.

When asked what she perceived as being the most valuable aspect of having attended the Academy sessions, she immediately said “The process and the interdisciplinary context were, for me, the greatest strengths.” BJ was in one of two groups of about six faculty members from different disciplines who took part in the intensive sessions; each group was taught by two leaders, so there was plenty of guidance. The purpose of the TEA was to encourage our known good teachers to become great teachers by having them re-examine the learning and teaching approaches in one of their upcoming courses. BJ was particularly enthusiastic about how helpful it was for her to get feedback from the other five people in her group who came from different disciplines. The format of the workshop, which involved al-

ternating spending time on one's own to work developing a course with group time in which individuals presented their ideas and then received feedback from others, was also a highlight. The fact that the venue for the TEA was away from participants' home turfs (St. Paul's College) ensured that they weren't interrupted and could really focus on the task at hand. When BJ and I were talking, it occurred to both of us that three or four days sounds like a huge amount of time to take out of one's schedule to devote to a single course. But, if one considers what most of us manage to achieve within a similar period when our work is less focused (telephoning, emailing, meetings, administrative chores), then developing a thoughtful plan for a course over 3 days - many aspects of which could transfer to other courses - is, in fact, a good use of time. BJ is convinced (as were others at the session, apparently) that having the interactive feedback in fact *saved* her time in her course preparation.

The course that BJ worked on was Psychology 318: “Psychosexual Organization”, which includes both biological and social aspects of gender identity, sexual identity, and sexual orientation. So, for example, conditions such as congenital adrenal hyperplasia (in which female fetuses are exposed to elevated levels of male hormones) are discussed, as are the social and psychological problems of individuals who, for example, are “psychologically intersexed”, in other words who are born genetically of one sex, but who have always felt they belonged to the other sex.

Given the course content, it is not surprising that BJ has affective learning goals (growth in feelings or emotional areas) for her students, as well as the more conventional cognitive goals. She wants her students to understand the issues from the point of view of people with these conditions and to be able to sympathize with the problems they encounter and to empathize with them. As well as lecturing herself, she will have guest lecturers tell their stories, and her students will watch videos, and participate in class discussions.

Aligning one's learning goals for students with how one assesses their progress was stressed during the TEA sessions. BJ will have students give written feedback to guest speakers and will assess that and other written work generated by groups that analyse case studies, in order to judge to what degree her students have achieved the affective learning goals.

Another goal is for her students to become more critical consumers of information; to that end she will have them write a critique of two recent newspaper articles about a research article in *Psychological Science* entitled “Sexual arousal patterns of bisexual men”, which was discussed in *The New York Times* and in the *Globe and Mail*. She will ask her students to determine whether the article was fairly summarized in the newspaper reports.

BJ said she “...would recommend this workshop to any faculty member who wants to look at his or her course with fresh eyes - to make it better. We can always make a course better!”

## New TRACE Faculty Associates



The TRACE Office is delighted to welcome Rohan Jayasundera as an addition to our staff this fall; he will be our Faculty Associate for Science, on a part-time secondment for one year. Rohan, a UW alumnus and Undergraduate Officer in the Physics Department, received the Distinguished Teacher Award in 1999. He is well known to UW

teachers in Science and Engineering for his commitment to students, his leadership in innovative teaching methods and his willingness to support other instructors in their teaching. As a member of the Teaching Excellence Council, Rohan has contributed to a number of projects enhancing teaching across UW, including bringing an instructor's perspective to the UW-ACE Steering Committee.

Rohan will support ongoing TRACE activities and some new initiatives, including providing consultations for Science and Engineering faculty members exploring enhancements to their teaching, working with Science graduate students in the Certificate in University Teaching program, and investigating new resources and methods for Science teaching. This pilot project for TRACE Faculty Associates

builds on similar roles at other universities such as Queen's University and the University of Southern California. We plan to evaluate this role over the course of the year, with a view to possible extension within Science and to other Faculties.

In related TRACE news, Catherine Schryer of English Language and Literature will also join us as a part-time Faculty Associate in January 2006. Cathy is then scheduled to become TRACE Co-Director in May 2006 and to become TRACE Director when Barbara Bulman-Fleming's term concludes in September 2006. More about Cathy's appointment will appear in the Winter 2006 edition of *Teaching Matters*.

*Tom Carey*

### “News”...

*Continued from page 1*  
as part of my sabbatical year. Here are some of the ‘people’ additions to our office. My trusted Associate Director, Donna Ellis, is now one-third of the way through her maternity leave, having given birth to our smallest newcomer, Liam Michael Macmillan Ellis, in early May. Welcome, Liam! Fortunately for all of us Dr. Tracy Penny Light, of LT3 and History, and a former TA Developer in TRACE, has been very capably filling in as Acting Associate Director since January. New this term to the TRACE team will be Dr. Rohan Jayasundera of Physics and Renée MacPhee of Health

Studies and Gerontology. Rohan will be TRACE's first Faculty Associate. See above for further information on this appointment and on Rohan. Renée, who is about to defend her PhD, will take over from Geneviève Desmarais, who has done an outstanding job as Program Coordinator for our CUT program this past year. See page 8 of this newsletter and our January 2005 newsletter (<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infotrac/tmJanuary05.pdf>) to learn more about Renée. With all these “comings”, we should also mention a “going” – that of Tom Carey, Associate Vice-President, Learning Resources & Innovation, who over-

sees TRACE, LT3, Distance and Continuing Education, and UW's Audio Visual Centre. Tom, who recently became a grandfather, is on a research leave to California where he will “.... lay out a framework for university systems and institutions to collaborate on the creation of resources which can be customized for faculty workshops and educational events specific to each institution and subject area.” See “Spotlight on Tom Carey” on the LT3 website (<http://LT3.uwaterloo.ca/>).

*Barbara Bulman-Fleming*

# Teaching Excellence Council (TEC) Updates

Members of the TEC, a group of about twenty dedicated teachers representing all UW's Faculties, have been meeting through the summer to plan for the coming year.

## *Changes in Membership*

Many thanks for their service on the Council over the past year to Winston Cherry, Mariela Gutierrez, Brent Hall, Conrad Hewitt, Stephen New, and Bob McKillop. We welcome incoming members Carey Bissonnette (Chemistry), Richard Holmes (Philosophy), Robert Ryan (French), and Jeff West (Civil Engineering).

This year Jean Andrey (Geography), and Lyndon Jones (Optometry) will be co-chairing the TEC sessions. Our theme for the year is "Engaging Passion and Depth in Student Learning". This might seem to be an overly ambitious aim, but if any two people can inspire others to take on this task, these two can. Have a look at the TEC website to check out their impressive credentials <http://www.teaching.uwaterloo.ca/>. Here are brief updates on some of TEC's activities:

## *Teaching Excellence Academy*

August 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> saw 13 UW professors taking part in UW's inaugural Teaching Excellence Academy sessions. See page 5 for Tracy Penny Light's feature article on the Academy's activities.

## *Presidents' Colloquium on Teaching and Learning*

The second annual PCTL will take place in January and we have invited George Kuh as guest speaker. Dr. Kuh is Chancellor's

Professor of Higher Education at Indiana University Bloomington, and Project Director of NSSE, the National Survey of Student Engagement. The NSSE began in the USA about 5 years ago, and is an assessment tool comprising over 150 questions designed to provide information to universities and colleges concerning ".... the extent to which undergraduate students are involved in educational practices empirically linked to high levels of learning and development."

(<http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/strategic/pdfs/NSSE04UAlbertaBenchmarkReportSelectedSummary-G10d04.pdf>) First- and fourth-year students were surveyed at UW and 7 of the other G10 Canadian universities in 2004 in order to gather data concerning five key areas: 1) level of academic challenges, 2) active and collaborative learning, 3) student-faculty interactions, 4) enriching educational experiences, and 5) supportive campus environment. We have asked Dr. Kuh to address ways we can use the information provided by the feedback data to improve student learning at UW. Our January newsletter will provide more information about this event.

## *"Teaching Spa" Days*

Imagine taking a day to get a shot in the arm concerning your teaching, comparing teaching successes (and failures) with colleagues and enjoying good company and good food – all it takes is a little organization. Following up on successful sessions at St. Jerome's and Recreation and Leisure Studies, twenty faculty members from the

School of Optometry will engage in such a workshop on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. The lunch-time guest speaker will be Howard Armitage from the School of Accountancy and the day's activities will involve presentations/interactive sessions including reflecting on one's teaching, getting into the heads of our students to figure out how best they might learn, and using UW-ACE to improve pedagogy. Those involved in facilitating the workshops will be myself, Jane Holbrook (LT3's Science Faculty liaison), Mark Morton (Instructional Program Manager with LT3), and Tracy Penny Light (Acting Associate Director, TRACE). Contact the TRACE Office if you think your department or Faculty would be interested in organizing such an event ([trace@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:trace@uwaterloo.ca)).

## *Open-Classroom Series*

Visiting a class taught by an excellent teacher or going to a research talk given by a wonderful speaker is inspiring to anyone, no matter how much experience one has. We hope to give instructors the opportunity to sit in on some classes taught by exemplary teachers this Fall, and will let the academic community know more about our plans by email as they firm up over the coming weeks. For more information, follow this link to a similar program offered a few years ago at the University of Saskatchewan: <http://www.usask.ca/communications/ocn/jan19-01/news1.shtml>.

Barbara Bulman-Fleming

# Teaching Excellence Academy



Back Row L-R: Richard Holmes, Tracy Penny Light, Jim Frank, Robert Ryan, Mardy Fraser, Guenter Scholz, Jim Barnett, Tom Carey

Middle Row: Mary Louise McAllister, BJ Rye, Linda Jessup, Vivian Dayeh, Kirsten Muller, Stephen Murphy

Front Row: Andrew McMurry, Katherine Acheson, Nancy Vanden Bosch

For three (and a bit) days this August, thirteen faculty members from Arts, Science, Applied Health Sciences, Engineering, and Environmental Studies, nominated by their Deans and Chairs, attended Waterloo's first Teaching Excellence Academy. This opportunity to discuss teaching and learning processes and approaches with colleagues who were also good teachers was really valuable and an experience many had never had. As one participant noted, "this is the first time in sixteen years that I've had an opportunity to discuss teaching with my colleagues." It was truly inspiring to hear the buzz around teaching and to work with such impassioned colleagues.

The workshop format was adapted from the McGill/SFU/Concordia

"Rethinking Teaching" workshop developed by Cheryl Amundsen and her colleagues and was facilitated by myself, Tom Carey (Engineering/AVP-LRI), Jim Barnett (Accountancy) and Jim Frank (Kinesiology). The workshop provided an opportunity to reflect on individual teaching philosophies and to identify ways to develop personal excellence as a teacher; to learn and apply course-design principles to design or redesign a course; and to share instructional and assessment methods. Not only was the workshop an opportunity to engage in "good talk about good teaching" but participants also had focused time to work on a course – time that many reported they do not often have.

Participants noted the value of

thinking of their courses as a "whole" and working to align the learning outcomes, teaching and assessment methods. The chance to receive feedback on their course-design ideas from their experienced colleagues was also appreciated. Plans are currently underway to meet with the participants again either in the fall or winter terms to follow up with them on the outcomes of their course redesigns. Overall, it was a rewarding experience for all and we are looking forward to next year's Academy. We already have a growing waiting list for the next workshop scheduled for summer 2006. To learn more about this event, please contact me at [tplight@admmail.uwaterloo.ca](mailto:tplight@admmail.uwaterloo.ca).

*Tracy Penny Light*

## Certificate in University Teaching (CUT) for Graduate Students – Organizational Meeting

If you are interested in finding out more about UW's CUT program for graduate students, please attend the meeting being held on **Wednesday, September 14, 2005**, from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. in the Math and Computer Building (MC), Room 5136.

You will learn about the various components of the program, meet TRACE staff, and hear from a current participant. We will also give you a brochure that outlines the program at a glance, and we will answer any questions you might have about how the program works.

We also encourage any faculty members to attend who are interested in this program for their graduate students. Associate Chairs for Graduate Studies as well as Graduate Secretaries may also find the session useful in their work with graduate students.

# Developing an Interdisciplinary Course

Interdisciplinary courses involve the combining and integration of two or more academic disciplines or fields of study. They are becoming increasingly popular in universities to help improve the quality of students' education by promoting critical thinking and creativity, as well as preparing students for the demands of contemporary life. They are also widely used as an approach to answer more complex questions, to address broad issues not adequately covered by one discipline, and to solve problems that are beyond the scope of any one discipline. On July 26, 2005, I offered a TRACE workshop that addressed some aspects of interdisciplinary education.

An important aspect of interdisciplinary education is that it should involve an *integration* of disciplinary views, rather than merely comparing and contrasting disciplines and perspectives. Therefore, instructors should focus on aspects that bridge the disciplines. When developing an interdisciplinary course, instructors should also have a clear purpose in mind, such as

coming up with new insights or an exploration or explanation of some phenomenon.

The assessment and evaluation of learning in interdisciplinary courses is a thorny issue, because multiple-choice questions rarely adequately assess a student's ability to integrate concepts from different disciplines. More applied methods, such as essays and debates, are often necessary to determine how well a student can produce work that combines the knowledge from different disciplines. TRACE has a Tips Sheet called "Types of Assignments and Tests" that can help you think about alternative methods of assessment.

During the workshop I also discussed the concept of *team teaching*, which allows students to be exposed to instructors with different perspectives and areas of expertise. In order to make this collaboration go smoothly, instructors should plan things ahead together and respect each other's expertise. Conflicts can arise when teaching as a team, and it is important to document all decisions made to

prevent later disagreements.

The workshop ended with some pointers for teaching to an "interdisciplinary audience" – that is, to students from diverse disciplines. The importance of clarifying jargon and terminology specific to one discipline was highlighted, as was the importance of diversifying examples to reach students from different backgrounds. In addition, it was suggested that courses could begin with students completing a *Knowledge Survey* – an assessment of students' prior knowledge of the course content – in order to find out exactly what students from different disciplines already know about the subject area.

Altogether, developing an interdisciplinary course involves consideration of how different disciplines can be integrated for the purpose of new insights and explorations. Consequently, offering such courses will require planning to ensure that collaboration goes smoothly and that assignments evaluate students' abilities to integrate disciplinary insights in novel ways.

*Chris Watson*

## For New Faculty

On September 7<sup>th</sup>, this year's first welcoming event for new faculty members took place. All new faculty members with contracts of at least a year are invited to one year's worth of sessions designed specifically for them. This year over 65 new faculty members were invited to the kick-off event, with the morning "Amazing Race" designed for encouraging them to get to know others from outside their departments and Faculties followed by a lunch with some of UW's top administrators, Deans and Chairs. The afternoon featured a panel discussion on issues relating to balanc-

ing one's teaching, research, service, and life outside the University. Panel members were Carey Bissonnette, Chemistry, Diana Denton, Drama and Speech Communication, Roydon Fraser, Mechanical Engineering and President of the Faculty Association (FAUW), and Beth Jewkes, Chair of the Management Sciences Department. An "Ultimate BBQ" for new faculty and their partners, served by UW Catering at President Johnston's farm, capped the day's activities. The BBQ event was co-sponsored by FAUW and the offices of the Associate Vice-President, Learning Resources and

Innovation, and the Associate Provost, Academic and Student Affairs.

One new-faculty workshop will be held in each term, starting with "Funding for Innovations", to be held in early November. Sessions on documenting teaching for tenure and promotion, and using course evaluations to improve teaching and learning will follow in the winter and spring terms, respectively. Invitations to new faculty will be sent prior to each of these events. You can also check the new faculty web site at: [www.watport.uwaterloo.ca](http://www.watport.uwaterloo.ca) for details. Welcome to UW!

*Barbara Bulman-Fleming*

# So You Want To Be A Faculty Member?

*or Everything you should know about being a faculty member but didn't know you should ask!!*

Students (undergraduate and graduate alike) often have a misguided view of the process one goes through to become a faculty member and the scope and demands of such a position. Faculty supervisors often do not have the time to explain these concepts and sometimes take these experiences for granted. Also, students learning about career paths from only their supervisor suffer from the "I learned how to drive from my father" fate – some aspects are overemphasized and others are disregarded completely.

A presentation to fill this void and act as a guide to graduate and undergraduate students interested in pursuing academic careers was presented by me on July 11, 2005. Necessary steps leading to a successful academic career were a framework for the presentation. These steps included a discussion of the pros and cons of an academic lifestyle, the preparation required to orient a person towards an academic

position, the process to land a faculty position, and recommendations on how to initiate one's first tenure-track job. To ensure broad applicability, academics from various faculties and universities previewed my talk and provided feedback based on their personal experiences.

The fact that one slide was dedicated to the pros of an academic life compared to three slides dedicated to the cons did not deter the audience. Students actively participated in discussions across a wide range of topics. These included: discussing the most important part of choosing a graduate program (choosing a supervisor), recommending experiences one should obtain from a graduate program (evidence of publishing, teaching, and administration), commenting on the frustration associated with just getting an academic job interview (could be one of many reasons), and anticipating life in a first academic position (can be isolating;

it is recommended that one finds mentors). Students were reminded that obtaining a faculty position is just another step in a career path. The first faculty position automatically leads to higher expectations such that the new academic is now responsible for starting a research program (generating research ideas, applying for research funding, publishing papers), finding and supervising competent graduate students, and teaching courses for the first time.

Based on the student feedback, the talk was well received by the roughly 100 students in attendance; the areas that were most helpful to them included how to land the first faculty position and what to look forward to in an academic job interview. The feedback will be used to improve the talk in anticipation of the next offering, in December 2005 (see page 8).

Slides of the July 2005 talk can be downloaded from [www.eng.uwaterloo.ca/~dclausi](http://www.eng.uwaterloo.ca/~dclausi).

*David A. Clausi, Associate Professor,  
Systems Design Engineering*

## LT3 Fall 2005 Events

(Centre for Learning and Teaching Through Technology)

<i>Learning and Teaching @ the Centre: LT3 and You</i>	September 29	3 - 4 p.m.
<i>Introduction to Online Resources for New Faculty</i>	October 6	12 - 1 p.m.
<i>New Classroom Workshop</i>	<i>Series 1:</i>	October 13 9:30 a.m.-12 noon
		October 27 9:30 a.m.-12 noon
	<i>Series 2:</i>	October 17 9:30 a.m.-12 noon
		October 31 9:30 a.m.-12 noon
<i>Five Ways that Technology Can Enhance the Learning Experience of Students while Saving Instructors Time</i>	November 17	3 - 4 p.m.
<i>UW ACE Instructors Group Session</i>	December 7	12 - 1 p.m.

All events are held in the FLEX Lab, LIB 329.

For more information or to register for an event, go to:

<http://lt3.uwaterloo.ca/events>

## New CUT Program Coordinator



**Renée MacPhee** will be completing her PhD this fall in Health Studies and Gerontology. Her dissertation research focused on the use of emergency medical services by the elderly. Renée also has a Master's Degree in Gerontology (UW) and a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Psychology (Carleton). She has completed her diploma in adult education from St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova

Scotia, and has been a participant in the CUT program. Renée has been teaching part time at WLU for the past two years in the Kinesiology and Physical Education Department. Courses that she has taught include *Concepts in Health* (2<sup>nd</sup> year) and *Health and Aging* (4<sup>th</sup> year). This year she will be teaching *Human Growth and Development* and *Adaptive Physical Activity* (both 3<sup>rd</sup> year courses). Her primary goal in terms of teaching is to ensure that the design and delivery of lectures meet the different learning styles of her students. Her research interests include: emergency health services and the elderly; continuing education in older adults/health care professionals; and, breast cancer in older

women. Renée is looking forward to taking on the role of Program Coordinator and in helping others develop their strengths as teachers.

You can reach Renée at: [rsmacphe@healthy](mailto:rsmacphe@healthy) or at ext. 7110.

### Announcing Fall 2005 TRACE Events

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

<i>Presentation Skills</i>	September 27	12 - 1:30 p.m.
<i>The Craft of Research Writing</i>	October 12	12 - 1:30 p.m.
<i>Teaching Dossiers</i>	October 20	1 - 3 p.m.
<i>CVs and Cover Letters</i>	October 24	12 - 1:30 p.m.
	or November 3	12 - 1:30 p.m.
<i>Assignment Design</i>	November 16	12 - 1:30 p.m.
<i>Understanding the Learner</i>	December 6	1 - 4 p.m.
<i>So You Want To Be A Faculty Member</i>	December 7	10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
<i>Understanding the Learner</i>	December 15	9:30 a.m. - 12:30 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](mailto:trace@admmail).

Certificate in University Teaching (CUT) participants, please note that all of these workshops partially fulfill CUT requirements for GS 901 and 902. **The teaching dossier workshop is required for the CUT and will be offered every term.**

To register for workshops, go to:

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

## TRACE Teaching Matters

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*Teaching Matters* is published by the Teaching Resources and Continuing Education (TRACE) Office. At TRACE, we support yet challenge instructors in developing and reflecting on their teaching practices, goals, and beliefs.

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