

Words of Welcome

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the University of Waterloo's seventh annual Teaching and Learning Conference, **Opportunities and New Directions (OND) 2015!**

The theme of this year's Conference is "Making Teaching and Learning Visible." Through this theme, we explore what we can do to clarify and communicate the processes underlying teaching and learning, so that learners and teachers work towards the same outcomes. We explore challenging and provocative questions, such as "How do we know what students already know, what they don't know, and what they have learned?" and "How can we make the thinking underlying our instructional decisions more explicit for ourselves, our students, and our colleagues?"

There is indeed much about teaching and learning that remains unintentionally hidden and unspoken. Thus, each of the day's over forty panel discussions, workshops, and presentations attempts to reveal and communicate assumptions or practices in some way. At the Conference, you will find a diverse array of research-based and practice-based sessions from across the disciplines.

The day begins with the Presidents' Colloquium keynote session facilitated by Dr. Linda Nilson, a renowned researcher, prolific writer, and dynamic educator. During this session, Dr. Nilson will explore one of the most common, yet challenging questions we have as teachers: How can we gather evidence of and measure student learning? The intent is that you will leave the session with concrete strategies for doing just this.

One of our regular Conference highlights is the "Igniting Our Practice" plenary session. This year, three of Waterloo's inspiring faculty members, Drs. Greta Kroeker (Arts), Troy Vasiga (Math), and Jonathan Witt (Science), will recreate for us learning opportunities they designed for their students. In doing so, they will draw us into their disciplines and engage us in disciplinary ways of thinking. During the session, we'll discuss and reflect on ways in which we can integrate these ideas and insights into our own teaching.

We hope that you will leave the Conference feeling that you are part of a community that values and has intellectual curiosity about teaching and learning. We hope that you will forge new and deepened connections with colleagues both within, and perhaps beyond, your discipline. And finally, we hope that you will find ideas that inspire your teaching philosophy and practice.

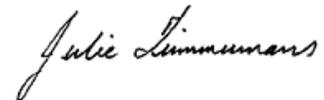
We look forward to a day of shared ideas and experiences and thank you for your ongoing dedication to teaching and learning.



Mario Coniglio,
Associate Vice President, Academic



Donna Ellis, Director
Centre for Teaching Excellence (CTE)



Julie Timmermans, Conference Chair
Instructional Developer –
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