

**ST. JEROME'S  
UNIVERSITY**



**PRESS RELEASE**

**Waterloo Professor Wins International Innovating Award  
for Cutting-Edge Lab & Hand-On History Project**

**Waterloo, 30 May 2017**

Prof. Steven Bednarski has won the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education's prestigious *D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning*. This is the second year in a row that the Society has bestowed this prize upon a faculty member from the University of Waterloo.

Steven Bednarski is a social historian of late medieval crime, gender, and natural environment at St. Jerome's University, a public Roman Catholic university federated within the University of Waterloo, where he also Co-Directs the Medieval Studies Program.

In 2012, Bednarski developed a student-driven process that led to the production of his second book, *A Poisoned Past: The Life and Times of Margarida de Portu, a Fourteenth-Century Accused Poisoner* (University of Toronto Press, 2014). This book proposed and pioneered a new genre of historical writing, pedagogical microhistory: gripping historical narrative, grounded in rigorous academic research, written with the learner and reader in mind.

In 2013, he applied for and obtained a large Partnership Development Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), which formed a dynamic research partnership between St. Jerome's, uWaterloo, Queen's University (Kingston), and the Bader International Study Centre (BISC) at Herstmonceux Castle, East Sussex.

Through this research Partnership, Bednarski has funded about fifty trips for Canadian students to Herstmonceux Castle, where *they learn about the past by doing*. These "junior research partners" acquire important skills working on a live archaeological site and training in local archives.

Bednarski and his team's goal is to understand how medieval climate change affected the ways in which people lived six centuries ago.

To ensure that students continue to learn once they return to Canada, Bednarski, with the support of St. Jerome's University, designed and launched the Medieval D.R.A.G.E.N. Lab (Digital Research in Arts and Graphical Environmental Networks) last September.

In the D.R.A.G.E.N. Lab, a team of undergraduate research interns works alongside MA and PhD candidates. They are supervised by faculty members on a variety of advanced research projects.

This is the first of its kind digital research lab for Medieval Studies and Medieval Environmental History. Lab members, including young undergraduate students, collaborate in teams; they apply for grants and deliver public conferences (they hosted a two-day *Climates of Change* Symposium with SSHRC support last October at the Delta Hotel, Waterloo and delivered the keynote address last month at Sir Wilfrid Laurier's *Forward into the Past* conference). Most importantly, Bednarski's students also contribute to the writing process, working on teams to co-author print and digital publications.

Bednarski's approach is revolutionizing the teaching and learning of history. It adopts a *Science model*, which underscores that people learn best by *doing*. This means going out into the world, encountering the past, and sharing it with others.

In recognition for his work, Bednarski is the recipient of a 2017 D2L Teaching Innovation Award. He will receive the award at a ceremony hosted by the Society for Teaching and Learning in Halifax, on 21 June 2017. Previously, Bednarski won the University of Waterloo's Distinguished Teacher Award in 2011.

For more on the D2L Innovation in Teaching and Learning award, please visit <https://www.stlhe.ca/awards/brightspace-innovation-award/2017-recipient/>



WITH 2014 EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ADVENTURE STUDENTS,  
AT HERSTMONCEUX CASTLE, EAST SUSSEX



## D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning

### About the Award

Established in 2012, the D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning, sponsored by D2L (Desire2Learn), celebrates and recognizes up to five post-secondary educators each year for their innovative approaches that promote student-centred teaching and learning.

Award recipients receive the following:

- 1) \$1,200 for registration and travel to attend the [FUSION](#) annual conference held in Las Vegas.
- 2) \$1,000 for registration and travel to attend STLHE's Annual Conference
- 3) Two year membership in STLHE

### Eligibility and Criteria

The D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning is open to all instructors currently teaching at a post-secondary institution, regardless of discipline, level, or term of appointment. Unique among the STLHE awards is that the D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning is international and open to applicants from all countries; however, applications will only be accepted in French or English. Candidates do not need to be members of STLHE to apply.

Please note that the D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning is for individual achievement. Teams of instructors will not be considered. STLHE encourages team-based teaching and learning approaches and initiatives through the Alan Blizzard Award.

Applications are invited from individuals with a demonstrable record of innovation(s) in areas including pedagogical approaches, teaching methods, course design, curriculum development, assessment methods, and various tools or technologies that enhance learning and have had a significant impact on post-secondary education.

### Call for Applications/Deadline

STLHE and D2L invite submissions for the 2017 D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning.

**The deadline to submit an application package is Sunday, 12 February 2017, 11:59 pm EST to the URL: <https://www.hightail.com/u/STLHE-SAPES>.**

[D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning – Call For Nominations Poster](#)

[2017 D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning – Application Form](#)

### More about D2L

D2L is the software leader that makes the learning experience better. The company's cloud-based platform is easier to use, more flexible, and smart. With D2L, companies can personalize the experience for every learner to deliver real results. The company is a world leader in learning analytics: its platform predicts learner performance so that companies can take action in real-time to keep employees on track. D2L is used by learners in higher education, K-12, and the

enterprise sector, including the Fortune 1000. D2L has operations in the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, Brazil, and Singapore. [www.D2L.com](http://www.D2L.com)

## Previous Award Recipients

For quick reference, award recipients' names are listed below by year. For detailed information about each recipient please view award recipients by year via the navigation menu at the left.

### 2016:

Carol Hulls  
Continuing Lecturer, Department of Mechanical and Mechatronic Engineering  
University of Waterloo

David Hutchison  
Professor, Faculty of Education and Faculty of Humanities  
Brock University

Jason Pearson  
Associate Professor, Department of Chemistry  
University of Prince Edward Island

Peter Sankoff  
Professor, Faculty of Law  
University of Alberta

Matthew Schnurr  
Associate Professor, Department of International Development Studies  
Dalhousie University

### 2015:

Professor Peggy Hartwick  
Instructor, School of Applied Linguistics and Language Studies  
Carleton University

Professor John Kleefeld  
Assistant Professor, College of Law  
University of Saskatchewan

Professor Veronika Mogyorody  
Academic Architectural Advisor, Visual Arts and the Built Environment  
University of Windsor

Professor Diane Reddy  
Professor, Psychology  
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Professor Aleksandra Zecevic  
Associate Professor, School of Health Sciences  
Western University

### 2014:

Dr. Christopher Buddle  
Associate Professor, Department of Natural Resource Sciences  
McGill University

Dr. Brent Mainprize  
Teaching Professor, Peter B. Gustavson School of Business  
University of Victoria

Dr. Marco Pollanen  
Associate Professor, Department of Mathematics  
Trent University

Dr. Elaine Khoo  
Senior Lecturer, English Language Development Centre  
University of Toronto

Dr. Ken Van Rees  
Professor, Department of Soil Science  
University of Saskatchewan

**2013:**

Dr. Sandra Bassendowski  
Professor, Nursing  
University of Saskatchewan

Shawn Graham  
Assistant Professor, History  
Carleton University

Jacqueline Murray  
Director, First-Year Seminar Program  
University of Guelph

Dr. Trent Tucker  
Anne Lockie and Frederic Promoli Professor, Transformational Learning  
University of Guelph

Ellen Zweibel  
Professor, Law  
University of Ottawa

**2012:**

Tetyana Antimirova  
Associate Professor, Department of Physics  
Ryerson University

Alison Flynn  
Science Lecturer, Department of Chemistry  
University of Ottawa

Joe Shapter  
Dean, Flinders University  
School of Chemical and Physical Sciences

Robert Sproule  
Lecturer, School of Accounting and Finance  
University of Waterloo

Jay Wilson  
Assistant Professor, College of Education  
University of Saskatchewan

**Enquiries**

For enquiries regarding the D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning, please contact [Patrick Lyons](mailto:patrick_lyons@carleton.ca), ([patrick\\_lyons@carleton.ca](mailto:patrick_lyons@carleton.ca)) D2L Innovation Award Coordinator.