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INSTITUTE FOR
INNOVATION AND SCHOLARSHIP
IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

Learning Matters @ KPU

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Teaching and Learning

Happy September!

Every year, as we approach September, I have happy memories of my own days as a student and of getting ready to go back to school after a summer break. In elementary and high school I loved the rituals of getting books and supplies ready for a new start in September and looked forward to reconnecting with friends after the summer.

Although most higher education institutions, including KPU, have now moved to a tri-semester model that provides more flexible options for when courses and programs may start and finish, for many (including teachers and students), the ritual of getting back to the 'classroom', (whether face to face or virtual), can be both exciting, but also a bit daunting. I have yet to meet a teacher (myself included) who does not have some butterflies at the thought of the start of a new term. In this issue of Learning Matters @ KPU, I hope that you will find that the articles included provide some ideas and resources to support the transition back to class, whenever, and wherever that may be for you.

I also wanted to share the news that September 2014 brings a professional and personal transition for me. In July, I resigned from my position of Vice Provost Teaching and Learning at KPU and will be 'passing the torch' to the Acting Vice Provost, Todd Mundle, on September 25. For a number of reasons, I have decided that at this stage of my professional life, rather than having a formal leadership role within an institution, I would like to focus on project work as a catalyst for change, and work with institutions on specific projects that support/promote change. I also love working with faculty directly through professional development workshops and seminars and will continue with this work when opportunities arise to support teaching and learning in a changing world.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my work in the role of Vice Provost Teaching and Learning at KPU and have met some wonderful colleagues and new friends. I have enjoyed many stimulating conversations and projects with those with a similar passion to mine for promoting and exploring excellence in teaching, learning and scholarship. I wish KPU continued success in future initiatives and thank all of those whom I have had the pleasure of working with for your support during the last 18 months. I hope that our paths will continue to cross in this 'small world' of teaching, learning and scholarship in higher education.

Diane.



Alan Davis,
President

Message from the President, Alan Davis

It is good to see the 3rd edition of Learning Matters appear just in time for a brand new academic year and what seems to be a record enrollment at KPU. Teaching is our core business, and (as many of you have heard me ramble on about before), I equate teaching to learning...the Danes use the same root for both verbs...and of course research and scholarship is what happens when any of us (faculty, professional staff or administrators) explore the unknown in some way, and thus learn.

Goal 3 of the Vision 2018 strategic plan asks KPU to become a better organization by regularly looking at all that it does in order to become a better (i.e. learning) institution: both in terms of efficiency and effectiveness.

So, it seems that, in addition to what faculty members explore in our classrooms and beyond, we are all teaching and learning in some way all the time, which suggests all kinds of possible synergies:

- The Resource Planning Task Force recommendations, which were finalized in June, paid a lot of attention in the “workforce” area to the training and development of all employees.
- KPU is one of the best institutions in the system for involving the learning gained from experience into its programs (we are the top teaching university in the west in terms of coop placements), and one of our Core Review actions is to explore ways to advance our prior learning assessment via portfolios.
- For my own p.d. this year I attended the AAEEBL meeting which looked at the state of play with the use of ePortfolios in engaged learning <http://www.aeebl.org/>.
- For our 3rd CRC position, we are hoping to appoint a scholar in teaching and learning.
- For several years, the Board has undertaken a series of internal audits of key administrative processes each of which has led to efficiencies and improvements.

And there are many other explicit as well as less obvious examples of where learning is going on around KPU.

Which is not to detract in any way from the artistry of teaching that is required (and which is exemplified in so many ways across KPU) to fulfill our promise to our learners: to guide them towards achieving the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to be successful in their careers, and as citizens.

Diane Salter Menzo leaves us in September. I am very grateful to her for building a solid foundation in the Office for Teaching and Learning that will serve KPU well in the future. Thanks too to Todd Mundle for taking over in the interim as we search for the new Vice Provost.

For details and registration for these and other INSTL events, please visit the Teaching and Learning Website at kpu.ca/teaching-and-learning/events

INSTL Upcoming Events

Moodle drop-ins:

- September 3 - Surrey
- September 5 - Richmond
- September 9 - Langley
- September 12 – Surrey

Outcomes Based Approaches to Student Learning (OBASL) *September 16*

Facilitated by Diane Salter, Vice Provost Teaching and Learning

What is ‘OBASL’? Why is this approach gaining adoption? How do competencies relate to learning outcomes? Join colleagues for this informative seminar and dialogue.

Open textbooks: A how-to guide on adaptation & adoption *September 23*

What is Openness in education? What is an Open Educational Resource (OER)? What is an Open Textbook? Join Dr. Rajiv Jhangiani (KPU), Mary Burgess (BCcampus), and Amanda Coolidge (BCcampus) for a hands-on session that will explore these questions, discuss the advantages and disadvantages of adopting open textbooks, and provide a guide for how you can easily adapt these to suit your needs.

Defining and Assessing Interdisciplinary Outcomes from Experiential Learning (as described on page 10)

Social Presence In Online Learning

I often thought learning online would benefit students and instructors alike while I taught in a face-to-face (f2f) classroom for many years. Why not? It's an option that enables student autonomy. Students would enjoy learning at their own time, and space, and instructors could support adult learners online through various activities. These were my assumptions and motivation to learn more about how to create effective online environments for students and instructors, and to learn more about this subject, I recently completed a graduate study in Learning and Technology at Royal Roads University.

These assumptions were challenged early in my studies when I became an online learner for 2 years. Furthermore, I soon realized how difficult it was to create elements of the f2f classroom online. Particularly student engagement. One of the first things you'll hear as an adult online learner is that the environment favors a self-directed learner, someone who takes responsibility for what, when, and how they will learn. Moreover, online learning is dependent upon "time, space, independence, and openness" (Lee, 2002, p. 101; Townley, Qian & Jing, 2002, p. 21). This was remarkably accurate. My research found when students were given clear course descriptions and the primary means of assessment in the online course upfront; students were more likely to ensure their success in the course by matching their educational values with the course delivery. The question then became, how do you motivate the 'non' self-directed learner?

The instructor, acting as a social agent, influences what students will learn by designing and organizing the learning to affect the students' cognitive processes (Al Harthi, 2010, p. 136). By creating a high level of social presence early in the online course, instructors can motivate students to engage in discussions and learn online. Anderson (2008) defines social presence as a supportive environment for students to comfortably express their own thoughts in a group setting; whereas the lack of social presence "leads to students' inability to express disagreements, share viewpoints, and explore differences, and accept support and confirmation from peers and teachers" (p. 344). The 2 week residency at the beginning of my studies helped our class to build the support network and inter-relational skills necessary for us to stay engaged and motivated to do well despite working full-time, familial and social commitments, and studying fulltime. We often commented without the residency, we may not have been as dedicated and accountable to each other as we were and still are, one year after graduation. In addition, Wang, Sierra, and Folger (2003) found small team collaboration assisted students with building social relationships and a sense of community that balanced their independent and team tasks, when facilitated by the instructor (p. 59). The instructor role is to closely monitor and scaffold discussions (Anderson, 2012, p. 168). This will help solitary learners who prefer to interact academically rather than socially, to collaborate with their peers (Ke & Carr-Chellman, 2006, p. 258, 262).

Social presence can be created using select activities from the beginning and throughout a course, to help engage students with course material. There are a myriad of activities that can be used to engage students online, and the selection will depend on the nature of the course, instructor preference, and the type of learning outcomes to be demonstrated by the learner.

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Facilitating Open Textbook Adoption Through the Creation of an Open Test Bank

Why Open?

The arguments in favour of adopting open textbooks are compelling. For students, the advantages include significant cost savings (~\$1000 to \$1500 per year), immediacy of access, convenience of cross-platform portability, and better course performance (e.g., Hilton & Laman, 2012). For faculty, there is the ability to modify the textbook to suit their course objectives and pedagogical goals. And for institutions, there are potentially higher student retention and program completion rates.

Why Not Open?

So why are faculty not yet adopting open textbooks more widely? Quite simply, for many disciplines and courses, there is no open textbook available. Where open textbooks do exist, faculty are understandably skeptical about their quality (e.g., comprehensiveness, clarity, currency, etc.). But even if an open textbook is of high quality and has received favorable faculty reviews, the absence of ancillary materials and resources (a test bank most of all) presents a significant barrier to instructors.

Why a Test Bank?

The reality is that many (overworked) regular instructors of multi-section survey courses start creating their exams from the publisher-supplied test bank, writing, revising, and editing questions over time. The need for this resource becomes even more pronounced for new faculty who do not have years of classroom and assessment experience to draw on, contract faculty assigned to a course only weeks ahead of the first class meeting, and large sections with limited teaching assistant support. For those of us that advocate for the adoption of open educational resources in the classroom, ignoring or criticizing this reality is self-defeating.

The Case of Introductory Psychology

Instructors of introductory psychology are fortunate in that we have at least two good quality open textbooks. One currently resides in the BC Campus repository and has been reviewed and recently revised by BC faculty. The other consists of a customizable series of modules written by recognized and leading scholars, funded and distributed by a group known as the NOBA Project. Of course, neither of these comes packaged with a test bank so, earlier this summer, I approached both groups and (successfully) pitched the idea of a “test bank sprint.” Modeled on the efforts of textbook sprints that bring together a group of faculty members for a few days to write a textbook from scratch, our idea was to invite faculty from a number of psychology departments in BC to come together for two days to create a high-quality test bank to cover each of the 15 topic areas of Introductory Psychology.

Organizing Principles

With funding in place and strong departmental support at KPU, the organizing team (which included KPU faculty Dianne Crisp, Cory Pedersen, and Levente Orban) began the process of planning the event. Keeping in mind that, at the best of times, writing questions is not enjoyable work, we knew that in order to recruit enough participants and to create a productive environment the sprint would have to be interspersed with opportunities for socializing and rejuvenation. Another goal was to recruit sprinters from a variety of institutions (the wider the representation, the more natural the sense of ownership and buy-in). Finally, we would have to find a way to map participants’ areas of expertise onto the 15 topic areas of Introductory Psychology in order to ensure adequate coverage.

The Test Bank Sprint

Eventually, seventeen faculty members representing the psychology departments at KPU, Thompson Rivers University, Camosun College, Northern Lights College, Capilano University, and the University of the Fraser Valley converged at the Cheam Golf Course in Chilliwack on July 18 and 19, 2014. We worked intensively, writing and vetting questions in small groups across 90-minute sessions each day, with breaks only for food and coffee. Nor was it all work, however, as we took the time to enjoy one another’s company while dragon boating on Harrison Lake on the first evening and golfing on the second.

So how did we do?

I am happy to report that, by the end of the sprint, we collectively managed to write and vet more than 850 high-quality questions across the 15 topic areas. This test bank is now available from BC Campus to any recognized psychology faculty. It may be paired with either open textbook for Introductory Psychology and is available in a format that may be imported into any institution’s learning management system. Tangibly, the creation of this resource has effectively eliminated one more barrier to open textbook adoption, while providing a template for other disciplines to follow. In a less tangible sense, however, we managed something even more special. We gave of our time and energy to a worthy cause and contributed in a small but important way to the cultural shift that is required for openness to become the norm instead of the exception.

I believe that the future of education is open, and I am proud to say that KPU and its Psychology department in particular have our hands on the crystal ball.

Note: Portions of this article have been taken from blog posts written by Rajiv Jhangiani at thatpsychprof.com

My Teaching and Learning Reflection At KPU

In East Africa, where I was born and raised, education was highly valued. I have two elder sisters who were both teachers in East African public schools. Their impressive teaching strategies were embedded in me because they brought the best out of those challenging students who were labeled by the community as “dumb” or the “black sheep of the family”. Both sisters taught Math, and they inspired their students, many of whom who hated Math, by simply making the class fun and interactive. Due to lack of funding and resources, they created homemade clay objects and used colorful legumes and various fruits to demonstrate Algebra in the simplest forms using tangible objects. Reflecting on those teachable moments, and my own teaching and learning experiences at KPU, has influenced my own approaches and beliefs.

I have been at KPU over 5 years, teaching in the clinical area where students apply theory learned into practice. One of my greatest contributions to KPU is my dedication to helping students overcome clinical anguish, the most common anxiety, and their lack of self-confidence. Over time, I am beginning to understand the importance of creating an optimal environment for students to learn in. I believe student self-esteem is vital to becoming a competent health care attendant. To me, without self-esteem, care-givers cannot be self-directed, autonomous, or responsible.

To achieve this end, I prefer a student centered teaching approach which consists of a collaborative relationship between the teacher and the students, between students and peers, and by encouraging students to actively participate in the learning process. I believe this approach reduces the power distance in the relationship making it more egalitarian, less threatening, and more encouraging for learners to solicit feedback related to their skill performance in question. I invest a personal interest in learners, conveying warmth and respect for them, to alleviate anxieties and create an atmosphere in which they feel safe to ask questions. I creatively demonstrate clinical skills by using humor and analogies to alleviate anxieties. The most effective strategy that I have utilized to calm the students nerves has been to make myself available to those students so that they have an avenue to address concerns or problems and this also allows me to provide appropriate resources available on campus. I genuinely establish a trusting working partnership, with focus on the student as a whole person and I am fully committed to learners success. Specifically, if a student demonstrated lack of confidence, then I would work closely with that student in a one to one setting, to acknowledge and focus on their strengths as well as identifying areas of improvement.

For example, one student had a fear of using a ceiling lift by herself to transfer a patient. To alleviate these fears, a scaffolding approach was used to support her learning by first having the student observe a peer using the lift alone, then having the student ‘be’ the patient and experience the lift procedure, and finally doing the procedure on her own. During the procedure, we used positive self-talk together and went over the entire safety feature taught in lab skills. Before performing the transfer alone, she verbalized a dry run by looking over the instruction sheet at the side. This helped her to alleviate anxiety and ensured her that she had not forgotten any important steps. By the end of the final practicum the student used the ceiling lift transfer with self-confidence.

I also use case scenarios to provide an opportunity for learners to extrapolate theory into real life situations and experiences. This teaching modality engages the clinical group of students by asking appropriate, open-ended questions that promote critical thinking and application of theory into practice. I believe in fostering a safe, supportive, and active learning environment that encourages students to have an open clinical dialogue, listen attentively, read, write, and reflect insightfully on their experiences. Students are able to make mistakes and learn by feedback to their misconceptions so that they can apply what they have learned.

There are many factors influencing our need to change our approaches to education today, such as the need to redesign curriculum for today’s working environment, downsizing of departments, and cost containment in the health care industry; these factors compel me as a faculty member to search for innovative teaching and learning strategies. As a committed FOH faculty I will continue to strive to foster a safe learning and teaching climate, give a meaningful practical experience through the students eyes, and promote the value of life-long learning. I am willing to reflect insightfully on both my teaching and evaluation practice and preserve better ways of guiding, preparing, and empowering our KPU graduates.

As a teacher, I am also a learner, and during my time at KPU I have found attending workshops and sharing stories with other faculty extremely beneficial to my own learning and professional growth. I feel privileged to hold a faculty position at KPU and credit my desire for a teaching career to the abundance of excellent mentors (Judith, Lorraine, Sue, and Sharon) and role models from the HCA program.

What truly inspires me is reflecting on Benjamin Franklin’s Quote: “Tell me and I forget. Teach and show me and I remember. Involve me and I learn”.



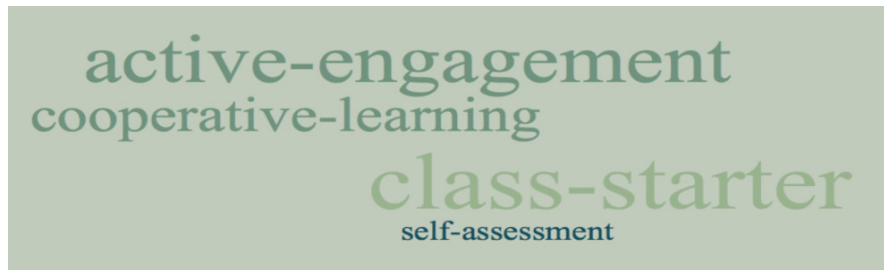
Nargis Ghadiali
Part Time Faculty,
Health Care Assistant
Program, 2014 Recipient
of the Distinguished
Teaching Award



Don Mathewson,
Physics Department

Teaching Strategy: Team Quizzes on Moodle

Don Mathewson is a physics teacher and author with 25 years of classroom experience. He has been with the KPU Physics department for 15 years, and actively incorporates new teaching strategies into his practice.



Why this activity?

- to engage students in active learning at the beginning of class
- to guide student learning through collaboration with peers
- to use assessment and feedback for learning by providing timely feedback and an provide students the opportunity to correct misconceptions

Main idea:

I use the quiz function on Moodle to create quizzes with numerical or short answers. I open the quiz at the start of class and allow students to work together in teams to solve the problems together. I set a close time for the quiz depending on the number of questions, but typically no more than 30 minutes into class. The marks are automatically entered into the assignment bin in my Moodle gradebook.

Features:

This is an excellent class-starter as students engage immediately. Students are very active and engage with the content. It is also good for team building as they talk a lot together as they work collaboratively. I find the level of interaction is better when they work on whiteboards, and so I have eight whiteboards in the physics classroom for students to work on. I allow students several attempts at each quiz question, so they get a chance to fix their mistakes and – I hope – improve their understanding.

Hurdles:

It takes a lot of time to set up the Moodle quiz, and the short answer questions can be challenging to implement (hint: make sure to guide students as in my question 3). (See quiz template.)

What does the quiz look like?

The screenshot shows a Moodle quiz interface with three questions. Each question is displayed in a light blue box with a sidebar on the left containing question details and actions.

Question 1
Tries remaining: 1
Marked out of 1.00
Flag question
Edit question

1. An object is placed 6 cm from a diverging lens with 3 cm focal length. Where is the image- how far from the lens cm?
Check

Question 2
Tries remaining: 1
Marked out of 1.00
Flag question
Edit question

2. Which side of the lens does the image appear on, relative to the object? Answer same or opposite:
Check

Question 3
Tries remaining: 1
Marked out of 1.00
Flag question
Edit question

3. Describe the image using three adjectives, separated by commas in alphabetic order.
Answer:
Check

OPEN LEARNING

Three Faces of Open Education: Teaching, Research and Service Perspectives

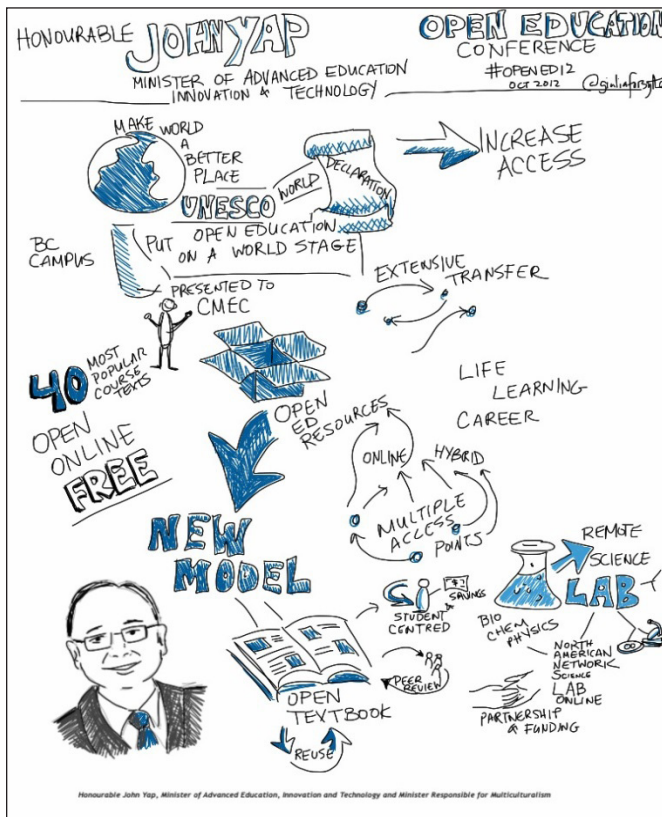
Dr. David Porter is the Executive Director of BCcampus in British Columbia. David's research interest is educational program design. He is a proponent for the use of design-based research (DBR) because of its ability to address emergent contexts where pragmatic, grounded, interactive and flexible approaches are required. David has been a forceful advocate for the use of open educational resources (OER), and most recently was co-editor of Perspectives on Open and Distance Learning: Open Educational Resources: An Asian Perspective, published by the Commonwealth of Learning in Vancouver, BC. He is also an instructor in the Master of Educational Technology (MET) program at the University of British Columbia. Currently, David is seconded part-time to Simon Fraser University as project manager for the University's Task Force on Flexible Education.



David Porter,
Past Executive Director,
BCcampus

Much of the focus on open education in British Columbia these days has been about the opportunity to lower costs for students through the BC Open Textbook project. In October 2012 the Ministry of Advanced Education announced the BC Open Textbook project with the goal of providing 40 open textbooks for the highest enrolled first and second-year courses in the BC post-secondary system. These textbooks would be available free in online e-reader versions or at a low cost for print-on-demand copies of the texts.

Since the open textbook program announcement in 2012, BCcampus has been working diligently with faculty, instructors, students and staff around the province to provide workshops and information sessions about the adoption, adaptation or creation of open textbooks for use in classrooms.



Accomplishments to date:

- 61 open textbooks are available in the <http://open.bccampus.ca> collection, including 37/40 texts for high enrolment first and second year courses
- Faculty and instructors have been active reviewers of the 40 designated open textbooks <http://open.bccampus.ca/open-textbook-101/top-40-subject-areas/>
- Adaptations and authoring of new textbooks to complete the target of 40 are also underway.

From the perspective of providing value to the system, the availability of open textbooks from BC Open Textbook Collection and other open courseware resources from the BCcampus SOL*R digital library, along with open resources from other digital collections such the Open Course Library operated by the Washington State Board of Technical Colleges, demonstrate what is possible at a system level.

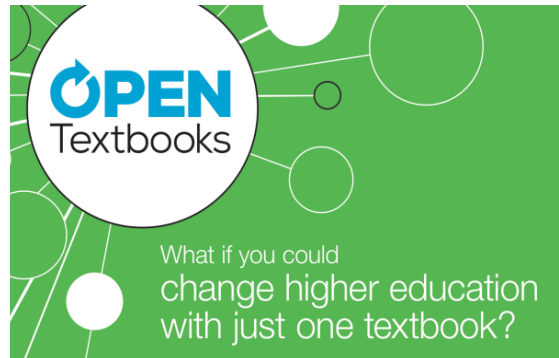
Our colleagues in Washington State were pioneers in the college sector and demonstrated that educational resources that were collaboratively developed and openly licensed could make an impact far beyond the initial investment of funds to get the project started. The March 2014 report titled, Updated Cost Analysis of the Open Course Library, authored by the Student Public Interest Research Groups (<http://StudentPIRGs.org>), underscored the impact of thinking differently about the manner in which teaching resources are selected, produced and licensed. These are lessons we are taking to heart in British Columbia.

Open education from a teaching perspective

But, open education is not just about the economic advantages of providing primary resource materials such as textbooks for free or at low cost to students. It is also about the pedagogical advantage inherent in the development and localization of instructional resources by faculty and instructors.

How many times as a teacher have you found an almost ideal resource online or in book form and wished you could make changes to it to better suit the needs of your students or your teaching style? In some cases copyright is held by an individual or publisher and requires you to write for permission or license the resource for use, but most often without any rights to revise or localize it to better meet your needs. Many web-based images are also not freely editable, either because of copyright restrictions or non-editable file formats that inhibit easy revision if they were available for reuse.

What open licensed resources provide in their purest form is raw material from which new or localized versions of content or images can be developed to suit teaching and learning needs in your classroom.



Pairing teaching expertise with customized resources is a new opportunity afforded by open licenses and the rights embodied in the 5Rs of openness:

- Reuse – the right to use the material to suit your needs
- Revise – the right to make changes to the material, or translate the material
- Remix – the right to reuse the material together with other open materials
- Redistribute – the right to give a copy of the material to each of your Students
- Retain – the right of your students to retain their copy in perpetuity

Open licenses are catalytic in their ability to help streamline the development of instructional resources through the adoption, adaptation or creation of new resources from building blocks of high quality content that may already exist on the Internet and that await your intervention to localize or customize them to meet your teaching needs.

A wonderful example of collaborative and catalytic development recently took place in British Columbia. In early June 2014 a team of five authors (Geography faculty) from BC institutions gathered at UBC along with two project managers, an illustrator, web developer and university librarian to conduct an open textbook sprint. The idea was to develop a first-year Geography open textbook in just four days, a feat they collectively accomplished. “The authors plan to publish the textbook under the title of Geography Open Textbook Collective. As well as being available as an open learning resource, the textbook is available in PDF, ePub, and HTML formats for Word Press, and also for print on demand in hard copy.”¹

While nobody is suggesting that all open textbooks should or could be created in a rapid development process, the open textbook sprint demonstrated what is possible when a group of colleagues decide to work together to customize and remix available open resources, with new materials of their own, to produce a locally relevant instructional resource for their students. Any academic department could explore the same process.

Open education from a research perspective

While doing field research on open education in 2013, I interviewed 21 BC educators including faculty and instructors to begin to understand how open education practices relate to their work lives in universities and colleges.

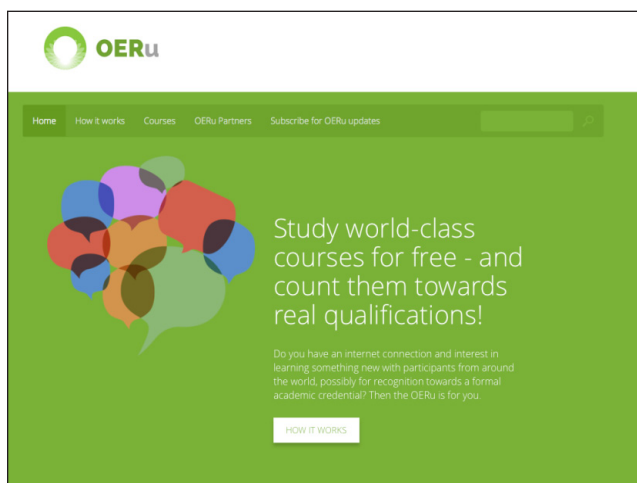
One of the inspiring observations I noted was the view expressed by some university faculty members in the study who were keen to link their research directly to the open education practices they were using in their teaching. And, the collaborators they would choose to work with to link research to teaching would most likely be the same people who were in their colleague research networks, often in their own discipline, but not necessarily someone in their own institution.

An example of this sort of collaborative effort is the Virtual Soil Science Labs that are hosted at the University of British Columbia, but that were developed as a collaborative effort that included departmental colleagues and a network of soil science research faculty from across Canada. The resulting products of combining research with the production of teaching materials is an award-winning education program that combines videos and online activities that are used in soil science programs across Canada.

In addition to providing visual resources and activities under a Creative Commons license, the Virtual Soil Science Labs program is also active in developing open source software applications for mobile platforms.

The SOILx application is a collaboratively designed and supported database of soil types from across Canada. The application invites contributors to join the project and add their own data to the project's master database.

The Virtual Soil Science Labs and SOILx projects illustrate an exemplary model for aligning research with teaching. Further, the projects demonstrate how an established network of academic researchers has chosen to extend its research interests to its teaching practices through the sharing of open resources.



Open education from a service perspective

One of the key roles that a university plays in its community is a service role. In some situations the service role can extend beyond the local community to a world stage, and may also be philanthropic in nature. Such is the case with OERu, a network of like-minded post-secondary institutions from around the world that includes Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

The central notion of OERu is that self-directed learners in the developing and developed world have an appetite for advancing their knowledge and can do so

using online learning. Many courses can already be studied for free online, but few can be assembled into a portfolio for assessment and accreditation by reputable institutions. The OERu aims to make the accreditation process, through self-directed study, both viable and rigorous.

The OERu partner network is beginning to assemble sets of courses that can be freely taken and that are matched to templated programs of study at the participating institutions, with evaluation handled by exam or prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) processes. Self-study students would have access to the study materials for free, but would pay a fee for assessment and credit. In this way OERu partner institutions are demonstrating a service mission by contributing courses for freely available programs of study worldwide that also offer a route to a credential or qualification.

In all cases the OERu institutions are building openly licensed courseware for their own students as a part of their teaching and learning missions. Through OERu they are providing the same openly licensed courses for free and open study as a part of their service missions. Learners who choose to use the institution's OERu resources for self-study could be students from Kenya, from Kamloops, or from anywhere in the world.

In summary, faculty and instructors can become involved with open education practices through entry points directly related to their role at the university—through teaching, research or service. Whichever entry-point an individual chooses will likely be a new experience, but not necessarily a solitary one. A major benefit to open practice is the collaborative and cooperative nature of the endeavor. It is inherently a community experience, fueled by like-minded researchers and teachers who value the opportunity to work and learn with peers in pursuit of a common goal.



Tom Carey,
Visiting Scholar,
INSTL

INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING OUTCOMES IN A POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY – a personal perspective

Tom Carey is a Visiting Senior Scholar in Kwantlen's INstitute for INnovation and Scholarship in Teaching and Learning. He is helping us to define the Institute's structure and programming, as well as working on strategic Faculty projects for exemplary teaching and learning (the first projects are in Design and Arts). As Tom notes below, Ross Laird (Arts/IDEA) and Tierney Wisniewski (Arts '12) were his partners in this innovation project.

In the last issue of Learning Matters @ KPU, I wrote about my personal perspective on Experiential Learning as a key element in teaching and learning at a Polytechnic University – this was a good exercise for me in preparing for the INSTL Experiential Learning workshop in June 10! One of our recent INSTL applied research and innovation projects is mapping from Experiential Learning activities to Interdisciplinary Learning Outcomes. This column will focus on the challenges in defining and assessing such outcomes – and how advances in research and leading-edge practice in this area can be applied at Kwantlen.

I am the INSTL advisor on this summer project; my colleagues are project leader Ross Laird of the IDEA program and the Faculty of Arts and our very able research assistant Tierney Wisniewski (a KPU grad in 2012 and now a Master's student at UBC). The course we are using for the research is the Amazon Field School ², IDEA 3100. IDEA courses are interdisciplinary in both learning outcomes and activities, e.g., the May 2014 Amazon Field School was co-sponsored by IDEA and the Chip and Shannon Wilson School of Design, with Lucie Gagné from Design co-leading the course with Ross.

There are three types of outcomes designed into the Field School experience:

- Outcomes from the associated discipline domain. In the case of Design, the Field School was an ideal opportunity to build student capability in Sustainable Design and Intercultural Design.
- Outcomes from KPU's Essential Skills ³, the capabilities that we want all KPU students to develop regardless of their program of study: Creative Thinking and Problem Solving, Interpersonal Skills, Teamwork and Leadership, Intercultural Skills and Global Perspectives, etc. The Academic Plan – Vision 2018 places a high priority on determining “*the most appropriate models for adapting Essential Skills to diverse disciplines*”, and the applied research and innovation project aimed to contribute to this process in the spirit of another of the Academic Plan's key directions, to “*support our educators in their pursuit of the emergent knowledge base for teaching and learning*”.
- Outcomes from transformative learning experiences, which lead to deeper change in how we view the world and our place within it. “*Transformative learning refers to the process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference (meaning perspectives, habits of mind, and mindsets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective* ⁴”. Put more concisely, “*Informative learning changes what we know; transformative learning changes how we know*” ⁵. Transformative learning experiences can be the most significant impact of a course for students, particularly in experiential learning contexts involving international contexts ⁶ and service learning ⁷.

The Sustainable Design learning outcomes associated with the Design discipline domain have been the focus of a great deal of research ⁸, and we naturally left it to Lucie to work further on these outcomes. Here are a few highlights from our work-in-progress on defining and assessing learning outcomes in the Essential Skills and Transformative Learning domains, along with an example to show how we have been linking those outcomes to the course Learning Activities and Student work Outputs in the process of ‘constructive alignment’ ⁹ – did you notice that I put these in the wrong order in the first paragraph above: we don't start with activities and then figure out the outcomes, we start with the outcomes and work backwards to design the course learning activities with the outcomes in mind! (We plan a fuller presentation at an INSTL seminar later in the Fall term when the project has concluded.)

Essential Skills: these capabilities are required by Senate Policy L.9 to be incorporated in all course outlines. One of the challenges in doing this effectively is the personalized nature of the start and end points for any student in the course: we don't typically specify for course enrolment a minimal criteria on the Essential Skills such as Teamwork and Leadership or Intercultural Skills and Global Perspectives, and we don't typically measure student progress on developing these capabilities on a course-by-course basis (if at all). So it can be difficult to specify the progress we expect to achieve in any particular course.

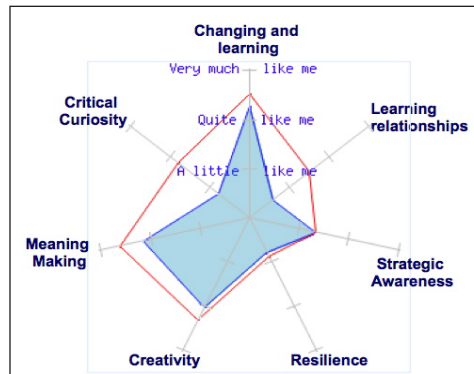
Our plan for the next iteration of the Amazon Field School is to include the following components to strengthen the way students engage with Essential Skills as part of their Field School experience:

- Provide milestones for Essential Skills via rubrics, which student can use at the beginning of the course to reflect on what capabilities they have developed beforehand and again at the end of the course to prompts for their reflection papers on how the course has helped them to develop and demonstrate the Essential Skills capabilities. Here is an example for one of the attributes of the Interpersonal capability:

Benchmark	Milestone 1	Milestone 2	Capstone
Learners may only minimally engage with their classmates and instructor except when required to do so, and may	Learners engage more willingly with others.	Learners engage willingly with others, give and receive support, and successfully negotiate conflict.	Learners actively seek out and engage in collaborative relationships in and out of the classroom and are skilled mentors

Our work on the Essential Skills adapted research from numerous research studies and exemplary practices at other institutions; the most helpful example was the VALUES¹⁰ framework and rubrics, developed by the American Association of Colleges and Universities.

- Another tool we want to use to support student reflection is the ‘radar chart’ or spider ‘web’ diagram which can help in visualizing the self-evaluation of capability on particular dimension of Essential Skills. Here is a sample diagram generated from student responses to the Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory¹¹, a well-researched and validated questionnaire which can be used to promote student reflection about how they rate their capabilities at the start of the course and as they write up their reflection papers as the course nears its conclusion. This can be compared with the faculty member’s observations about the capabilities they have demonstrated in the course. When using this kind of tool, we may have to remind students that “this is not a ‘score’, but the basis for a conversation with a trained coach/mentor. This is a mirror, reflecting back to learners what they have said about themselves. There is power in the language, in the shape, and in the size.”¹² And while we would like to see students make progress as illustrated in this idealized diagram – from the start of the course in the inner blue shape to the red star shape at the end – they may also make progress by achieving a more realistic assessment of their capabilities, contracting the shape on particular dimensions!



Transformative Outcomes: when Ross showed me excerpts¹³ from the student reflection papers in past offerings of the Field School, it was a moving and celebratory experience to hear how the students described their experiences: “a life-changing experience for me”, “a life experience that I will never forget and one I will always brag about”, “changed how I view education” and so on. Since this can be such an important part of the Experiential Learning opportunities we offer, we wanted to explore how KPU faculty can capture some of this in course descriptions. These outcomes can be even more personal than the Essential Skills described above: not only are the individual start and end points different for various students, even the nature of the outcome shows a great diversity. For this reason, researchers refer to transformative outcomes as being ‘constructed’ by the students themselves, rather than ‘received’ from the instructors and course goals¹⁴.

We came up with an interesting mix of a formal structure – the Logic Model – and informal narrative scenarios to help us link Transformative Outcomes with the course Experiential Learning activities that were designed to provide opportunities for transformative learning. A Logic Model¹⁵ is widely used in planning, tracking and evaluating programs for social change. (I came across it as a requirement when applying for grant funds with philanthropic foundations to support faculty development programs: they wanted to see how what we were proposing matched with their mission and goals.)

The components of the Logic Model include the following:

- Activities to be supported with the requested resources
- Outputs: deliverables and data generated by the activities
- Outcomes: specific changes in behavior, knowledge, skills
- Impacts: intended longer-term consequences, typically measured in a timeframe of 7 – 10 years

Creating some narrative scenarios with this arc helped us to evaluate the links between these components, in particular to illustrate how students developed their own individualized plans for Outputs and how this produced longer-term Impacts. Here are some excerpts from the scenarios, drawn from the students' submitted course projects, the instructors' notes and reflections, and the assessment conversations and feedback.

Course Activities:

"Carl" completed a multimedia creative project involving painted images, photographs, and creative nonfiction narratives. He utilizes the indigenous brush technique taught to him by artists in Colombia and finds equivalent materials from the rainforest of British Columbia to make his brushes... He concludes the multimedia project with a contextual essay in which he describes his creative process.

Carl completed a comprehensive self-assessment in which he reflects upon his experiences during the journey and contemplates the implications of the trip on his future development both personally and professionally... Carl also contributed to a series of collaborative compositions developed by the group and published online as open educational resources. His particular contributions centred on reflections on indigenous art-making and travel photography, descriptions of the challenges and opportunities of traveling with others, and suggestions for how other travelers might handle the complexities of human interaction.

"Laurie" completed a project focusing on indigenous environmental practices and their application to a modern world alienated from them. She proposed a methodology by which indigenous approaches might be implemented, tested, and validated on a small scale in Canada and Colombia, with results from each region integrated and analyzed to form a snapshot of alternatives to industrial agriculture and modern environmental stewardship. She illustrated her arguments with historical exemplars from both places... Laurie also contributed to a series of collaborative compositions developed by the group and published online as open educational resources. Her particular contributions include reflections on readings, descriptions of various non-governmental initiatives underway in Colombia, and suggestions for how people in Canada might get involved...Laurie also completed a comprehensive self-assessment in which she reflects upon her experiences during the journey and contemplated the implications of the trip on her future plans to build a career in the domain of social action.

Course Outcomes: Using Outcomes rubrics such as the one outlined above for Interpersonal Relationships, Carl moved from a Benchmark capability level to demonstrating Milestone 1 capability. Laurie moved from a Milestone 2 capability level to demonstrating Capstone level capability. The narrative scenarios also demonstrated how the assessment process works, including the Outputs being assessed and the instructor's recorded observations of student Activities (which allow for calibration of student self-reports and a safeguard in case of later questions about the assessment).

Course Impacts as reported by the students are reflected in the italicized narrative text below:

"Lindsay" has started to wonder about what she knows, and how she knows it...As the fireside conversation evolves, Lindsay hears many perspectives about how we learn, what learning is, and what it means to be smart. Many of the local people she has met on this trip have no formal education of any kind, yet they seem smart in ways she has not encountered before. They are street smart, jungle smart, people smart. And surely, she thinks, these skills must be learned. They cannot be fixed and immutable traits...Lindsay's participation in the conversation is tentative at first. She does not normally engage in such conversations and she is worried about looking stupid. But she has been deeply impressed by the many kinds of knowledge she has seen over the past few days, and she begins to speak passionately about this new world of her understanding.

I hope these examples from our research and innovation project whet your appetite for some of the developments coming from the Academic Plan directions around extending Experiential Learning and improving the ways we define, develop and assess Learning Outcomes. We'd be happy to share the results from our project – including the proposed revisions to the course description and syllabus, a research survey highlighting the sources and exemplars from which we drew ideas and evidence, and the transformative scenarios illustrated above - and we look forward to conversation with some of you at our Fall seminar.

- ¹ Gardner, S. (2014). *A sprint through the pages*. Available: <http://ciltl.ubc.ca/2014/06/16/a-sprint-through-the-pages/>
- ² <http://www.kpu.ca/idea-amazon-field-school>
- ³ <http://www.kpu.ca/essential-skills>
- ⁴ Mezirow, J. (2000). *Learning to think like an adult*. In J. Mezirow (Ed.) & Associates, *Learning as transformation* (pp. 3-4). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- ⁵ Kegan, R. (2000). *What form transforms? A constructive-developmental approach to transformative learning*. In J. Mezirow (Ed.) & Associates, *Learning as transformation*, pp. 35 - 70. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- ⁶ For example, Stone, G. A. (2014). *Study Abroad as a Transformative Experience: Measuring Transformative Learning Phases and Outcomes*. Brigham Young University Theses and Dissertations, Paper 4020.
- ⁷ Kiely, R. (2005). *A transformative learning model for service-learning: A longitudinal case study*. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 12(1).
- ⁸ For example, Shephard, K. (2008). *Higher education for sustainability: seeking affective learning outcomes*. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, 9(1), 87-98. Wiek, A., Withycombe, L., & Redman, C. L. (2011). *Key competencies in sustainability: a reference framework for academic program development*. *Sustainability Science*, 6(2), 203-218. Sterling, S., & Thomas, I. (2006). *Education for sustainability: the role of capabilities in guiding university curricula*. *International Journal of Innovation and Sustainable Development*, 1(4), 349-370.
- ⁹ Biggs, J and Tang C. (2011): *Teaching for Quality Learning at University*, (McGraw-Hill and Open University Press, Maidenhead)
- ¹⁰ <http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/>
- ¹¹ Crick, R. D., Broadfoot, P., & Claxton, G. (2004). *Developing an effective lifelong learning inventory: the ELLI project*. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 11(3), 247-272.
- ¹² <http://learningemergence.net/2011/10/09/elli-profiles-size-matters/>
- ¹³ <http://www.kpu.ca/ideal/amazon-tesimonials>
- ¹⁴ Fullerton, James R., *Transformative Learning Outcomes in College Students: A Mixed Methods Study* (2010). *Open Access Theses and Dissertations from the College of Education and Human Sciences, University of Nebraska - Lincoln*. Paper 65
- ¹⁵ W.R. Kellogg Foundation(2004). *Logic Model Development Guide: Using Logic Models to Bring Together Planning, Evaluation, and Action*. www.wkcf.org p. 19

TRANSITIONS @ KPU

Coming Soon: The KPU Pathway to “US” (Undergraduate Studies)

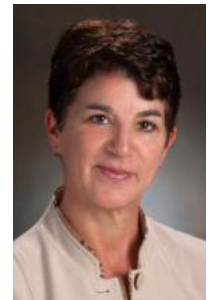
As part of KPU’s new admission model taking effect Fall 2015, The KPU Pathway to Undergraduate Studies (or simply “The Pathway”) is an exciting new initiative that is currently under development as part of this new model. KPU is a proudly open-access institution that supports all learners in their pursuit of academic success. In keeping with this core value, KPU is developing a new paradigm that creates the opportunity for students to take a limited number of undergraduate courses at the same time as they complete the upgrading necessary to meet KPU’s English proficiency requirement for undergraduate admission.

Under the new model, students who are already clear about their interest in pursuing an undergraduate program will have the opportunity to complete ACA upgrading courses while identifying as a Pathway student in one of our other Faculties. A student can begin developing an affinity to their intended Faculty upon immediate entry to KPU while we provide the scaffolding and supports necessary to address English proficiency needs. The Pathway is a unique model that pairs upgrading and undergraduate studies with guided support while students work towards their intended undergraduate program. While this means that students may enter directly into one of our Faculties that provides undergraduate options, it does not mean students will no longer have the option of starting out in the Faculty of ACA – it’s all about choices, and we want our students to have the ability to make the choice that is the best fit for them.

Not only will The Pathway bring clarity to the admission process, it will also help to address the disparity between native and non-native English upgraders. Until now, only students completing the English Language Studies upgrading program were permitted to take undergraduate courses while completing their upgrading for undergraduate admission.

The Pathway does not result in a KPU credential; rather it is a re-packaging of existing course offerings, based on existing preparatory admission thresholds. The Transitions Advisory Group has been heavily involved in discussions about The Pathway model, including the undergraduate courses it may include, and the next steps include consultation on a broader level with Dean’s Offices, advisors, the Faculty of ACA, the Senate Standing Committee on Curriculum and the Senate Standing Committee on Academic Planning and Priorities about how the model will be implemented.

The Pathway is meant to enhance recruitment opportunities, but more than that, it will provide additional options for student success through broader access for students we believe can be successful at KPU.



Jane Fee,
Deputy Provost



Meg Goodine,
Manager, Learning
Technology

LEARNING TECHNOLOGY UPDATES

Moodle News:

All of our Moodle sites have now been successfully migrated to our new location hosted at Thompson Rivers University (TRU). We are pleased with how smoothly the transition went and with our new working relationship with the TRU team. Moodle users should notice no change except in the URL which is now “kpu.ca”. We will continue to work closely with IET to monitor system performance.

Plagiarism Awareness Badge Pilot:

We are partnering with the Library and faculty volunteers to pilot an “I Cite My Sources” digital badge within Moodle. The badge will be awarded to students who successfully complete the Library’s Plagiarism Awareness tutorials. Once awarded, students will be able to display the badge on their Moodle profile and also export it to external systems such as Mozilla’s Open Badges Backpack. The faculty volunteers working with us will make completion of the tutorials a requirement in their courses this fall. We will work with these faculty members and their students to evaluate the usefulness of a digital badge over the current paper certificate as proof of completion.

We hope our pilot will lay the groundwork for extending digital badges to other areas and programs where there is interest in exploring alternate forms of recognizing and verifying student learning.

LIBRARY NEWS

Open Access: A Powerful Tool for Teaching, Learning and Research



Lisa Hubick,
Public Services
Librarian

It is no surprise that libraries are at the forefront when it comes to the promotion and development of open access resources. Providing relevant and timely information, with as few access barriers as possible, is a professional tenant of librarianship. So this is why you see libraries spearheading institutional repositories and developing portals to digital collections. Closer to home, KPU’s Systems Librarian, Caroline Daniels, is part of a team of post-secondary librarians working to further OER (Open Education Resources) in BC.¹ Their first meeting, a Hackerfest in May, resulted in the creation of a robust rubric to help librarians evaluate the growing array of open access resources being made available.² Currently the group is using this rubric to develop subject lists of quality open access resources and when completed, KPU librarians will be incorporating these resources into the Subject Guides on the Library website.

But why should faculty embrace open access?

OERs can include full course materials as well as individual textbooks, learning objects and tests. They have developed beyond MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) resources, and their breadth and depth is reflected in the growing number of OER websites and search tools. Now faculty can find a wide array of open access materials created and used by faculty around the world who are teaching the same classes. Having these materials accessible - freely available to use and adapt - can inspire new and innovative ways to teach, invigorating one’s instruction.

Open access is also about research.

Institutional Repositories (IRs) are collections of open access materials where faculty can make their research more accessible. Studies comparing views and downloads of articles available in both traditional databases or journals (with a pay wall) as well as through open access, like IRs, show that the free, open access versions of the article are viewed and downloaded many more times compared to the same article housed in a subscription database or journal. This isn’t surprising. However, a recent study showed that articles are not only being viewed and downloaded more, but are also being cited more frequently in other research.³ In disciplines where replicating and building upon other research is necessary for the development of new research in the field, open access can facilitate and speed up the process for the validation (or invalidation) of current research and the innovation of new.

This is why the Library is excited about the possibilities for KORA, KPU’s new IR coming online in November.⁴ Like other research institutions, Kwantlen can now share its unique research contributions to a growing open access community; helping to facilitate teaching and research in a new global environment.

¹ BC Campus “New librarian group to support the use of OER in B.C.’s post-secondary system” July 16, 2014. <http://bit.ly/X275TV>

² BCOER wiki “OER Assessment Rubric” n.d. <http://bit.ly/V25aNa>

³ Nature Publishing Group “Nature Communications data shows open access articles have more views and downloads” July 30, 2014. <http://bit.ly/1km3Z7N> (Note: this press release provides an overview of the study. The original research report can be found here: <http://bit.ly/1tbl4Ey>)

⁴ More information about KPU’s new IR can be found in the Library’s KORA guide <http://libguides.kpu.ca/KORA>

INTERNATIONAL @ KPU

What an amazing time to be working within the International Education sector! KPU International's role is growing at an exciting rate at the university as can be seen by the development of our specialized International Recruitment and Admissions team, new academic programs, and dynamic global partnerships.

Our students come from all over the world to advance their studies, with our largest student populations coming from China, India, Saudi Arabia, and Brazil. Overall, though, KPU has close to 70 countries represented in its student body. International students travel here to improve their academic prospects but also to expand their personal horizons in beautiful BC. KPU is proud to be the host institution for the many international students wanting to study here.

In particular, we have noted that our Business, Design, IT, and Trades programs are consistently popular choices for our international students. Recently, our office has noted a trend with prospective students increasingly interested in pursuing our Health Sciences and Horticulture/Environmental Protection programs. Moving forward, we hope to see increased enrolment in those areas.

International students have told our staff of the benefits of studying at KPU. Mexican student Jonathan Medina has been studying Political Sciences for the past four years. When speaking of KPU instructors, he says, "They care about you and get to know you better, as well as your ideas and way of thinking. It really makes an impact since it makes the learning experience more personal, instead of having a teacher focusing on research and not students. Our professors are passionate about teaching." He credits studying at a Canadian institution for offering a different learning experience than what he might have received in his home country.

At the same time, domestic students and staff benefit from our international student population. International students help bring a global view into our teaching research and service activities, which is to everyone's advantage. Business Marketing Management student, Joseph Watson MacKay, says that on average, he sees one to two international students in his classes and can relate to some of the cultural and academic challenges they might be facing.

Having been an international student himself in Japan, Joseph knows the challenges that may come from being out of your comfort zone. "Studying abroad allowed me to understand what it feels like to not be native to a country. It also helped me better understand my Canadian culture and see it from an outsider's perspective," he says. He added that the teaching styles were different in Japan with some classes being more lecture-based than at KPU. Interestingly, this difference in teaching gave him a better sense as to what pedagogical techniques and material engages him as a student. Conversely, one can assume that the same observations are being constantly made by international students in our classrooms.

Domestic students like Joseph develop an international perspective, which can only be beneficial in an increasingly connected global market. The presence of international students is therefore an integral component to our institution's internationalization efforts. Currently, international students form an estimated 9% of our total student population; however, our department anticipates seeing this number climb in the years to come. Our world is becoming increasingly connected and this will surely be reflected in our classrooms. The challenge now is to meet the needs of all students, both international and domestic. KPU is ready to meet this challenge.



Stuart McIlmoyle,
Associate Vice Provost,
International



At Joseph's farewell party, saying goodbye to the friends who helped make Nagoya, Japan feel like home.

KPU Program:
BBA in Marketing
Management

Partner School:
Nagoya Gakuin University,
Nagoya, Japan

Duration:
April 2013 - February 2014

DEAN'S CORNER

I PLAR, she PLARs, we PLARed



Diane Purvey,
Dean, Faculty of Arts

Academia has an uncomfortable relationship with the autodidact. On the one hand, we respect anyone who has the self-discipline to do the intellectual heavy lifting on their own; on the other, we naturally place a lot of store in the advantages of a formal education measured out not in coffee spoons but in credits and degrees. Academia tends to feel equally uncertain about the value of training delivered under unconventional circumstances and even in non-local institutions. The upshot is that there are lots of people out there who know more than we are – sometimes – prepared to give them credit for.

That's not always the case. While working as a faculty member at Thompson Rivers University, I added to my portfolio the job of a PLAR assessor. (PLAR is the acronym for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition, also known as PLA (Prior Learning Assessment) or RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning)). At TRU there are several different forms of PLAR, some of which we have here at KPU. These include transfer credit, course challenge exams, and portfolio-based PLAR assessment that is both course-based and competency-based. My responsibilities covered competency-based portfolios in which students develop digital portfolios as a means to outline and reflect on their informal and experiential learning. Students provide specific examples of their learning based on eight competencies: communication, information organization, problem solving/decision making, numeracy, critical thinking, intellectual maturity, independent study, and applied knowledge. Working in pairs, assessors review the student's portfolio, interview the student, and determine how many credits the student will receive. Students go through a pre-screening assessment before they develop their portfolio to ensure that the process is worth their while, and assessors are given a robust training.

In the growing research on PLAR, assessors often attest to the transformative nature of the PLAR process for applicants. Candidates discover the range and depth of their acquired knowledge as they assemble and describe their educational experiences. So far, however, there doesn't seem to be any research on the impact on assessors. When I reflect on my own experience as an assessor, I think it, too, is transformative.

After assessing scores of portfolios, I came to ask myself the following questions: How have I benefitted from the assessment experience? How has my understanding of the learning process been impacted and broadened? And how has that understanding informed my teaching and administrative practices? I believe the assessment experience can encourage reconsideration of the range of pathways to acquired knowledge, enhance the teaching tool of "reflection on learning," and enrich the development of teaching curricula.

Being a PLAR assessor has had specific impacts on my teaching practice. I realized that learning outcomes can be achieved in many different ways. I came to appreciate the range of pathways to acquired knowledge and became more flexible in affording students opportunities to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes in alternative ways. Encouraging students to reflect on their knowledge and understanding, not just in terms of what they know, but what they need to know and how they will gain that knowledge, became embedded in all of my courses. In terms of curriculum, I started designing courses with a greater variety of assignments and assessments, including more opportunities for formative assessment. In the end, I developed a profound understanding that student learning, not teaching, is what is important.

President Alan Davis has developed an Open Studies initiative wherein KPU students will be able to design a personalized degree plan based on competencies. Appealing to busy, mature students as well as those who want to build on previous learning, the degree competencies provide students with flexibility in what they study, how they study, and the time it takes to complete a degree. KPU Open Studies will bolster our PLAR processes as students' previous formal, informal, and experiential learning will be valued and credited.

Expanding students' opportunities to access PLAR fits well with KPU's mandate of access. Student learning is rarely absolutely formal, and providing students the opportunity to have their learning assessed and recognized will encourage more people to come to KPU and complete their degrees. PLAR can be a key to unlocking real life-long learning and a catalyst to change lives.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

What do we know about Academic Development to support University Teaching and Learning?

Diane Salter

"It is good to have an end to journey toward; but it is the journey that matters, in the end." Ernest Hemingway

Until around 40 years ago, there was little recognition of the need for any type of formal, organized preparation or support for those academics entering teaching roles in higher education institutions. The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) was established in 1970 and the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE) was founded in Ontario in 1985. Since then, various other societies as well as provincial and government bodies (such as Ontario's HEQCO) and other regional groups have been formed. More recently, international societies have been established that provide opportunities for international conversations about global teaching and learning issues; these organizations include in their membership lists faculty as well as academic developers who provide institutional support for faculty. More recently, these organizations are encouraging students to join as partners in teaching and learning research and dialogue. This move is consistent with the growing recognition of the benefits of including students in these conversations. International groups include the International Consortium for Educational Developers (ICED) founded in Oxford in 1993, with the first group face to face meeting held in 1995 and the International Society for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISSOTL) founded only 10 years ago in 2004. These and other global, national and regional organizations encourage, and provide forums for continued dialogue around the growing body of scholarly literature dealing with teaching and learning and best practice.

One of the earliest, and possibly the first, centre established in Canada to support university teaching and learning was initiated by the University of McGill in Quebec, with the founding of their 'Teaching and Learning Services' unit in the late 1960's. Today, almost all universities in developed countries provide faculty with support centres for teaching and learning (some centralized, some faculty specific and some with combinations of both) to provide support for developing curriculum, adapting curriculum, supporting new technologies, designing and using new collaborative spaces and learning technologies, and generally helping the faculty (who are the content experts) keep up to date with the growing body of literature on how students learn, and how to create exceptional student learning experiences.

While awareness is growing on the importance of providing support for teaching and learning, additional pressures continue to mount for higher education with budgetary restraints, increasingly complex learning technologies to be adopted, increasing pressures from employers who want graduates with transferable skills and real-world competencies, and all of this combined with increasing diversity of the student body. Today's students are not a homogenous group. They come with different backgrounds and levels of prior work experience, different interests and motivation levels and often a wide range of ages that includes not only the high school graduates, the main student body of 'yesterday's higher education classroom, but also adult learners who return to school with a specific focus, sometimes related to employment goals, or perhaps with a general interest in a topic, life-long learners with many different reasons for their participation. While this diversity adds richness to the learning experience for all students, in this increasingly changing and complex learning environment, service centres to support and enhance teaching and learning must also change and adapt if they are to provide both the much needed support for teaching and learning, along with a critical lens to view practice and promote professional learning.

The research on teaching and learning over the last 20+ years has emphasized that to support student learning, as teachers, we must shift our emphasis from a focus on what the 'teacher does', to a focus on what the 'student needs to do' (in order to learn). This requires a shift in the role of academic developers and academic development units to correspondingly change approaches to how they provide professional learning opportunities for those that they support. At the recent STLHE conference held in Kingston, Ontario in June 2014, Leisel Knaack, Director of the Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning (CIEL) at Vancouver Island University and I, co-facilitated a workshop about this shift. The chart that follows this article depicts the shift in focus that we describe is needed as a way forward for academic development units as they navigate the changing economic and educational terrain of today's higher education environment.

The journey of academic development, since the early days of the late '60's, has been evolving and will continue to evolve to meet the needs of tomorrow, with no pre-determined 'end'. May we all enjoy and embrace this learning journey; in the words of Hemingway, perhaps it is the journey that matters the most in the end.

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- Salter, D. & Knaack, L. (2014). *Enhancing a culture of teaching and learning at a 'teaching-focused' university*. Paper presented at the STLHE National Conference, Transforming our Learning Experiences, June 19, 2014. Kingston, ON. queensu.ca/stlhe2014SAPES

CHANGING ROLES: APPROACHES TO TEACHING AND LEARNING: How Academic Development Centres Respond with the types of Events/Activities/Programs for Professional Learning

FROM: FOCUS ON TEACHER

TO: FOCUS ON LEARNER

<i>Shift needed From: Focus on the Teacher</i>	<i>Traditional Way that Academic Development Units / Centres May Respond</i>	<i>Shift consistent with need to: Focus on the Learner</i>	<i>NEW ROLES: How Academic Development Units / Centres May Respond</i>
Coverage Mode – faculty member focuses on covering content, getting through all of curriculum, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of PowerPoint/slides • Use of textbooks and resources • Web resources and free materials 	<p>Assignment/Learning Task Centered Mode – faculty member focuses on adapting and adjusting learning experiences to students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment of learning outcomes with institutional strategic initiatives, program or profession intentions and with a discipline-specific focus • Experiences for faculty in building rich and authentic experiences through multimodal means • Experiential education activities • Engage grad students/TAs in conversation around perceptions + approaches to teaching
“What am I going to teach?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescriptive lesson plans • Finding resources online • Textbook focus in choice and use • Teacher-directed lessons • Teacher presentation skills • Technology integration skills 	“What do I want the students to learn?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year-long faculty development institutes • Student engagement focus - using student voices • Creation of culture whereby faculty want to engage in challenges and choices in their teaching • Helping faculty collect own data so they can self-monitor impact of their course versions on student learning
“I have to cover the content” “I don’t have time to do X because I have the content to cover and will barely make it” “I have to teach them this”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescriptive lesson plans • Standard formats for teacher-directed lessons • Teacher guides, pre-designed lessons 	“Learner intentions are Y” “Learners know X already, focusing on helping them gain understanding of Z”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructing learning outcomes • Competency-based learning activities by subject • Classroom visits to fellow faculty peers • Pre-Assessment and self-assessment focus • Design for students to take control of learning • Communities of Practice for faculty
Assessment OF learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing test + exam questions • Gradebook and marking • Plagiarism issues and academic dishonesty consequences • Exams: writing and marking • Students not performing – failures 	Assessment FOR learning Assessment AS learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formative assessment focus for courses • Classroom assessment techniques (CATS) • Metacognitive learning and teaching approaches • Faculty learning focused on assessment • Use of technology to support informal learning
Monologue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation skills development • PowerPoint / slide development • Technology to project content • Board work – writing • Lecture capture and recording 	Dialogue WITH students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design pedagogies, Questioning skills • Facilitation of group discussion • How to provide inclusivity in learning design • Participatory activities for engagement • Recognizing that (unexpected) change in course can impact student ratings of courses – help faculty with students to mitigate negative effects
“Students must know this before they can go to the next module, unit or course”	Designing multiple choice question exams and mid-terms, multiple ways to ‘test’ if they ‘know’ the content	Content as a dialogue to assess for deep learning: Students co-create content	Professional learning activities focusing on understanding how to plan from learner’s point of view with multiple ways of learning discipline

Salter, D. & Knaack, L. (2014). Enhancing a culture of teaching and learning at a ‘teaching-focused’ university. Paper presented at the STLHE National Conference, Transforming our Learning Experiences, June 19, 2014. Kingston, ON. queensu.ca/stlhe2014SAPEs

NEW INSTL STAFF

Introducing Robin Leung

We are very pleased to announce a new addition to the Learning Technology team. Robin Leung joined us over the summer and will be providing some very welcome support for Moodle administration and other learning technologies.

Robin brings over 3 years of experience in web design and in supporting learning and content management systems at Simon Fraser University. He has a Bachelor's of Business Administration degree in Management Information Systems and Marketing from SFU.

In his leisure time, you may recognize Robin as a popular food blogger in and around Vancouver.



Robin Leung

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Learning Matters @ KPU

Learning Matters @ KPU is a newsletter by and for the KPU community published three times a year. Our goal is to share information on KPU teaching and learning activities. If you have any questions or comments on the newsletter or if you have items you would like to submit for future issues, please email: learningmatters@kpu.ca

INSTL website: kpu.ca/teaching-and-learning

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