4-3-2-1 ACTION!

Double feature on collaborative learning and interdisciplinary performance

TEXTBOOK EARTH
Land-based education

GREAT LEARNING MOMENTS
Alumni share stories in honour of our 140th

3D WORLD
Pedagogy-altering tech
MESSAGE
FROM JANICE RISTOCK, PROVOST AND VICE-PRESIDENT (ACADEMIC)

AT THE END OF GRADE FOUR, my teacher announced that she told fortunes and methodically went around the room telling each of us what she saw in our futures. She told me that I would at least get my master’s degree and then told my best friend that she would try university but wouldn’t like it and would work for Manitoba Hydro. I remember my friend’s horrified look as we all wondered what powers this teacher really had to predict our future. I have reflected on this moment often to remind myself of the profound impacts (intended and unintended) that teachers have on their students. I also remember nervously teaching a section on “international feminisms” at Trent University and my grateful relief to have two students in the course who had traveled far more extensively than I, worked in women’s cooperatives in Sri Lanka, and could bring to life concepts in the readings in a much more meaningful way than I possibly could. This, too, had a strong effect on my pedagogical approach going forward.

In honour of the University of Manitoba’s 140th Anniversary, this issue features special U of M teaching moments as shared by alumni such as Deborah Young, Usha Mittoo (also a current faculty member at Asper), Karen Beaudin (winner of the 2016 DAA for Community Service), music alumnus Luke Nickel, author and curler Sean Grassie and fine art alumna Kae Sasaki. Then, to flip the perspective, we hear from three faculty members—Tuula Heinonen, Zana Lutfiyya and Joyce Slater—who recall learning situations in which students reshaped their own thinking.

You’ll also find other exciting features about Indigenous land-based pedagogy, how 3D printing technology is transforming classrooms in the faculties of Architecture, Health Sciences and Engineering and the School of Art, as well as two collaborative learning projects based on a film production course and an interdisciplinary project between Religion and Music.

There are articles on extending teaching and service beyond the classroom, through initiatives like Jean-Eric Ghia’s CBC/Radio-Canada activities and Alan Katz’s Refugee Response Project.

Following the theme of our anniversary commemoration, there are some treats from Archives & Special Collections—an exam from 1888 (no bubble sheet exams back then) and the story of Alexander Isbister’s legacy.

As we celebrate and reflect upon the profound legacy of this institution, I am reminded how proud I am to be part of this community of teachers and learners. One hundred and forty years on, this issue of Teaching Life pays tribute to the many ways that teaching and learning remains at the deep and dynamic heart of the university.

On the cover: Student from the 2016-17 film production course taught by George Toles. Photo by Mike Latschislaw. See feature on page 23.
TEACHING BEYOND THE LAB
Medicine prof Jean-Eric Ghia on knowledge translation beyond the university classroom

THE LAND IS OUR TEXTBOOK FEATURE
Making space in academia for land-based education

A WHOLE NEW (3D) WORLD FEATURE
A printing technology is changing teaching in architecture, medicine, engineering and fine art

TEACHING SERVICE
How one doctor brought U of M faculty together in response to the Syrian refugee crisis

STUDENT TEACHERS
Professors learn from their pupils

4-3-2-1 ACTION! DOUBLE FEATURE
Two inspiring teaching projects emphasize collaborative learning and interdisciplinary performance

FIRST DAY OF CLASS
For new faculty, teaching can be overwhelming

IN PRAISE OF GREAT LEARNING MOMENTS
Memorable classroom moments from outstanding alumni to celebrate the U of M’s 140th

Q AND A
Viktor Popp, student and Schulich Scholarship winner

FROM THE ARCHIVES: U OF M 140TH
Our founding story of the Isbister Legacy and some hidden treasures

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Sharing research with our society is an integral part of the work of a researcher, who must adapt its language for a lay audience. Science has not always existed and the dissemination of knowledge has often been confined to an elitist category—and even then in a reductionist manner. It is only with the emergence of radio and media that knowledge began to spread to the general population, but with some issues ...
A S A RESULT of my outreach activities, I realized that despite the importance of the research activity, our communities are not always aware of the scientific discoveries in their own country, province or even city.

To fill what might be described as “scientific desert,” we need to share our research with the public and show the importance of our scientific community and their discoveries. This is a challenge that must be met on a daily basis, as very often we hear that science is not the media’s priority. One would say that the mainstream media is less interested in science, but this response is very restrictive; perhaps we should also look on the researchers’ side. Indeed, many simply do not think of disseminating their research, although their results can be very promising. The problem is that the curriculum doesn’t focus yet on scientific popularization, even though it is a necessary skill for future researchers.

Do not think that well-known researchers are comfortable either with general knowledge transfer! Each researcher has to share his or her scientific perspective to a wider audience outside the scientific community. In that context, the tone of the message must be adapted depending on the public. The biology enthusiast will understand biological phenomena, while the young graduate in literature will have more difficulties. Therefore, the reformulation, the use of metaphors and the angle chosen to address the topic play key roles. For a scientist, it can be tough to link all these aspects, as he or she needs to detach from the specialized language; lectures don’t mix well with scientific popularization.

Scientists not used to popularizing their research also fear that journalists could distort their message and moreover, with the internationalization of science and multiculturalism, the language barrier can become another hurdle.

However, when communication is properly used, the shared information can bring a glimmer of hope to the public. I sometimes hear: “We don’t hear often about the results of ongoing research,” or “It gives us hope.” Hope is the word that recurs from the mouths of patients. People need hope in their daily lives to overcome disease and treatment. Don’t we say: “Hope springs eternal”?

On CBC/Radio-Canada: After discussion with some CBC/Radio-Canada hosts and producers, the idea of creating a French scientific radio segment emerged. Since 2015, the segment Des éprouvettes et des hommes has been on air every fortnight and features a scientific article produced by an English or francophone researcher from Manitoba or Canada. Hours are dedicated to deliver credible, relevant and accessible information. The authors of the articles are contacted and with their help, I prepare my segment. I also regularly try to conduct interviews with world-renowned researchers (e.g. Profs Kobinger, Elena Verdu, Michel Raymond) and the most relevant parts are selected to fit the format of my segment. Once aired, the segments are available on CBC/Radio-Canada Première Manitoba: Le 6 à 9 website, under the tab “Des éprouvettes et des hommes,” with additional links and pictures featuring the investigators. The segment is also aired on demand in western Canadian provinces. In some cases, the complete interview is broadcasted during the radio show “Les Samedis du Monde.”

To demonstrate the importance of knowledge transfer, I also discuss its implication with celebrities. Recently, I interviewed the Academy Award-winning French actor Thierry Lhermitte, who visits laboratories, talks to researchers and presents scientific information to the public through radio and TV broadcasts.

Just like education, information and access to knowledge in science are rights—and they should be in the public domain.

My expertise in the field of science, along with my education, allowed me to establish a link between English and francophone researchers and the Franco-Manitoban community. The goal of science is not only to deliver scientific content to our peers, but also to play a fundamental role in education, giving it a cultural dimension. Just like education, information and access to knowledge in science are rights—and they should be in the public domain. To attract a larger audience, we have also created a TV version, which is aired in Western Canada.

To be continued….
TEXTBOOK IS OUR LAND
THE
EVERY COURSE WE DO, we teach about healthy and sustainable relationships with the world around you and with your non-human relatives,” says Native studies department head Niigaan Sinclair. Maybe that’s why, last spring, Native studies sessional instructor and former grade-school teacher Tasha Spillett had her class of undergraduate students outside on the lawn on Fort Garry campus.

This is a common method for Spillett when discussing traditional Indigenous teachings. “Talking about creation stories connect us in a very intimate way to our territories, so what I do is bring people outside and I think the spatial change to outside the classroom onto the lawn changes the student,” she explains.

“People are taught that education only happens in the classroom, the professor stands at the front of the class, there’s rows facing the front, you stay there for however long, you take your notes—the teaching pedagogies don’t change much from classroom to classroom here at these institutions because it’s so hierarchical.”

In a time where many instructors are utilizing computers, cell phones and other pieces of technology, it seems ironic that some of the most innovative teaching methods are based on pedagogies that go back hundreds of years.

That’s what Spillett does: she specializes in Indigenous land-based education, which, rather than trying to fit Indigenous knowledge inside a university setting, takes students to the knowledge keepers and to learn on the land.

“Indigenous land-based education centres Indigeneity,” she says. “It centres our understandings of who we are and where we come from and looks at that as the framework for education.”

Spillett uses a metaphor to explain why “centring” Indigenous teachings is important: “What we’re seeing now in education—which is not new—is a blend-and-stir approach.”
We have the education system, which is Eurocentric, and we add some Aboriginal perspectives. If we’re making a stew, they might be the celery that goes into that stew. Aboriginal perspectives are only one ingredient.”

A better path, Spillett argues, is “looking at Indigenous education as a complete recipe for education; a whole, intact recipe.”

Essential to the recipe of Indigenous education is the land, which is used as a basis for teaching across the Native studies department at the University of Manitoba.

THE EARTH AS KNOWLEDGE KEEPER

“I would say that everything we do here [at the department] has to do, in some part, with the earth itself,” says Sinclair. “All aspects of what we would call our non-human relations or our non-human entities are connected to us through creation. It’s in everything.”

Indigenous education is a more holistic approach to learning that sees the earth itself as a knowledge keeper. Sinclair acknowledges that books are an important element of learning—but they’re not the only element.

“The earth reminds us that it’s a textual place, it’s a place of knowledge, it’s an archive. When I teach literature, I teach [students] to see a text as more than squiggly lines on a page, which is the only way that Europe likes to view language. I say, ‘How is a moccasin a text? How is that a novel? ... And if that’s the case, then who’s the author of the moccasin?’ It’s not just the human hands, it’s the moose and it’s the water that fell on the moose, and it’s the birds that live above us in the sky. It’s all the things that happened to make that moccasin possible.”

Another example of Indigenous land-based education in practice is the Native Studies Field School at the U of M, facilitated by Ryan Duplassie, PhD candidate and instructor in Native studies. Along with discussion of scholarly texts, the program includes a two-week experiential learning component in Grassy Narrows First Nation.

According to the course description, students “develop an understanding of their place as Treaty people by engaging the environmental and cultural politics of the Anishinaabe community.”

Students learn about Indigenous grassroots efforts to preserve and protect Indigenous traditions and home territories, and contribute to community-led development projects. They also have the opportunity to learn practical skills for living off the land, such as how to build trapping cabins, how to catch and cook fish, and how to make traditional tools such as wooden paddles.

Take second-year master’s student in Native studies, Naithan Lagace, for example. His current work examines Indigenous education and representations of Indigenous characters in a recent video game—specifically, how characters are represented in relation to the land.

“The game Never Alone incorporates Indigenous-based teachings,” Lagace says. “I’m interested in how the player interacts with the game and whether it reinforces negative or positive stereotypes.” The game has been receiving attention around the world since its release in 2014; it was developed by Upper One Games, a for-profit enterprise of Alaska’s Cook Inlet Tribal Council that calls itself “the first indigenous-owned video game developer and publisher in US history.”

Indigenous land-based education also values skill sets that might be overlooked in traditional academia.

“It might be that that student has a great storytelling ability or a great mathematical ability in which they’re able to calculate the distance of the sun from the horizon and be able to tell the time,” says Spillett.

“You don’t know what kind of skills a student has if you’re not giving them the opportunity to act within that skill set or have that skill set nurtured.”

Spillett and Sinclair agree that Indigenous teachings are essential to moving Canada forward in a positive way.

As Sinclair puts it, “What I say in Native studies is that we don’t teach people how to become Native, we teach Canadians how to become Canadians.”

Centring Indigenous knowledge is essential to Reconciliation in particular, notes Spillett.

“We know that education has been used as a weapon of colonialism in Canada through the Residential School System and I argue in today’s Canadian education system as well.”

WORKING WITH URGENCY

With the development of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation at the U of M and the launch of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in September 2016, it’s time to make Indigenous education a priority.

And since much of Indigenous knowledge is held by Elders and traditional teachers and passed on through oral storytelling, “there is an intense immediacy in this work,” says Spillett.

“We’re trying to work against the clock at saving the knowledge that’s still left; we also have to find a way to prove it, to capture it within data, analyze research and then to share it. All this is on a clock, because every day we’re losing encyclopaedias of knowledge in the knowledge keepers that are passing on, and at the same time we’re working against the colonial system that is still intruding on our ways of being.”

This is a lot of pressure, but Spillett finds it motivating rather than paralyzing.

“What I’d rather do is be very mindful and purposeful. We need to be very determined—fiercely determined—in reclaiming this work, in harvesting it and recapturing it and protecting it,” she says.

Her hope is that, with time, as more people engage in Indigenous land-based learning, the merits of Indigenous education methods will gain respect and prominence—and that teaching a class of undergraduate students on the lawn won’t be such a foreign concept. ❭
“The earth reminds us that it’s a textual place, it’s a place of knowledge, it’s an archive.”

Native studies prof Niigaan Sinclair with master’s student Naithan Lagace.
There’s an evolution afoot and the classroom may be its next stop. 3D printing—also known as additive manufacturing, or AM—is changing the world. Search online and you will find innumerable articles on the expansion of 3D printing well beyond the cute, hobbyist tinkering stage to include the manufacturing of everything from textiles and teeth, to pills, bridges and buildings. The possibilities, say proponents and industry-watchers, are limitless. Now students and profs at the university are utilizing this unique tool in their labs and classrooms.

Architecture students visited Reykjavik harbour in Iceland, where they saw the architectural marvel Harpa Concert Hall and Conference Centre, designed with pioneering 3D models. Students’ thesis projects and 3D models were based on the harbour front.
3D printing's transformative effects on practice and training
FOR HERB ENNS, PROFESSOR in the Faculty of Architecture, 3D printing technology represents a radical change in both the means of architectural production as well as what is produced.

“The tools have a transformative effect on the way in which we think and the things that we can do,” he says. 3D printing technology has changed the way Enns prepares his students for a career as a professional architect.

There’s still the need, he explains, “for architects to understand how heavy a concrete block is, how to assemble a brick wall and how to work with combinations of glass and steel—the real things. But in addition to that, there’s this new layer that’s so expressive and dynamic.”

The faculty’s fabrication laboratory, FABLab, is currently buzzing with students using 3D technology to create a range of designs for the Reykjavík harbour front.

That’s Reykjavík, Iceland: In February, Enns took a team of eight first year master’s students there to experience the Arctic city’s remarkable landscape and culture. Students visited several architecture firms including Batterið Architects, which designed the U of M’s Active Living Centre. On the harbour front, students also toured the Harpa Reykjavík Concert Hall and Conference Centre, an architectural marvel designed and constructed using 3D technology with a magnificent glass façade by Danish-Icelandic artist Ólafur Eliasson.

The experiential learning allowed students to gain the understanding and context required to design for the challenges of this country and climate, he says, noting that Iceland has periods when there is almost no sunlight and days of near continuous light.

Their projects include a greenhouse to grow produce year-round, a space for media production, a woodworking enterprise and a three-kilometer beachfront park with amenities such as hot pools and kayaking, he says.

“If you put [all the projects] together as a composite, it’s really an exciting array of possibilities for the city,” says Enns. It’s clear he takes great pride in his students’ work.

He says students are keen to gain proficiency with 3D technology when they join the faculty. “Students have a premonition that these skills are going to be important,” he says.

In 2015, Enns created a new course offering, called Future Studio, inspired by a request from environmental design architecture students who wanted to gain more experience with 3D software, technology and media.

As part of the course, students used Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR)—a technique that analyzes reflected light to map environments—to scan exterior sections of the Winnipeg Art Gallery and the Hudson’s Bay building and the trees in the park at the intersection of Memorial Boulevard and Colony Street.

“The 80-million-point digital artifact created through the compositing of many individual scans was then reconciled with floor plans and building sections from the Hudson’s Bay Archive,” Enns clarifies.

Students printed the composite files in the FABLab with a 3D printer that creates objects with plastic powder resembling white sand. The resulting models were near-perfect miniature replicas of the faces of these iconic buildings.

Enns says that students’ enthusiasm to understand and use this new technology has contributed greatly to the success of the FABLab. A competent and broadly tooled 3D fabrication lab, he notes, has “a lot of moving parts and it takes both institutional investment and an investment on the part of students.”

He also applauds the leadership and open-door policy of lab managers Jason Hare and Kim Wiese.

“Everybody can come in there and experiment, everybody can come and take workshops on the software,” he says. “In that way, this lab is phenomenal.”

The accessibility of the lab and the efficiency of 3D tools means that students can gain hands-on experience in prototyping earlier in their education and more frequently throughout it, according to Enns. 3D printing’s agility allows for more testing of concepts and ideas—whereas the old methods of prototyping, though not obsolete, are considerably more labour-intensive.

“Students have a premonition that 3D printing technology skills are going to be important.”

The time required to build models by hand means that students leave the construction part of project until the end, when “the choices are behind you,” he says.

3D technology allows for a very different, more efficient, process.

“If you have an idea and if you have the skills, you can get a quick print out of something that shows you immediately what the object is turning out to be,” says Enns. “The people who are good at it are using it as almost an everyday tool.”

He supports what he calls a balanced approach.

“As you think about a professional degree, it’s the best way to move forward,” he says. “Some combination of the old ways—beautiful drawings still being made in the school—and then a complete, absolute, unselfconscious embracing of new technology.”

Above: Herb Enns with his architecture students. Left: Dusting off a 3D model in the printer.
Medicine

The surgical modeling simulation technology that could change training for medical students around the world
IN THE MAX RADY COLLEGE OF MEDICINE, researchers aren’t just taking advantage of 3D technology; they’re advancing it.

Working together in the Laboratory for Surgical Modeling Simulation and Robotics, director Bertram Unger and associate director Jordan Hochman have pioneered uniquely realistic bone models that can be surgically dissected in a true-to-life fashion, making them ideal for training and surgical rehearsal.

“What has been achieved at the U of M is an internal fidelity with true-to-life tactical realism,” says Hochman, who is also deputy department head and an associate professor of otolaryngology, head and neck surgery. “The models that we are able to create with the 3D printing technology are unique because they allow for exceptional physical realism.”

Hochman and Unger are part of the wave of 3D printing that’s changing the way medical researchers around the world prepare for and perform complex surgeries. Researchers at the University of Rochester Medical Centre, for example, are using 3D printing to build human anatomy and create lifelike organs that residents can examine and dissect.

Using 3D models offer considerable benefits to medical residents, Hochman says. It creates opportunities for simulated, patient-specific, pre-operative rehearsal—practice without consequence—and allows them to develop their skills and gain confidence performing increasingly difficult surgeries, he explains.

“We need to find a better way to train residents such that they become medical experts while at the same time maintain our fiduciary responsibility towards patients,” Hochman adds, noting how this technology offers a significant reduction to patient risk.

“You can build a library of specimens with graduating difficulty so that trainees can then evolve their skills without ever touching a person. Without it, they have to learn on actual patients.”

The potential to improve surgical outcomes and create opportunities for residents are remarkable outcomes of this advancement he says, but Hochman sees another benefit as well.

“The secondary advantage is the ability to add better assessments to training,” he explains. “We can now have an identical bone dissected by every candidate for graduation where we can then grade performance.”

Hochman says this technological advancement, made here at the U of M, is likely to change how universities train medical students around the world.

“If we provide trainees with a better learning environment, they will excel.”

“Over time we are going to transition to this being incorporated in accreditation examinations nationally and internationally,” says Hochman. “It’s not fully rolled out yet—the training aspect of it—but we’ve built the technology. This is where we’ll be in six to 12 months.”

Hochman is humble about the impact of this advancement, but also enthusiastic about how this new tool could improve the learning experience for medical residents around the world, thereby graduating more confident and competent surgeons.

“By having as realistic a simulation as possible, you’re going to significantly increase interest for the trainee,” he says. “If we provide trainees with a better learning environment, they will excel.”
3D printing is shifting students’ focus to what is possible
A **BIG PART OF ENGINEERING** is using existing technology to solve new problems,” says Nishant Balakrishnan, laboratory instructor and manager of the Computer Assisted Design (CAD) Lab at the U of M. 

With 3D printing, “the ability for [students] to try out new solutions and prototype them is where the innovation lies.”

It’s why 3D printing is having such a significant impact on teaching and learning in the Faculty of Engineering, he says. “It ends up enriching the learning experience quite a bit because it makes people want to learn more.”

According to Balakrishnan, the CAD Lab allows even students in early years to design, build, test and prototype efficiently using 3D technology. The agility of 3D printing means they now have greater opportunities to see a design through and make it work.

All of this creates an immediate sense of ownership, motivating students to create early on, he explains. “I get students asking questions all the time about what they can do, what the limitations are [and] what the extents are—rather than worrying about only the basic requirements.”

Students want to do more than just what’s assigned, he adds. Their focus has shifted to the possibilities of what they can create.

Balakrishnan notes that it’s common for universities to offer this technology in fourth year courses, but the CAD Lab’s open access policy ensures that every student can prototype and fabricate, even at the lower level.

For example, second year mechanical engineering students “without a lot of background” are working with Manitoba Hydro to develop an automated tool to de-ice hydro wires. It’s a complex process, but students are inspired by 3D technology to find innovative solutions.

It also means that engineering students gain advanced skills earlier in their education and graduate with a more applied skill set, he says.

Because 3D printing and laser-cutting can simulate almost all manufacturing processes, says Balakrishnan, it saves a massive amount of machine shop time, allowing students to prototype at a quicker rate and shifting the focus to hands-on design experience.

When graduates go into the workforce, “they understand more [about] their capabilities because they’ve had more of a chance to apply them—which most of the companies we’ve worked with seem to enjoy quite a bit,” he says.

Another project in the CAD Lab is by biosystems engineering students who are using 3D printing to create an automated lake algae skimmer to remove algae from northern Manitoba lakes or water bodies.

Students were challenged to build a small device that moves between two drones to remove algae blooms, he explains. They came up with a completely new approach. “Nobody has ever tried to approach lake algae skimming this way,” says Balakrishnan.

“I’m seeing a lot of students do really stellar work because of the capability that’s there in that process,” he says. “Students are being pushed to think outside of the box.”

3D printing offers thrilling creative possibilities for students and can be a gateway to related practices of all kinds, says Alex Poruchnyk, associate professor in the School of Art.

That is why, several years ago, he purchased a small 3D printer for his students. “It’s a start,” he explains. “It’s there as a lifeline.”

Many students are embracing the technology, Poruchnyk says. One of his first year students, Shanelle Rempel, designed and printed a chessboard. MFA student Francisco (Pancho) Puelles used 3D modeling to create an art installation of thought-provoking masks.

Though the School of Art presently does not offer any courses in 3D printing, Poruchnyk says doing so would give students tools to go further in their education and career. He incorporates the technology into his teaching and leaves the 3D printer in an open-access area for students to use once they’re educated in the technology.

Access to the 3D printer encourages students to be more creative, he explains. “That’s what happens when they’re interested and excited.”

Students at the School of Art would benefit from a greater investment in technology, he argues. 3D printers could help students create stop frame animation, or pitch characters for film, he says. Graphic design students can print models for products and sculptors can work with printers that output in clay, he adds.

“Our students would just knock ‘em dead [if we gave them more tools],” he says. “And we’d be able to attract more MFA students.”

But this requires a significant investment, Poruchnyk acknowledges.

He hopes to see a new technology champion take his place in the School of Art because he has come to the end of his 28-year career.

“When we teach art, we’re really teaching our students for the future, not for the past or the present,” he says.

“I’m talking about what’s possible. We should be taking more risks.”
“The best methods of teaching are not about lecturing,” says Alan Katz, director of the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy in the Max Rady College of Medicine. “They’re about engaging learners. Community service is a way of walking the walk—demonstrating your own commitment to what you are teaching.”
KATZ FOUNDED THE REFUGEE RESPONSE project as an outgrowth of his conviction. Putting his values into action, Katz organized a 30-member committee on the Bannatyne campus during the 2015-16 academic year to raise the required $35,000 to sponsor a Syrian family.

From a teaching perspective, he says, leading the Refugee Response project has allowed him to model his conviction that health professionals have a social responsibility to live their values.

"A lot of teaching is about values and attitudes, not just knowledge. Values and attitudes are more difficult to teach. Knowledge, you can get from a book or the Internet. To me, there's no better way of helping students learn about values and attitudes than to demonstrate and live it in your real life. That's what service really is."

THE REFUGEE RESPONSE PROJECT

It began when Katz saw TV news coverage of refugees fleeing wartorn Syria in 2015. He couldn't look away.

Having grown up in South Africa in the apartheid era, and having a strong sense of Jewish identity, the U of M professor of community health sciences and family medicine was deeply troubled by the Syrians' suffering and loss of rights. He felt compelled to be of service somehow.

Many Canadians were organizing to sponsor refugees through churches or community groups. But Katz had a unique vision: the faculty, staff and students of the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences could pull together to privately sponsor a refugee family.

The Refugee Response project was born.

"It aligns with the values that the Rady Faculty [of Health Sciences] tries to impart," Katz says. "We're educating health professionals to act with empathy and compassion and to respect the needs of individuals for the basics of human life: nutrition, shelter, safety and rights."

In the summer of 2016, the group started a drive to collect furniture, household goods and clothing in preparation for the family's arrival. Donated items poured in, from bunk beds, desks and dressers to warm boots and parkas. "The response was really heartwarming," says Katz, who landed in Canada himself as an immigrant 30 years ago.

On Oct. 18, 2016, the Hamidi family arrived, grateful to be starting a new life in peace and safety. Kevser Abduvahid, her husband Hasan Hamidi and their four sons had narrowly escaped injury when their apartment building in the city of Aleppo was heavily bombed.

After fleeing Syria and spending two and a half years struggling to survive as refugees in Turkey, they were at last warmly welcomed at the Winnipeg airport by supporters from the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences.

"I was surprised to see lots of people with smiling faces," Abduvahid said through an interpreter, a few days after moving into a two-bedroom apartment in the Fort Richmond neighbourhood.

"They have helped us with everything—documentation, settling into our new apartment….

"We would like to thank the people from the university, not only for bringing us to Canada, but for doing everything possible to take care of us."

The boys—seven-year-old Yahya, 10-year-old Yusef, 12-year-old Ibrahim and 14-year-old Salih—have adjusted well to school. The parents are taking English classes and the devoutly Muslim family has been introduced to local mosques. The committee will continue to financially support the Hamidis throughout their first year in Winnipeg and help them adjust to tasks such as shopping, banking and getting to medical appointments.

"I think they're doing remarkably well," Katz says. "I'm impressed with how they're a close-knit, strong family and they know what they want."

BALANCING PRACTICAL MEDICINE WITH A LARGER VIEW

The sponsorship experience has led Katz to reflect on an aspect of the U of M's social accountability that is a priority at the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences: teaching students to be responsive to the self-defined needs of diverse communities and to be respectful of cultures that are different from their own.

"It's important for us not to overstep and make value judgments," he says. "For example, people come to Canada with certain religious values. We have to respect their ways of life. That's true for refugee sponsors and for health-care providers."

In health-care education, Katz notes, there is an ongoing tension between studying the wider picture and acquiring hands-on medical knowledge and experience. Students need to learn about the social determinants of health, such as poverty and racism, and how they relate to health policy. On the other hand, they must learn the practical skills of clinical care, which are focused on "the patient in front of you now."
“Most students are much more interested in clinical medicine,” he says. “They don’t see health policy as being sexy within medical education, but it is critical. My medical-school training was in South Africa, in an environment based on unethical, immoral exploitation of people of colour. People didn’t have access to health care because of the political system and poverty.

“Now I live in Canada because of the Canadian health-care system and the values it portrays, in terms of providing health care based on need, not on ability to pay. There’s a strong parallel between those values and the values I hope I’m demonstrating by being involved in the sponsorship of the Hamidi family.”

Katz says the goal of medical education is broader than teaching future doctors to diagnose and treat patients.

“People who come out of medical school need to have a rounded approach and understanding of the role they play within society. I tell students that they are privileged to be educated, and I think they have a responsibility to use their knowledge to influence policy in the right direction.”

He also hopes to inspire learners to participate in service projects to make change, no matter how small.

“My personal philosophy is that we have an ethical responsibility to work beyond our professions, as volunteers within society. Apply your values to your work, but go beyond that. There is so much need.”
I was walking across the Osborne Bridge with a grad student I was advising, someone who was also teaching at the time, someone very wise; we were heading to a coffee shop to talk about her work—and something she said really struck me. This happened about 15 years or more ago; I’ve been at the University of Manitoba for 24 years.

We were talking about some of the students in our inner-city program [in social work] and I was saying that it’s nice to see students “with promise” get into the university and be in a supportive environment.

She stopped and looked at me; we stood on the bridge and she said, “It’s nice for those students; they’re the lucky ones. The ones I think are more important are the ones who don’t have that chance, that we don’t even know about, that could achieve certain things and they might not even be noticed.”

I’ve never forgotten that. I still remember that when I think of her, how meaningful and how moving that was to hear. And how it kind of shook me, in a good way.

I started to see students differently after that. I really started to see everyone as having gifts and promise, even though I couldn’t see it, or it wasn’t showing up at that time. There’s always next year, or the year after. It may not be [immediately] evident to us…. We’re used to looking for signs of success. If someone gets a prize in this, we think, let’s give them more prizes and more opportunities to get better. And then what about those students who are struggling to get even to that point?

Sometimes when you plant a seed, it can grow so quickly—and so beautifully—and it can bloom into something that you wouldn’t have expected could happen.

“Sometimes when you plant a seed, it can grow so quickly—and so beautifully—and it can bloom into something that you wouldn’t have expected could happen.”

It was a lesson that stays with me today and I tell it to others and people say, “Aha! Of course.”

Tuula Heinonen is a professor in the Faculty of Social Work and with the Interprofessional Education Initiative, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences.
I mulled over several career possibilities growing up, but one thing was sure. I was never going to be a teacher. Both of my parents were teachers. My mother taught math and my father was a sociology professor, including at the U of M from 1969 to 1977. After a somewhat circuitous route, I ended up working with individuals who have an intellectual disability. This work eventually led me to a master’s program and then into doctoral work. As I completed my PhD and post-doc, I was still thinking that I was not going to teach. I loved the research and policy work that I was involved in and hoped for a career in those areas.

I joined the U of M as a faculty member in 1992 to follow my research interests … and it meant that I would teach. Over the past 25 years in the Faculty of Education, I have had the opportunity to teach at the bachelor’s, post-baccalaureate and graduate levels. In conjunction with the Manitoba First Nations Resource Centre, our faculty has supported several cohorts of First Nations educators to complete the post-baccalaureate with a focus in inclusive education. I have been impressed and moved by my students’ efforts to gain an education and to become better practicing professionals who are guided in their work by the knowledge and research that is available to them.

I have also seen doctoral students take their place as leaders and as researchers themselves. All of these students hold themselves to a high standard. They genuinely want to be able to change and improve opportunities for their own students, the children and young people of this province. I am grateful for the chance to get to know so many committed educators and to gain a sense of what they do and why they do it.

I have also learned much from one group of students whom I have never taught and I would be remiss if I didn’t acknowledge them. The University of Manitoba supports several young people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to attend university through the Campus Life initiative and I get to spend time with the students in a number of ways, including an end-of-the-academic-year celebration.

These six to eight young people audit courses and take part in a wide variety of learning and social activities each year. A few have found part time or summer employment at the university. Like other students, they attend classes, sweat over homework, meet lots of people, develop friendships and discover interests and passions that will last a lifetime. Some are artists and have had their work accepted for exhibition. Others have written and published their experiences.

Their time at the U of M helps serve as a foundation for their future: to build a life of meaning and purpose. Based on my experience with them, the U of M students who most value their education are those who may have had the least access to it in the past. I am proud that since 2004, the U of M has supported these students to join our learning community.

Zana Lutfiyya is a professor in the Faculty of Education and the director of the peace and conflict studies graduate program.
ACTION!

4-3-2-1

TWO INSPIRING TEACHING PROJECTS
EMPHASIZE COLLABORATIVE LEARNING
AND INTERDISCIPLINARY PERFORMANCE

Mike Latschislaw

TeachingLIF 23

DOUBLE FEATURE
IT IS THE BEGINNING OF OCTOBER and we are gathered in the media lab in University College. A group of 23 students has been meeting since the 2016 school year began in September. Our current focus is deciding on the foundational story in the making of what will become a completed film, fully edited for viewing, ideally by spring 2017. It’s going to be a busy eight months.

Last night, we finished our third creative writing workshop for the course, Film Production: Advanced Camera Acting, Directing, Scriptwriting, Production. The six credit-hour course, taught by film chair and distinguished professor George Toles, has been running in the University of Manitoba’s department of English, film, and theatre (DEFT) every two years for 13 years. This is the seventh time the course has been offered to DEFT students who have at least completed the department’s introductory film course.

The course provides opportunities for students to learn a number of roles in filmmaking, with directorial, camera, management, art and technical positions. Some students will fill more than one position.

Of the students in our writing group, several will direct. The main actors and actresses are in the writing group. There are sound people and art people here and the student production manager will attend each writing session, too.

I’m a creative writer and PhD candidate in English at the U of M. I’m one of the co-facilitators of the writing workshop portion of the course, alongside teaching assistant and line producer Paymun Nematollahi and film student/through line coordinator Corey Rademaker.

The group’s task is to adapt an existing screenplay, crafting a personalized version of a shooting script of a little over 60 pages for a full-length feature film close to two hours running time. We will meet for three hours once a week into December, to hash out the intricacies. The writing process entails a scene-by-scene working over and rewriting of a script according to the group’s story choices.

Paymun is a master of logistics and he’s set us up with a schedule of writing deadlines for each of the three acts of the screenplay, with a final deadline of December for the whole script, leaving room for on-set revisions later. Three principal writers, led by head writer Corey, have stepped out of the larger group to become responsible for the writing of acts after our group discussions, returning every week with edited pages. After shooting wraps at the end of March, producer Jim Agapito will guide the film editing process with a group of student-editors, using the tools in the media lab.

Everything begins with the writing. Our workshops should be a place of conversations necessary for turning a script into a work of collective art. The goal for this group of committed students is to experience the collaborative art of filmmaking to professional industry standards. By mid-winter, at least three people in the writer’s room will be screenwriters, with the whole group credited as writing assistants. By next spring, every one of the students in the course will be a filmmaker.
I’ve participated in a lot of creative writing workshops. Typically, at an introductory level, they begin with writers sitting in hopeful yet hesitant circles, unsure of much, but that wherever they’re going, the words will be the way there.

Every film begins with a story. The writer’s love of language takes on a unique economy in developing a screenplay, almost as if drawn from haiku, in writing spare scenes and sequences of precise images. When it happens that the individual worlds of the writers merge in the shared world of the group, and the private inner voices of imagination become the voices in the room, finding agreement or challenge in hearty discussions about character, theme or setting, then collaboration has begun. Writing is often a solo gig. Writers can be territorial sorts, keen to command their own story terrain. The love of story and the desire to tell it here in movie form drives the group. Twenty-three invested students, one movie, three principal writers.

As we move further into the process, sometimes we will hold votes to decide contentious issues. Of course, first there will be pleas and arguments in thick rounds of democratic debate. By the time of the movie shoot, everything will have been discussed many times with conviction, as the solid choices required of filmmakers. Defending a personal position is important in discovering what works best for the film. But at this early stage, as the group newly comes together, with many people yet unknown to one another, every utterance is a courageous act.

FLASHBACK: Early on, George starts a workshop session by prompting the group to consider ways to view and develop the film’s characters. He brings Irvin Yalom’s Love’s Executioner: And Other Tales of Psychotherapy into the initial workshop session and reads passages from the psychotherapist’s tale of grappling, as writers must grapple in drafting characters, with psychological motivation, states of being and personal empathy in his relationships with his clients.

Yalom explains: “Even the most liberal system of psychiatric nomenclature does violence to the being of another. If we relate to people believing that we can categorize them, we will never identify nor nurture the parts, the vital parts, of the other that transcend category.” The weeks of workshop discussions must be underscored by the questions: What are our tendencies as readers or viewers of film? Are we punishing in our orientation toward character? Do we tend to be forgiving? Can we avoid crass labelling or an oversimplification of characters? Can we treat our characters justly?

It is also important to discover where we might embellish moments of irony in the script, or how to add a sense of comedy to a serious piece. The beauty of adaptation is that it provides students an opportunity to experience their own assumptions against the backdrop of a comprehensive story—which is useful for critical conversations. As we progress, Paymun will constantly remind us to narrow in on scene-writing details, with Corey maintaining each detail in memory, as the whole labyrinth of the story structure is produced.
The formal elements of filmmaking’s structures are the basic learned components of the course. The creative writing aspect is one of several U of M offerings, from creative writing classes to the possibility of writing a creative master’s thesis or various events and workshops hosted by the Centre for Creative Writing and Oral Culture. DEFT instructors are leaders in literary and theatre arts. As creative writers, critics, thinkers and teachers, they offer their students the plums of humanities training, in serious considerations of empathy-building through artistic reflection. Each place of study in the department is a stage for careful refinements of expression in a creative process towards a career of art making. “Film Production: Advanced Camera Acting, Directing, Scriptwriting, Production” is a course providing practical experience in deep, close, critical reflection and literary analysis, with resolutions in writing choices moving from the page to the screen.

**JUMP-CUT:** We had another exciting session last night. The buzz in the room peaked after two hours of passionate discussion when Paymun led the dramatic vote on whether our main character would die or not at the end of the film. Sighs and cries. A death in one of the final scenes of the movie is a pretty big deal. It’s a movie maker’s last judgment on the film. The room was split and debate was intense. Each of the three principal scene-writers have been alternating writing daily for a long time, meeting often with Corey to incorporate ideas from group discussions. The writers read selected passages from their portions of the script during the workshops, justifying choices and fielding questions and critique as conversations deepen.

**This project is no longer a distant fantasy, but something brought in and cared for, close to home.**

Although editing will continue for a couple of months, at least one process of transformation is complete. The group of students has already graduated. They are now filmmakers.

This is a difficult process. Various great ideas are constantly getting their heads lopped off, sliding onto the cutting room floor to perhaps be picked up for later projects. The meaning of consensus, or at least of approximate agreement, is newly hewn. The mood is high and everyone feels the stakes of completing the screenplay and entering the next phase of production. Location scouts will soon comb the community in search of premium shooting spots. The art department will begin pulling costumes together and creating sets. We’re getting down to the nitty-gritty. Thematic concerns have long been decided as the details near their finished shapes.

**JUMP-CUT:** It is December. Days are short and we’ve been meeting in the evening dark to finalize the screenplay. The dedication that the group has poured into hours of discussion and writing will evolve during the next stages of filmmaking. Shooting will soon begin. Our last workshop ended in applause of celebratory congratulations. Collaboration is a forge. All of the students have been tested and each delivered through the depths of real life emotions, imagining and then writing the story of the film. The group’s bond, which will increase over the next five months, is the trusting bond of workers hard at work. This project is no longer a distant fantasy, but something brought in and cared for, close to home. In a few days, the script will be ready for its first full table reading.

**JUMP-CUT:** It is spring. The snow is receding and water is rapidly moving along brown Winnipeg rivers. On a bright, warm morning, I make my way to a film set location on Osborne for the full-day film shoot of a couple of the movie’s final scenes. The weeks of immersion, with the cast and crew sorting through the details, from acting choices to how to make fake blood look believable and how to set the lights and position the camera have transformed into the work being edited daily in the lab. Editors and directors take turns tweaking the tone of every shot, with every scene crafted to fit the overall composition of the film.

Although editing will continue for a couple of months, at least one process of transformation is complete. The group of students has already graduated. They are now filmmakers.

Thanks, everyone, for following along. Stay tuned for screening details!
DIVINING DANCE

HOW STUDENTS FROM RELIGION AND MUSIC COLLABORATED ON A SPECIAL PROJECT

BY MARIANNE MAYS WIEBE

Mike Latschislaw
DOUBLE FEATURE

NOT ONLY DOES CANTELO’S UNUSUAL COURSE in the department of religion, Religion and Dance, explore a history of dance in world religions, but students are also expected to create an expressive, end-of-term project. For many of them, it’s a first foray into dance.

Dance and religion may not seem to hold much in common at first glance, yet the relation between the two is a productive one, notes Cantelo. She cites dance practitioner and theorist Kimerer LaMothe’s ongoing investigation of a dialogue between the body and religion through consideration of various sacred texts, historical artists including Graham, Alvin Ailey, Merce Cunningham, Robert Dunn and John Cage, and the ideas of philosophers such as Plato and Friedrich Nietzsche, who declared, somewhat sardonically, “I would believe only in a God that knows how to dance.” (He also called his daily dancing his “divine service.”)

FACULTY OF ARTS
INSTRUCTOR BRENDA CANTELO DEDICATES HER ACADEMIC PRACTICE TO HELPING STUDENTS DISCOVER “THE HIDDEN LANGUAGE OF THE SOUL, OF THE BODY,” AS THE GREAT AVANT-GARDE DANCER MARTHA GRAHAM CALLED DANCE.
Some religions accept and use dance as a vehicle for the sacred, Cantelo says, and there are some other religions that reject it all together as inappropriate for the sacred.

In the course, she explains, “we look at the curriculum, of dance and world religion, and [students] are thinking about dance and the way in which practitioners could connect movement to higher levels of understanding or expression or spirituality.”

In fall 2015, Cantelo took the idea a step further. Students from the course had the opportunity to collaborate on an interdisciplinary performance with award-winning local choreographer Stephanie Ballard and students from music professor Gordon Fitzell’s eXperimental Improv Ensemble (XIE) in the Desautels Faculty of Music.

After working together on improvisational exercises and elements such as rhythm, space, sequencing and force, Cantelo’s students shaped their dance performance and entitled it, “Bodies of Water.” The narrative of the dance was based on water: life coming out of the water, sailing through happier moments and into the storms of life struggles and ending in death, with dance movements to represent birds skimming the surface of the water and then flying into the sky.

The learning objectives for the course included learning these improvisation, movement, group cooperation and collaboration skills, in addition to developing competencies for creative response and problem-solving across disciplinary lines. In the past, says Cantelo, “students have relied on recorded music but our project with Dr. Fitzell’s eXperimental Improv Ensemble (XIE) gave them the opportunity to work with live music and to create a collaborative soundtrack where the dancers influenced the musicians and the musicians influenced the dancers.”

Fitzell says he was delighted to find in Cantelo “a colleague who shares my enthusiasm for experimentation and collaboration as meaningful pedagogical methods.”

The process of discovering and defining the rules of an open-ended project exercises very different skills than the more conventional process of ensuring adherence to preexisting rules, he notes. “From a teaching perspective, I’ve found that the trick is to provide enough direction to maintain collective focus, yet enough freedom to allow creativity to flourish.”

Both are proud of the creativity, courage and commitment shown by their students, saying the two groups learned from one other in expected and unexpected ways.

The event also drew a surprisingly large and appreciative audience, says Cantelo, including well-known members of the local dance and music communities, demonstrating the unique possibilities of shared learning and enriched understanding across disciplines.

As Ballard commented after the performance, “Being a part of ‘Bodies of Water’ was a unique experience. The live interdisciplinary dance event provided exciting challenges and a beautiful discovery process.”

**THIS PROJECT RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM:**

The University of Manitoba Creative Works Grants Program
Desautels Faculty of Music, eXperimental Improv Ensemble
Faculty of Arts, Department of Religion
Institute for the Humanities
St. John’s College
FIRST DAY OF CLASS

TEACHING LEARNING CERTIFICATE PROGRAM HELPS ALTER A COMMON TRAJECTORY FOR NEW FACULTY

BY MARIANNE MAYS WIEBE
When Cathy Rocke, an assistant professor in the Faculty of Social Work, got a last-minute request to teach an academic course—her first—on the topic of family violence in 1999, she leapt at the chance. She had experience in the social work field but none in teaching.

“How hard could it be?” she thought, given that she knew the content area. She says she expected to pick up a textbook and “wing it” with interesting discussions from her own lived experience.

It was a classic case of not knowing what she didn’t know, she ruefully says now. “Needless to say, the course was a disaster. I basically read the textbook as the class went along, prepared a few notes and questions and hoped for the best! I did not prepare a lesson plan, identify course objectives or use any student engagement techniques, and [I] expected written assignments without any plan to align [with] the curriculum.”

Her student evaluations were a concern to her. Rocke “dusted off her ego” and decided she needed to learn how to teach, enrolling in a one-week training course. It helped. Teaching as a sessional, however, she was largely unaware of teaching resources at the university and felt that she was “muddling” along, learning from past mistakes to slowly improve my teaching ability,” she notes. Upon joining the faculty in 2010, she says she relied on lecturing and PowerPoint notes in her teaching due to her anxiety. Student evaluations still reflected a lack of student engagement.

All of it led her to seek more training. In 2014, she became part of the inaugural cohort of the Teaching Learning Certificate program through the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (The Centre). She says that it has improved her skills and helped her to devise a professional development plan—so much so that she’s been asked to be a mentor in the program, work she has already begun.

Rocke used her early difficult teaching experiences to motivate her to find ways to improve. And she adds, “I am a firm believer in lifelong learning and will continue to seek out ways to improve my teaching skills through ongoing professional development.”

Improving on First Attempts

On September 23, 2016, the Centre celebrated the completion of the certificate program by its first group of faculty members; the program is designed to support and develop the teaching skills of new faculty.

Max Rady College of Medicine’s Jean-Éric Ghia says he was enthusiastic about jumping into teaching in his academic and research career. He had been surrounded by educators his entire life—his father and mother, aunt, godfather and wife all teach. Being immersed in the educational environment, he was confident the teaching would come easy.

Those positive feelings were quickly hampered by reality. His first attempts at teaching were “a disaster,” says Ghia, who’s now an associate professor in immunology and director of the Gastrointestinal Basic Biology Research at the IBD Clinical and Research Centre in the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences.

Since enrolling in and graduating from the program, he says his teaching has “exponentially improved.”

In-Class Observation, Mentoring at Heart of Competency-Based Program

The Teaching Learning Certificate is a two-year program that helps faculty members and instructors develop knowledge, skills and reflective practice. What makes it completely unique, says Colleen Webb, educational developer and co-designer of the program at the Centre, are two things: the mentoring-and-observation component and the fact that it’s a competency-based program.

Webb explains, “We wanted something that was measurable and where people could get recognition for their efforts. So we designed a program that recognizes the teaching knowledge people already possess, builds on that knowledge—and when they come out at the end, there would be some measureables. That was very important for us.”

To hit that objective, the program was designed so that participants would finish with a completed teaching dossier for promotion and tenure purposes.

Besides helpful workshops on various teaching topics, the program offers observation and feedback on classroom teaching, as far as possible by mentors with similar backgrounds who are paired with the participants.
As Webb says, “You can’t just conduct workshops and give faculty and instructors teaching tips. It has to be supported in the classroom.”

It was a learning experience for everyone, but the first cohort round went very well, she adds.

“The mentoring piece is key to the program. Mentors not only observe you in the classroom—they are also there throughout the two years to support you. And whether [participants] have questions about [course] design or something else, they can run that by the mentor or bounce ideas off of them about teaching. The Centre is currently working with its second and third cohorts; intake for the two-year program occurs annually.

“The feedback that I got from my mentees was that the best part of the program was having someone to support you.”

CERTIFICATE PROGRAM A ‘UNIQUE AND RARE OPPORTUNITY’

Chuang Deng, an associate professor in the Faculty of Engineering who was part of the first cohort, agrees. He says in-class observations and work with his mentor allowed him a safe space to work on teaching areas he was most concerned about.

He calls the program a “unique and rare opportunity.”

When he started as an assistant professor in 2012, he didn’t feel that the hours he spent on the teaching paid off. Below-average Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ) scores, some negative comments, dropping class attendance and pacing problems sapped his confidence. He felt he needed some formal training.

After enrolling in the program, his SEEQ scores increased significantly, to above-average in his faculty, he notes. Anyone with a strong commitment to teaching could benefit from the program, he says—from those “who may have been struggling to deliver a lecture effectively” to those who wish to improve SEEQ scores.

THE DEMANDS OF TEACHING: ‘BACKSTAGE THERE IS MORE TO DO’

Jean-Eric Ghia found the live observation of teaching to be helpful but tough, too. He says he joked with other cohort members, “Why at our age did we agree to give a course in the presence of a person in our class who is [evaluating] the good, the bad and the ugly of our teaching lesson?”

He admits it’s not easy to make oneself vulnerable like this, but calls the feedback he received “invaluable.” Overall, he says the program allowed him to gain a legitimate confidence in his teaching skills.

Ghia: “It’s not easy to make oneself vulnerable, but the feedback is invaluable.”

Teaching is highly demanding, he says now. “What we see during the class is like what we see during [a] play, forgetting that the hours in front of the students or the public are only the tips of the iceberg. Yes, backstage there is more to do!”

That includes learning about novel and updated teaching techniques; creating and updating teaching philosophies; and adding new technologies to one’s repertoire, he notes.

“I learned the basic ways of learning, the different teaching philosophies, the theories behind teaching practices, how to construct a rigorous lesson plan and how to create a syllabus,” he says. The program boosted his teaching skills and confidence and he’s since been recruited by the International Network for Educational Development and Scholarship in the Biosciences and is co-authoring an article with Francis Amara, biochemistry and medical genetics professor at the U of M, entitled, “Effective Engagement in Tutorials: Evidence-based-learning.”

Like his cohort colleague Chuang Deng, he recommends the program to not only all new faculty members—but any faculty at all.

Find out more about the Teaching Learning Certificate program at the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning’s website at umanitoba.ca/catl
Learning Moments

In honour of our 140th, six impressive alumni pay tribute to their memorable teachers

Usha Mittoo is a groundbreaker—and she traces it back to her own classroom learning. The first female finance professor at the Asper School of Business remembers worrying as a University of Manitoba student that she didn’t have the background to follow the case studies they were doing in her course. She had just come from India and was the only foreign student in her program.

“I understand,” said her prof Ross Henderson, a Harvard-trained PhD who used the Socratic method in his courses, when she went to see him after class. “But you are coming with new insights rather than looking from the same perspective as everyone else.” He challenged her “to be innovative and creative,” says Mittoo.

That lesson never left her. After completing her PhD at UBC, she joined Asper School of Business in 1988. In her first MBA class in investments, a student asked her if she could suggest a Canadian textbook or provide sources for information on Canadian stock market and financial data. At the time in 1988, there were few sources for Canadian financial markets—finance education relied mostly on information from the US markets. She saw an opportunity to launch her research by studying differences between Canadian and US stock markets that she has built on ever since and expanded this to cover European markets in 1990s. Mittoo, who currently holds the Stuart Clark Professorship in Financial Management, has lectured and presented all over the globe and has received many awards for her research and teaching; her work on Canadian markets and international finance has been cited in many top academic and practitioner journals and textbooks.

And she continues to apply the lesson today, she says, bringing new methodological approaches to her research and teaching, such as asking real-world finance managers to weigh in on issues of corporate finance and investments.

Her professor, she says, “was receptive to my perspective and encouraged me to grow what I saw as a weakness into a strength—to take risks and to think outside the box.”

—Marianne Mays Wiebe
EARLY IN MY STUDIES at the University of Manitoba I took an ethics course taught by Professor Arthur Schafer. He showed me how philosophical theories and ideas can be applied to real-life situations. The course was one of my favourites in university and helped steer me toward pursuing a master of arts degree at the U of M in philosophy.

Outside of the classroom I’ve crossed paths with Arthur many times on the tennis courts. He’s an avid tennis player and I’m a tennis instructor. I have given him lessons and strung his racquets. From time to time I see him at his home club (Taylor Tennis Club) or he stops by my club, Deer Lodge Tennis Club, and it’s nice to have that connection with him from university days!

Skip of the 1999 Manitoba Junior champion and the 2009 Canadian Mixed champion teams, curler and author Sean Grassie also represented Canada at the 2009 World Mixed Doubles Championships—and his team boasts the only Canadian medal, a bronze. He is a multiple Manitoba Curling Tour Championship winner, and in 2012 penned the book *King of the Rings*, chronicling the world’s biggest and longest continually running bonspiel of the Manitoba Curling Association, the MCA Bonspiel, which has run since 1889. He won his first World Curling Tour event in 2014.

IN 2008-9, MY THIRD YEAR as an undergraduate student at the University of Manitoba, I was enrolled in the XIE ensemble, or eXperimental Improv Ensemble, under the direction of Dr. Gordon Fitzell. Unlike other musical ensembles where students would perform existing repertoire at lunchtime concerts at the faculty of music, the XIE taught an improvisatory approach—both musically and in respect to its own organization. Dr. Fitzell worked with us to organize our own off-campus events. The events ranged in size from small jam sessions to larger multidisciplinary shows. I will never forget when Dr. Fitzell proposed that we fundraise for Amnesty International by cooking and serving a meal to over fifty people. The catch? We were to do it while musically improvising using cutlery, food-processors, knives and food. This experience was extremely inspirational to me at the time. Dr. Fitzell taught us the fundamentals of event organization, but also the hard-to-teach capability to dream as big as our brains would allow us. I carry this sense of boundless possibility with me in my work as a festival director as well as into my own artistic practice.

Award-winning Canadian interdisciplinary artist and researcher Luke Nickel has just completed his PhD at Bath Spa University and lives in Bristol, UK. His work investigates notions of notation, re-performance, loss of fidelity and memory. He has had works performed by ensembles such as the Bozzini Quartet, EXAUDI, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra. He cofounded and continues to co-direct Winnipeg’s Cluster Festival of New Music + Integrated Arts, which in March 2017 celebrated its eighth year.
EDUCATION HAS ALWAYS been important to me. I grew up in St. Eustache, Man. and graduated from St. Paul’s Collegiate in Elie, Man. I moved to Winnipeg right after high school to gain employment and pursue post-secondary education.

My uncle Phil Beaudin was my role model. He was a teacher and provided that consistent message of pursuing post-secondary education after high school. I had Mr. Beaudin as my French teacher in grade 12. There was also the guidance teacher who did not encourage me to pursue university entrance courses; she advised me to take the general courses. I do believe that this made me pursue post-secondary education after I graduated from high school—the fact that she did not think I could handle university and that all Metis kids were advised to take general courses.

I attended the U of M Access program completing my bachelor of arts degree. I enjoyed the supports and resources that were available, as I did need some tutoring in certain subject areas. I also had to attend adult education and do Math 300, Bio 300 and Chemistry 300.

The staff from the Access program was very supportive and helpful. One of my memories of attending the U of M was the encouragement that they gave and hearing “You can do it” many times over the years.

A tireless volunteer and proud Métis woman, Karen Beaudin champions Indigenous youth, supporting downtown and Elmwood neighbourhoods as a community resource coordinator for the City of Winnipeg. Beaudin received the Order of Manitoba in 2015 and the 2016 U of M Distinguished Alumni Award for Community Service.
During my seven years at the University of Manitoba both as an undergraduate and graduate student with the Faculty of Social Work, I was fortunate enough to be taught and mentored by a number of exceptional social work professors. I find it extremely difficult to focus only on a single individual because I felt supported by the entire academic social work community; however, if I had to choose one it would be: Dr. Brad McKenzie.

I met Dr. McKenzie when I was a young naive first year social work Cree student. I took his course, Introduction to Social Work. He was meticulous, fastidious and rigorous. He possessed every characteristic that I lacked and one would assume it would be a rocky if not a volatile student-professor relationship that certainly should have ended after the first year. However, Dr. McKenzie’s perfectionist and demanding ways both intrigued and motivated me so that I kept on taking his courses year after year. He later became my primary advisor when I was accepted in the graduate program.

Over the seven years that we were together, Brad taught me so much about research, writing and passion for social justice and activism. He constantly questioned and challenged my various points of views. He comforted me when I needed comfort and pushed me when I needed to be pushed. He listened to my endless rants about this or that and, more importantly, Brad taught me how to organize, research and write those rants into coherent and respectful arguments. It was a tremendous, powerful gift to be given.

Brad was my mentor, teacher, ally and later became a trusted friend. To this day, I still carry many of the values he and others in the Faculty of Social Work instilled in me—passion, social justice, integrity, competence and the value of community service.

My time as a social work student was a life-changing experience for me on so many different levels; intellectually, socially and emotionally. I can honestly say these were the best years of my university life and the learning experiences that Faculty of Social Work gave me laid the foundation of my professional life in the years to come.

Currently Senior Policy Manager for Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, Deborah Young served as Executive Lead, Indigenous Achievement at the U of M from 2011 until 2016. She has dedicated her professional and academic life to working with and for Aboriginal peoples of Canada. After working as policy advisor at the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, she joined the Public Service of Canada in 1997 where she worked on a number of key federal policy and program initiatives, including serving as advisor to two federal cabinet ministers. A major accomplishment was her role in the overall planning and coordination of the Prime Minister’s historic Statement of Apology to former students of Indian Residential Schools on June 11, 2008. She is a member of the Opaskwayak Cree Nation, Manitoba, and was born and raised in Winnipeg.
For every student, a story

Growing up on a farm near Erickson, Man., Schulich Leader Scholarship awardee Viktor Popp has trained prize steers, taught kids about animals and agriculture at a community 4-H Fun Day and co-organized Pink the Rink, decking out his entire varsity hockey team in bubble gum-coloured jerseys, socks and tape in honour of those fighting cancer. Good-natured, with a positive attitude, Popp is a natural learner who displays a high level of commitment to his tasks.

He shared his story upon entry into the Faculty of Engineering with UM Today last year—and recently chatted with Teaching Life about his university experience so far.

Favourite first-year course:

My favourite course so far was a design course in my first semester. At the beginning of the course the students were split into teams to work on engineering design projects. The team I was a part of truly made the class for me; they were a great group to work with. I value the connections I could make in design and the class’s high demand for teamwork appealed to me.

Why engineering:

I’m very analytical. I love math. I love physics.

First-ever design project:

When I was around 10, my dad ran over my sister’s bike. It was busted and we turned it into a unicycle. I like to create things. You have to see beyond the facts and try to find—I don’t want to sound cheesy—but find the beauty in things that can be fixed and made into something else.

On farming and diligence:

The biggest thing I’ve learned living on the farm is to be diligent and do a job correctly the first time. Don’t rush things. Take it slow. Be methodical.

The university experience is both academics and relationships:

At the end of first term, I likely would have [warned] that university is much different than high school from an academic standpoint. This is still true; however … I think second term has caused me to reflect slightly more on my university experience [and] what I have been learning is that the relationships you can create with people are important.

His nickname:

A couple of kids on my hockey team [used to] call me ‘Mom’ because I’m always the reasonable one. I’m always the one that says: ‘Don’t say that. Don’t do that. We need to be on time.’

A learning moment he recalls:

Some of my professors are very inspiring people. In one of the courses I took this past term, one of them is actually a grad student. Hopefully that could be me a couple of years down the road. A big reason we connected so well was because he graduated [with his undergrad degree] so recently. In 2013, I think…. Usually [with a course], the questions [I ask the prof] would be strictly focused on the material. But in this context, I felt like I could ask him, ‘What did you think of this class?’ Or ‘how did you study?’ Or ‘how did you pick a department?’—questions I’m dealing with in my first year; questions that are important and can play a role in how successful I am in my degree…. I feel like I need something a little more practical. And this is what he was able to give me.

Any advice for other first-year students?

I think being part of a group on campus or an organization in Winnipeg can be beneficial to one’s growth. When I think back on my first year, I remember the activities that I did and my involvement. Ultimately, most people at university are here to be students first; however, I would encourage others to become involved and integrated on campus (or in Winnipeg) to a level they feel comfortable with.

This year, more than 1,500 students from across Canada competed for a Schulich Leader Scholarship. Philanthropist and business leader Seymour Schulich launched the $100 million program in 2012 to support incoming undergraduate students pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering and math. To date, 10 Schulich scholars have enrolled at the University of Manitoba.

Katie Chalmers-Brooks
Our Story Begins
With a Gift

The Story of our university begins with a visionary gift. In 1883, Alexander Kennedy Isbister bestowed $83,000, a value over $1 million today, and 4,000 books to the University of Manitoba.

A Métis scholar, educator, lawyer, and author, Isbister made his gift with an exceptional stipulation for the time: that the money be used for scholarships and prizes for anyone who deserves them, regardless of sex, race, creed, language or nationality. For many individuals who had faced significant barriers to receiving a university education, this stipulation provided unprecedented access to a world of opportunity.

Archives & Special Collections launched a new exhibit series, The Legacy of Alexander Isbister, in Feb. 2017 to mark the 140th anniversary of the University of Manitoba. Founded in 1877, the university became the first degree granting body in Western Canada.

The exhibit will explore the impact of Isbister’s legacy and the evolution of identity and diversity at the University of Manitoba.

As a multi-part exhibit, the series will look at moments in the U of M’s history that have defined, and redefined the institution’s identity, furthered Isbister’s ideals and embodied the values he held close as a defender of equal rights and an advocate of education for all.

Over the course of the 140th year, Archives & Special Collections will also be releasing 140 historic images related to the university’s history. The archival photographs will be released through the Archives’ Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts.

Students at a lecture at the Medical College in 1915. The class included five women and the U of M’s first black student, Dr. Hewburn Greenridge, from British Guiana. The photograph shows early signs of inclusiveness in education at the university.

Dr. G.M. Little fonds (PC 26, A79-63).
It is fitting that in 2017, on the occasion of the University of Manitoba’s 140th birthday, our graduates received their parchments during Spring Convocation to join the more than 140,000 alumni living all across the globe.

In 1880, the first degree of the University of Manitoba was conferred on William Reginald Gunn, a student of Manitoba College, who graduated with honours in natural sciences and was awarded the Governor General’s Silver Medal.

Research by staff in Archives and Special Collections has uncovered the fact that Gunn was Métis, born in 1858, one of eight children of Emma Garrioch and the Honourable John Gunn, MLA for St. Andrews North from 1875-79.

Other significant milestones throughout the university include: the Faculty of Engineering in its 110th year; the Asper School of Business in its 80th; and Mosaic, the Natural Resources Institute, and the Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation all celebrating 50 years. Most notably, St. John’s College—one of our founding colleges—just marked 150 years.

Together, we commemorate the legacy of our institution and celebrate 140 years of tradition and transformation at the University of Manitoba!
These pages are excerpted from a rare document, an 1888 exam from the University of Manitoba. The institution itself did not offer courses until 1904 but in its first years, the university conferred degrees upon graduates of Manitoba College, Saint John’s College and Saint Boniface College. These colleges offered theological courses and admitted students of Presbyterian, Anglican and Catholic faiths respectively but they worked together under the newly formed University of Manitoba to offer a wider variety of courses related to arts and sciences. The exam was on display as part of the Spirit of Red River exhibition organized by Archives and Special Collections in 2016. The exhibit not only offered a glimpse into the history of the university and province, but also represents just an inkling of the hundreds of thousands of photos and documents contained in the archive that can be accessed by the public.