Teaching for Excellence: The Development of Expertise

Cheryl Kristjanson, Director, UTES

University Teaching Services has spent the last three years studying the development of expertise and critically appraising the frameworks and processes we use to provide academic support to our students’ and faculty’s quest for excellence. As a result we have developed a model (p. 3) to support the development of expertise based on a compilation of findings from the fields of expertise, education and performance.

The first element in our model of expertise is that of connectedness. Currently there is a greater emphasis in post secondary institutions to improve the “student experience or engagement”. Student experiences are comprised of many encounters but one of the most critical is what happens on a daily basis in our classrooms. Some of the factors that influence student success/retention are their sense of connectedness with their instructors, the content material and its relevance to real world applications. It is important to create a culture in the classroom and a Faculty context where students are given the message that teaching/learning is a priority and this is a place where they can succeed and achieve excellence.

The second element is that expertise is developmental. In our model we have illustrated this fact by indicating that there are stages of development i.e., novice........expert. Our stages are not meant to be definitive in number or name but rather indicate that there is movement towards expertise. Although the goal is for the movement to advance forward we all experience times in our learning where we have had to backtrack to relearn something due to changes in our discipline or environment. (Benner, 1984; Burke, 1985).

The third element in the model illustrates some of the behavioral changes that occur as we move towards expertise. For students these are most easily characterized by their thinking and acting. Novice learners tend to focus on the isolated facts or skills because they lack the more sophisticated frameworks of knowledge to attach those facts. As they become more adept with the content they begin to understand how to combine those facts into more integrated sets of knowledge. As they become more sophisticated in their thinking they see the complexity of issues and understand how to integrate facts into more critical thinking patterns. The most sophisticated levels of thinking are characterized by the ability to not only do complex thinking/acting but to understand when to deviate from those patterns based on new information.

The fourth element in the development of expertise is a factor that is not addressed in the (Continued on page 2)
literature. While we are attempting to develop expertise within our students we are at the same time developing our own expertise as instructors. Most faculty members come to their role of teaching as novice instructors. If we were to look at the pattern of behavioral changes in instructors we would see them move from a strong internal focus, one of surviving the classroom to shifting their focus more to their students’ needs. This is followed by a more critical appraisal of their own approaches and practices to actually undertaking scholarship around their own teaching. (Adam, 1982).

This leads us to the fifth element of our model which outlines what the research tells us are the critical instructional factors to support the development of expertise. The first being the importance of expert supportive teachers. An expert supportive teacher creates the culture for learning by understanding that: the development of student learning is task and domain specific, that it requires their curriculum to be sequenced to support learning that students require informative and accurate feedback combined with an opportunity to have focused deliberate practice of their skills and an opportunity to correct their errors (Ericsson, 2006).

The final element deals with the internal factors directly attributed to the learners. We know that teaching/learning is a reciprocal process. The learner has a responsibility to bring their best to the classroom if they want to achieve excellence. The internal learning factors most closely associated with success include how focused their attention is on their learning, how closely their cognitive learning styles match with the expectations of the classroom, how motivated they are, how strongly they believe in what they are doing, how prepared they are and how well they deal with the stress of being a post secondary student.

How has UTS utilized this model in their work and how might you as an instructor or academic leader benefit from its adoption? Firstly we have organized our programming to be developmental and longitudinal offering courses like the Certification in Higher Education Teaching (CHET) and the New Faculty Teaching Program. We have also provided extended programming opportunities to more experienced teachers around the development of online teaching and conducting action research in your classroom. We provide opportunities for scholarship to our most experienced teachers through workshop presentations and articles in our newsletter. For academic leaders the model of expertise provides a research based framework to design and evaluate your curriculum, teaching methodologies and assessment practices. We have included this model as an insert so that you can readily access the information as needed. If you would like an individual consultation to discuss how to integrate the development of expertise into your current academic responsibilities please contact us at 474-6958. References - p. 4

The anticipation of a New Year is often a stimulus for self-reflection.

UTS has designed a model of Teaching Expertise (p. 1) which you may consider as you reflect on your teaching. For those U of M Instructors who are excelling at teaching (p. 18) - Congratulations! All of us are developing our teaching as the curriculum is adjusted (p. 5), or we are introduced to new technologies in teaching (p. 6), or we learn to be inclusive with student diversity (p. 9). Likewise, students are transitioning to a new culture and developmental stage in life (p. 11). This can be stressful resulting in depression (p. 14). For teachers and graduate students alike, I trust that you will find this resource supportive in your journey towards excellence. Happy New Year!
TEACHING FOR EXCELLENCE
THE DEVELOPMENT OF EXPERTISE

Changes in Learners
Isolated info/skills ... integration of info/skills ... more complex thinking/acting ... automatic/adaptive high level thinking/acting

Instructional Factors
Supportive Expert Teachers
Task/domain specificity
Focused deliberate practice over time
Informative/accurate feedback
Opportunity to correct errors
Scaffolding of difficulty

Psychological Factors
Focus of attention
Cognitive/personal style
Motivation/belief
Preparation
Self Reflection
Coping with stress

Changes in Instructors
Internal focus ... shift of focus towards students ... changes in approaches/practices ... consolidation of practice ... scholarship

Culture

Context

Kristjanson, Friesen & Tittle, 2009
Developed from compilation of research cited on back
PATH TO PEDAGOGY

TEACHING FOR EXCELLENCE: THE DEVELOPMENT OF EXPERTISE REFERENCE LIST

In the fall of 2008, the Faculty of Pharmacy initiated mapping of our undergraduate professional program with the goals of illustrating and evaluating the curriculum. We were interested in an ongoing process which would also facilitate curriculum documentation and development between accreditation cycles.

The exercise was initiated by the Curriculum Management Committee which oversees the content, delivery and evaluation of the pharmacy program. The 4 year degree contains close to 140 credits and 36 courses (most multi-instructor) generally categorized into streams: pharmaceutical sciences, clinical sciences, and performance-based labs and pharmacy practice (i.e., experiential learning). Canadian pharmacy programs are guided by national educational outcomes for entry-to-practice such as “Meets patients’ drug-related needs” and “Educates about drugs, drug use and health promotion”, each of which contains several elements. These educational outcomes also form the criteria for accreditation reviews.

It was essential to find a process which would be comprehensive, practical, adaptable and, ultimately, informative. Following consultation with local and national experts, some important pitfalls of curriculum mapping were identified as (1) adopting overly theoretical approaches making it difficult to engage and sustain faculty support, and (2) collecting inappropriate and/or inconsistent data resulting in a difficult-to-use end product.

The Faculty decided early on that UTS could provide the necessary expertise, direction and support for curriculum mapping. The approach focused on mapping course objectives and student learning to the national Pharmacy educational outcomes. First the map would be constructed, and then used for evaluation by identifying gaps and redundancies. UTS conducted initial seminars on curriculum mapping outlining the basis, components, data collection and various designs. They lead subsequent review sessions on course objectives providing practical instruction on key elements, appropriate language, effective formatting and linking to educational outcomes. Course-specific consultation was also available on request. Course coordinators re-examined and modified existing objectives, as required, for inclusion in the map. They were also asked to supplement each course objective with an assessment of learning level using ICE (ideas, connections, extensions). For each objective, the expected learning level of students upon successful completion of the course was identified. The anticipated performance level of students as novice, functional or competent was also documented.

Two versions of the map were constructed: (1) student-centered—which follows student learning through course objectives by year, and (2) educational outcome centered for curriculum evaluation (FIG 1). In the latter for example, the educational outcome “Meets patients’ drug-related needs” is linked to all courses with stated objectives applicable to this outcome. FIG 2 exemplifies the documentation of course objectives along with the expected learning and performance levels for educational outcome #1 coded in red.

The Faculty is now beginning curriculum evaluation. Within each year of the program, the map will document how courses integrate to achieve each educational outcome. ICE will also allow assessment of the knowledge levels achieved by students as they advance through the program. In addition, within each discipline stream, the map will demonstrate longitudinal progression from understanding ideas to making connections within and between subjects and ultimately to extending knowledge and skills to new situations and life-long learning.

Curriculum mapping supplemented by ICE has proved very successful in meeting our needs for curriculum documentation and evaluation. UTS provided valuable collaboration in developing an approach and plan which was logical, functional and greatly supported by faculty, course coordinators and administration.

Reference
The technical innovations today have influenced the way we live and the way we teach. As educators we have been investigating and using various technologies in teaching. University Teaching Services (UTS) has asked us to share our experiences with the intent that it may help faculty looking for strategies to get started using technology in teaching.

### Who are we teaching?

**Ulysses** – Although there is considerable media hype about Generation X and Millennials students being raised on technology, by no means is everyone in this age group a technophile. Generally, students are not impressed with high tech wizardry. While they may appreciate this kind of technology in their “non-student” lives, it is not what they are looking for in their online courses. What they want from online courses is user friendliness, a robust learning management system that is technologically sound, reliable, a problem-free Internet access, instructor social presence online, and timely feedback to address their concerns and questions.

**Elise** – Most students I have taught express anxiety about learning and technology, as they tend not to be savvy computer users. Upon completion of a course students will express gratitude about the technological tools they have learned to use. For this reason I use low or as trouble free as possible technologies. Generally the students I have taught participate in distance technology courses for the flexibility not for the technology.

### Faculty and student concerns: Loss of face to face (f2f) contact

**Elise** – As a student I have completed a variety of courses online. I was not apprehensive about the loss of f2f contact with students. I did attend continuing education in-services that presented strategies for how an educator can develop “presence” in an online environment. Students do have anxiety about the loss of f2f interactions at times but quickly become comfortable with the course in a week or two, similar to beginning a new f2f class. Currently blended delivery (f2f with online learning) is a model that works best for nursing courses, especially for the introductory courses in a program while students become accustomed to the technology.

**Ulysses** – Faculty and students alike express concerns about losing f2f contact in the learning process. Considering that most of us have participated for 12 to 15 years or more in f2f learning formats, it is understandable to experience anxiety when contemplating the use of a different teaching and learning model. Creating a social presence and promoting student engagement are two strategies that help to compensate for physical presence.

### Online “presence”

**Elise** – As an online learner I realized how important faculty presence was to encouraging participation. In several graduate courses I have completed online the discussion board was a significant aspect of the grade. Frequently student questions and discussions received no response from the instructor, which tended to deter further postings. As an instructor, post regularly to the discussion board so students do not feel that their contributions are lost in a cyber abyss.

---

### Strategies for establishing a social presence online

The first few weeks of a course are the most critical in terms of establishing and projecting a social presence. Efforts at building an early online presence will go a long way in quelling student anxieties and feelings of isolation. Some strategies we use regularly include:

1. Send a welcome message using Aurora to registered students encouraging them to login to Angel to access the syllabus.
2. Similar to introducing yourself on the 1st day of class, post a brief biography to the discussion board and ask students to do the same.
3. Using e-games/icebreakers to generate enthusiasm and get the course started.
4. Contributing frequently and regularly throughout the week in facilitating the discussion board.
5. Post contact information, preferred communication methods, standard response times, online office hours, etc.
6. Set a “tone” online by letting students know how you wish to be addressed (professor or a first name or title).
7. Post your picture and ask students to do the same.
8. Using inclusive terms (we, our, us).
Engaging Students

**Elsie** – A strategy to engage students early in the course is necessary. If there has been no participation in the first few days of the course from some students I email them promptly. If there is no response to my email message, I phone the nonparticipant within the first week of classes to ensure engagement in the course. I build a sense of community within the course, using a module 0, which is a general guide for success strategies as a student and online services to access help (e.g. online writing tutor at the UM Learning Assistance Centre, the UM live chat and distance librarian, the UM computer help desk, online UM Bookstore link, etc.). In providing a source of services that student can access via technology, in person or telephone I hope to build a sense that they are not alone and there are supports including myself and other students.

**Ulysses** – Much of learning online occurs when students interact with each other, the professor, and the course content. Student engagement with the course material is essential for learning to occur. Online discussions are an important vehicle by which student engagement with the course material is facilitated. This requires frequent and regular participation and moderation by the course leader and is one way to establish and assure an online presence. Expect to logon and moderate/participate in online discussions almost daily or at least several times a week for the first 4 to 6 weeks. To assure student participation and engagement, seriously consider offering marks for participation.

**What about class size?**

**Elsie** – A general guide for online class sizes is 12 – 16 students as a maximum. I have taught classes of 25 in 2 sections, where it was difficult to ensure students were engaged and participating.

**Ulysses** – while class sizes of 12 to 15 are considered ideal, that is usually not practical outside of graduate programs. Classes of 25 students are considered the upper limit of an acceptable size. Beyond that, quality is compromised, usually as a result of the instructor not being able to spend more time online interacting with students.

**Can I create a sense of discussion like I have in class?**

**Elsie** – Yes, the discussion is different from in class as everyone participates (in class you can have students who tend not to speak up) and in some cases this allows a neutral and safer environment for students who are not as confident in class.

**Ulysses** – yes, but in a different way. Online, everyone participates (if you make it a course requirement). There is no place to hide. So you get more perspectives. Also, if the discussions are held asynchronously, (where students log in within a set time frame to participate), interactions can be much richer, as there is time to think critically about responses. There is an art to designing learning activities that promote rich interactions and to moderating discussions that promote engagement.

**Is on-line better than face to face?**

**Ulysses & Elsie** – since the earlier days of online teaching and learning (mid 1990’s), there has been considerable debate about whether online courses were as good as face to face (f2f) courses. That question was researched extensively during that time. That debate has been put to rest since about 2005. Most educators in the field of online teaching and learning would agree today that online learning is as good as, and sometimes superior to f2f learning depending on which variables are being measured.

**Strategies to promote student engagement**

We know that student engagement with course materials, other students, and instructors enhances motivation and learning. The following strategies have been effective for us:

1. Giving grades or marks for student participation in the discussion forums.
2. Providing consistent and transparent methods of evaluation.
3. Providing guidelines regarding participation frequency, quantity, quality and timeliness.
4. Ensuring timely feedback to students in discussions.
5. Summarizing frequently, and weave ideas together from the discussion.
6. Creating a FAQ discussion forum and encourage students to post and answer questions on technical issues/problems or helpful tips for each other.
7. Developing specific expectations or course requirements related to online etiquette. Students need to know that the course is a safe environment for expressing ideas and opinions.
8. Updating the calendar with assignment due dates.
9. Using a scavenger hunt e-game for students to surf to various aspects of the course (i.e. syllabus, lessons, discussion board, and web links).
10. Creating smaller discussion groups (8-12 students)
11. Posting weekly get started and concluding messages.

This came across my desk and I thought you might find it interesting - Elsie

"*ProHacker* delivers tips, tutorials, and commentary on pedagogy, productivity, and technology in higher education, Monday through Friday at [http://www.prohacker.com/](http://www.prohacker.com/)"
Will it be less work for me as an instructor?

_Ulysses & Elsie_ - regrettably, no. In fact, we find it is more work, all things being equal. The literature in educational jurisdictions attests that most educators who teach online perceive it to be so as well. Some aspects will be a time saver such as using the course announcement tool to communicate important messages to the class (due date reminders, clarifications, etc.), posting a syllabus.

**Thinking of taking the plunge?**

It is daunting to think about teaching online the first time, but it needn’t be a solo enterprise. Limited but effective exposure to online teaching can be acquired prior to teaching a first complete course.

- Consider teaching a “hybrid” or “blended” course. This model features the best characteristics of online education and the interactivity that typically characterizes face-to-face classroom instruction. It offers face-to-face instruction, but some aspects of the course are offered online. This model can help a faculty member new to online teaching “test-drive” a course, becoming familiar with the technology, but still retain the comfort and safety of frequent face-to-face meetings with students during the course.
- Consider team-teaching or collaborative teaching. Given similar backgrounds and areas of expertise, teaming up with a colleague who has experience teaching online can provide significant exposure while helping to learn how to do it right.
- Negotiate a smaller class size. Fewer students mean that the course can be managed more efficiently, and can make the first experience more rewarding.
- Finally, if the above scenarios are not promising, one can “observe” a colleague’s online course. With the colleague’s blessing, and a guest identification and password, one can log on to a course and browse around to get insights on how things work online.

**Getting started tips**

1. Claim a UM computer account id.
2. Start small. Focus on familiarizing yourself with basic features on Angel, for example, e-mail, announcements, share syllabus, calendar and so forth and begin using a couple of online tools for your current course.
3. Less is more – use technologies that work with low Internet speed and are universal to all systems and software. For example, convert documents to PDF format or html, limit images and graphics.
4. Attend UTS, Information Technology Services (IST), Learning Technologies Centre (LTC) workshops when you can.
5. Know your audience (how technologically comfortable are they), where to send them for support or where you can get support.
6. If you are using modules or units, provide a module that has information for:
   - How the units/modules will be organized.
   - Online course expectations & tips for online learning.
   - Logging on to Angel.
   - Navigation Angel – direct all students to read the quick start guide on the Angel homepage (www.umanitoba.ca/angel)
   - Online services such as Learning Assistance Centre and Off-Campus Library Services.

**Useful Resources**


**Where to go for help?**


- **UTS, IST, and LTC** offer ongoing professional development workshops.

**Getting started tips**

1. Claim a UM computer account id.
2. Start small. Focus on familiarizing yourself with basic features on Angel, for example, e-mail, announcements, share syllabus, calendar and so forth and begin using a couple of online tools for your current course.
3. Less is more – use technologies that work with low Internet speed and are universal to all systems and software. For example, convert documents to PDF format or html, limit images and graphics.
4. Attend UTS, Information Technology Services (IST), Learning Technologies Centre (LTC) workshops when you can.
5. Know your audience (how technologically comfortable are they), where to send them for support or where you can get support.
6. If you are using modules or units, provide a module that has information for:
   - How the units/modules will be organized.
   - Online course expectations & tips for online learning.
   - Logging on to Angel.
   - Navigation Angel – direct all students to read the quick start guide on the Angel homepage (www.umanitoba.ca/angel)
   - Online services such as Learning Assistance Centre and Off-Campus Library Services.

**Useful Resources**


To describe Aboriginal House as a building is not enough.

Sure, it is the most energy efficient building on campus. Yes, it is beautiful. And, yes the building was needed for a very long time. But despite all this, the most important aspect of the building is the stage it gives the people within it, students and staff, to attain academic excellence, promote Aboriginal culture, and sustain a holistic community where every individual is valued. The calming energy in the building is undeniable.

In my short time as staff at the Aboriginal Student Centre, I have seen the difference this building has made for so many that found the courage to pursue a post-secondary education. The University of Manitoba is a large institution with so much to offer. However, our size often makes it difficult for new students to find their way. This building has opened the doors to the wider community in Manitoba and has increased the accessibility of education. It is a place where people, young and old, feel comfortable discussing their options for attaining their goals, where people can get answers to their questions about University life or get the appropriate referrals, where students coming from far away can become part of a family so that they do not feel alone, where Aboriginal people can learn and share their own culture and the culture of others, where people are proud of who they are, and where people discover their strengths and use them to excel.

The stimulus for this environment is in part due to the work of the various departments located in Aboriginal House. The departments are: Aboriginal Student Centre, Access Programs, Office of University Accessibility, and representatives from the Department of Native Studies, and the University of Manitoba Aboriginal Student Association. Together, we establish an environment of support, encouragement, awareness, educational relevance, and opportunity for Aboriginal students so they can thrive in achieving their academic goals. However, the roles of staff at Aboriginal House extend beyond our privilege to help students. We are also ambassadors, advocates, and educators of Aboriginal culture to all at
the University of Manitoba, including academic and non-academic staff. Aboriginal House is a safe place for staff to ask questions and learn about Aboriginal culture. In particular, Garry Robson, Florence Paynter (Elders-In-Residence), Kali Storm (Director), and Carl Stone (Student Advisor) at the Aboriginal Student Centre are excellent people to ask.

The building is providing a place where a strong community is being built. Every day, when I get here in the morning, when I take my lunch at the front desk, when I leave in the evening, and even when I drop by on the weekend because I forgot something in my office, the student lounge and computer lab is full of students. Not only are these students studying, but they are connecting with each other. They are helping each other with coursework, seeking advice from each other, helping each other with life issues, and supporting each other reach their individual goals. This interconnectedness extends beyond current students to recent graduates, alumni, and individuals in the community thus creating a group of educated and interconnected individuals that are proud of their culture and that are passionate about improving their communities.

We encourage you to drop by for a visit or to book a tour. Meeting space is available during the day to other University units.
To make a reservation, please call 474-8850.

Teaching Graduate Students
Includes topics such as supervision, the student-supervisor relationship, relationship between graduate supervision and faculty research performance and much more. Available at http://www.ryerson.ca/lt/resources/graduatestudents/index.html

Learning and Teaching
This journal is designed for educators, researchers and students in the social sciences. The most recent issue focuses on the transformation of graduate education in applied anthropology.
Available at http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/berghahn/latiss
In an effort to understand one of the most complex of processes researchers, interested in learning about learning, have tended to ‘chunk’ the ages and stages of human development. Accordingly, when discussing the lifespan approach to learning the developmental timelines are often chunked into, for example, five stages: early childhood (2 to 6 years of age), the elementary school years (5 to 12 years), secondary school (12 to 18 years), the post-secondary years (18 to 20+ years), and learning in the adult years (27 and older) (Flavell, Miller, & Miller, 1993; Leahey & Harris, 1993). Although this chunking of information into manageable bits has long been recognized as a viable strategy (i.e., the focus on one chunk at a time), the intersections that connect these stages have generally not been examined in detail. In other words, what happens between the chunks? The movement from one stage of human development to the next requires changes to have occurred. Hence, the transitions from one stage to another can themselves be recognized as part of the learning process.

The transition from secondary school to either post-secondary education or to the labour market is by far, the most critical in the life cycle. Early adulthood, approximately between 18 and 27 years of age, is a time when the first and perhaps the major life decisions are made. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) provides several examples of such life determining decisions, for example, whether to continue their education or join the labour market, whether to seek greater independence or stay at home, whether to start a family or wait, as well as decisions about establishing their own lifestyle choices (OECD, 2000).
This transition is seldom straightforward. It more often than not “involves activities and or decisions that are abandoned, revisited or revised as values and attitudes become clearer, as personal goals become more defined and as career choices become more understood” (Canadian Council on Learning, 2008, p 84). According to Looker and Lowe (1996) “transitions after high school are much more complex, prolonged, non-linear and unpredictable than in the past”.

Evidence indicates that this transition period from secondary school to post-secondary education or the labour market is becoming longer and more complex (OECD, 2000). The rapid technological changes, global competitiveness, the need for more sophisticated transferable skills matched onto the increasing number of potential paths or career options to choose from (OECD, 2000; UNESCO, 2006) signals that many students are ‘learning’ for jobs that have not yet been created. Bowlby (2000), quoting data from the OECD, discussed how the school-to-work transition process is taking, on average, eight years, beginning at approximately 16 years and ending at age 23 years. This is two years longer than the previous generation. Factors that may account for the lengthier school-to-work transitions include students giving themselves more time to make informed decisions, travelling, gaining work experience (de Broucker & Hango, 2008), and dealing with the increasing requirements of most occupations (Bell & O’Reilley, 2008).

Bell & O’Reilley (2008), examining Statistics Canada’s Youth in Transition Survey (2000), identified several critical transition points that typically characterize the timing, nature and intent of young adults’ pathways. The first key transition point is entering post-secondary education and the second is making post-secondary program and level changes. The third transition point is leaving post-secondary study because of graduation or dropping-out. From an educational perspective, Tinto (1987) describes the transition to post-secondary study in a similar fashion but with a more focused definition. Tinto proposed that students entering post-secondary institutions must work their way through three stages in order to adjust and become comfortable with their university. A student must first separate from his/her former environment. Next, the transition period is the time of adjustment into the new environment and is a time of risk, anxiety and new experiences. The final stage of incorporation marks the time of full integration and acceptance of and by the university. The degree of transition required is directly related to the differences between the individual’s life at home and the community life of the university (Tinto, 1982).

For a transition into university to be made smoothly, students need to integrate academically and socially. If the quality of academic integration is low the result may be underperformance or failure, dropping out, or a much-diminished quality of undergraduate life. On the other hand, students who are not socially integrated may experience emotional problems in not being able to adapt to the emotional task of leaving home and attaching themselves to a new life at university (Rickinson & Rutherford, 1995).

**Examples of transition issues which can affect academic integration include:**

1. The student’s need to adapt to styles of teaching and learning that are different from high school (Lowe & Cook, 2003);
2. The study habits learned in high school can often persist until the end of the first term, indicating that students are not bridging the gap between high school and university quickly or effectively (Lowe & Cook, 2003);
3. The pace and volume of work may be higher than expected or previously experienced;
4. The different grading structures at university may cause marks to be lower;
5. The research which indicates that the first year involves significant cognitive growth and the development of learning behaviour. Teachers need to ask themselves whether the learning and teaching styles employed in their courses promote this development (Harvey, Drew & Smith, 2006);
6. The fact that traditional academic staff - and many new staff who initially base their teaching approach on the way in which they were taught - view teaching a subject and teaching students as synonymous activities, and have not made the cultural and philosophical shift necessary to recognize and use ‘the nexus between teaching and learning’ (Katanis, 2000);
7. The adjustment that is required to different expectations and experiences.

**Examples of transition issues which can affect social integration include:**

1. The student’s new level of freedom (Lowe & Cook, 2003);
2. Having difficulty making friends (Rickinson & Rutherford, 1995);
3. Experience homesickness, disorientation, isolation and feelings of being lost (Rickinson & Rutherford, 1995).

Transition issues will affect all students to a greater or lesser extent and will have their greatest effects in the months after entering university when students are making early adjustments. Those most seriously affected are unable
to engage with their new environment and lack confidence in their ability to cope with the new personal and academic demands imposed upon them (Rickinson & Rutherford, 1995). The experience of the first semester is critical to the success of all students. This is true not only concerning decisions about staying but also in determining their level of performance, personal development, confidence and motivation.

Transitions are, for most, very difficult and for some they go unnoticed. However, it is clear that transitions are individual; they are complex, circuitous, and longer than they were in the past mainly because we have asked students to make, what seems to them, a life-long commitment. It seems that we put pressure on students when it appears that the majority of them are undecided. Perhaps it is time to rethink the purpose of First Year. Should First Year be about preparing students for their major as well as facilitating a successful transition to a University environment?

References


It would be hard to overestimate the effects of depression on our campus, given the widely acknowledged prevalence and impact of depressive disorders. For example, according to the World Health Organization (2009), depression is the leading cause of disability and the fourth leading contributor to the global burden of disease. By the year 2020, the WHO projects that depression will become the second greatest cause of lost productivity worldwide for all age groups. Within Canada, only 23% of Canadians report never feeling depressed (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2001).

Looking more specifically at the university population, the American College Health Association (2009) provides compelling data related to the prevalence of depressive symptoms among students attending North American postsecondary institutions. In its 2008 survey, the ACHA reported that 15% of students had received a diagnosis of depression. Of these students, 32% had been diagnosed in the past year, 25% were currently receiving psychological treatment, and 36% were currently taking antidepressant medication. With respect to the students’ direct experiences, 62% of the total sample reported feeling hopeless at some point during the past academic year, 94% reported feeling overwhelmed, and 43% reported feeling so depressed that it was difficult to function. Even more alarmingly, 9% of all students surveyed reported that they had seriously considered attempting suicide at some point during the past year, and 1.3% reported that they had actually attempted suicide.

Given these statistics, it would be fair to say that all instructors have had experience dealing with depressed students, whether they have explicitly recognized it or not! Our intention with this brief article is to provide instructors with some basic information about common signs and symptoms of depression that may assist them in identifying this concern among their students, and to describe some of the campus and community resources that are available to instructors for consultation or direct referral of students.

Common Signs of Depression in the Classroom

Depression is formally distinguished from normal periods of sadness, such as might be experienced following a significant loss, by several unique features, including the range, severity, and duration of symptoms and the level of distress or impairment (APA, 2000). During a major depressive episode, there will be a depressed mood and/or loss of interest or pleasure, a variety of physical symptoms, such as changes in appetite, sleep pattern, or energy level, as well as other difficulties including decreased concentration, feelings of guilt or worthlessness, or recurrent thoughts of death or suicide.

Unless a student discloses such information directly to you, many of these features will not be immediately apparent. However, there are other possible manifestations of depression that may be readily observable in the classroom, including the following:

- Decreased motivation (e.g., poor attendance, preparation, or participation in class)
- Late, incomplete, or missing assignments
- Unexpectedly poor exam performance
- Vague requests for extensions or exam deferrals
- Changes in physical appearance or behaviour (e.g., poor hygiene, yawning or nodding off, leaving the classroom)
- Increased sensitivity or reactivity (e.g., agitation, irritability, or tearfulness during class discussions)
- Expressions of low self-esteem, emptiness, or perceived worthlessness (e.g., put-downs of self)
- Unnecessarily morbid tone or theme in written or artistic productions (e.g., required journal entries begin to focus on death or suicide)
- Any verbal or written disclosure of suicidal thoughts or intentions
Of course there are many other possible causes for such changes in a student’s performance or behaviour in the classroom. However, if you are concerned that some of your students may be struggling with depressive symptoms, there are a couple of ways to approach the situation. The first method is an essentially indirect approach in which you ‘provide permission’ to students to seek counselling by making a blanket announcement to the class. For example, you might say: “I would like to remind all of you that the Student Counselling and Career Centre provides free and confidential counselling to anyone who feels depressed, anxious, or has concerns about how they are performing in their courses or their career planning. They are located on the 4th floor of University Centre.” We have brochures describing our services that you can request as well for distribution in your classes. A more direct option is to quietly approach students who are showing several of the above features (or perhaps other signs of struggle) in order to explore possible reasons for the difficulties and identify what to do to assist with their resolution. If it seems like depression or other personal issues could be a contributing factor, there are several campus resources that could be accessed to help you effectively support your students in dealing with depression or related problems.

Dealing with Depression on Campus
At the Student Counselling and Career Centre, our annual statistics routinely put depression in the top three concerns we address in counselling with students (along with stress and anxiety). As such, we have considerable experience identifying and treating students with depression, both individually and in groups. One of our best-utilized programs is called ‘Managing Your Mood’. This six-session interactive workshop helps students to significantly decrease their depressive symptoms (Ritchot, 2009). The program incorporates cognitive-behavioural interventions, which are recognized as an empirically-validated technique for treating depression, along with mindfulness-based techniques and social support functions. We also offer a follow-up program for MYM graduates called ‘Managing Your Mood over the Long Term,’ intended to promote positive long-term outcomes and diminish relapse. Students may be referred directly to the MYM program, which is offered in several sections per term, by contacting our front office.

In addition to psychological interventions, there is a range of widely-prescribed medication options for treating depression. These medications may be used alone or, preferably, in conjunction with psychological treatment in order to promote the best possible outcome (e.g., Friedman et al., 2006). Our University Health Service physicians are knowledgeable and experienced with a full range of mental health issues affecting students and are an excellent resource for those who may require diagnosis or pharmacological treatment for depression. Along with psychological and medical treatments, students with depression may also require academic accommodations through the Disability Services office. Some common accommodations for depression would involve extra time for exams and assignments to accommodate a slower rate of information processing, private exam space to accommodate decreased concentration and increased distractibility, extended deadlines and/or exam deferrals due to diminished ability to sustain effort, note-taking assistance for missed classes, and possibly others depending on the degree of impairment. Our Disability Services advisors are familiar with depression and other mental health conditions affecting students, and are accessible directly by students who are seeking information about possible accommodations. For students whose depressive symptoms may have led to more serious academic difficulty, consultation with the office of Student Advocacy may also be worthwhile to ensure an equitable outcome. In cases of imminent risk of self-harm, such as an expression of suicidal intent, you should follow your departmental or Faculty procedures for dealing with urgent concerns, which in this case will likely involve contacting the Student Counselling and Career Centre or Security Services for immediate assistance.
PATH TO PEDAGOGY

Contact Information for Campus and Community Resources for Depression

**Student Counselling and Career Centre.** 474 University Centre, 474-8592 [www.umanitoba.ca/students/counselling](http://www.umanitoba.ca/students/counselling) Provides free, confidential individual and group counselling for students

**UM Employee Assistance Program.** 1-800-387-4765 [www.umanitoba.ca/admin/human_resources/eap](http://www.umanitoba.ca/admin/human_resources/eap) Provides free, confidential counselling for UM employees

**University Health Service.** 104 University Centre, 474-8411 [www.umanitoba.ca/student/health/index.html](http://www.umanitoba.ca/student/health/index.html) Provides a full range of medical services for students, including psychiatric consultation

**Security Services, Welcome Centre.** 474-9312 or 555 (Emergency) [www.umanitoba.ca/campus/security/](http://www.umanitoba.ca/campus/security/) Provides on-site response for urgent safety concerns

**Disability Services.** 520 University Centre, 474-9251 [www.umanitoba.ca/student/resource/disability_services](http://www.umanitoba.ca/student/resource/disability_services) Provides information and support for students requiring academic accommodations

**Student Advocacy.** 519 University Centre, 474-7423 [www.umanitoba.ca/student/advocacy](http://www.umanitoba.ca/student/advocacy) Provides information and support for students with problems or concerns involving academic and/or discipline decisions

**WRHA Mobile Crisis Service.** 940-1781 [www.wrha.mb.ca](http://www.wrha.mb.ca) Provides 24-hour crisis intervention throughout Winnipeg via dispatch of mobile crisis teams

**Klinic.** 545 Broadway, 24-hour crisis line, 786-8686 [www.klinic.mb.ca](http://www.klinic.mb.ca) Provides 24-hour telephone crisis intervention and drop-in counselling during business hours

**Mood Disorders Association of Manitoba.** 4 Fort Street, Ste. 100 [www.depression.mb.ca](http://www.depression.mb.ca) Provides peer support, public education, and advocacy

Sources


Wondering how to improve student engagement, evaluate group work, write learning objectives, use case studies...? University Teaching Services has a library dedicated to supporting the professional development of professors. Please visit our website at ([http://umanitoba.ca/uts/resources/library.html](http://umanitoba.ca/uts/resources/library.html))

You can browse through the entire contents of the UTS library or search the library for a resource by title, author, publisher, or topic. Books can be signed out on-line. Stop by our office (220 Sinnott building) and pick up your book or have it delivered to you through interdepartmental mail.

Preceptor Education Program

The University of Western Ontario provides an on-line, multi-media preceptor program for any health care discipline. It has been designed by an interprofessional group of health care educators and is based on both research and current practice. It is a valuable and accessible tool. [http://www.preceptor.ca/index.html](http://www.preceptor.ca/index.html)
CHET CHAT

Congratulations to the 2009 Fall CHET Program Graduates

Ludivine Coudière, Biochemistry & Medical Genetics
Martin Agelinchaab, Mechanical Engineering
Nyla Dil, Oral Biology & Immunology

RefWorks has gone Mobile!
RefMobile (http://refworks.scholarsportal.info/mobile) is a version of RefWorks for mobile and smart phones, as well as PDAs, that allows you to:

► access and view your references
► manage folders
► add information to the Notes field of your references
► enter new references with SmartAdd which will search the web for references based on a digital object identifier (DOI), PubMed ID (PMID), PubMed Central ID (PMCID), ISSN/ISBN number or by author and publication year, or even part of a title.

To access RefMobile you must enter the University of Manitoba Libraries’ group code. The current group code is located on the RefWorks login page at: (http://proxycheck.lib.umanitoba.ca/libraries/online(proxy.php?http://refworks.scholarsportal.info). Some smart phones will automatically redirect to the mobile version when you try to access the Libraries’ regular RefWorks site.

Communication Strategies for International Graduate Students: Surviving and Thriving in Canadian Academia by Nadine LeGros. Details and sample chapters at (http://www.uwo.ca/tsc/csisgs.html)

Some good advice for your first teaching job - What They Didn't Teach You in Graduate School - available at Tomorrow’s Professor Mailing List (http://cgi.stanford.edu/~dept-ctl/cgi-bin/tomprof/posting.php?id=952)
The University of Manitoba celebrated excellent teachers at the Annual Teaching Gala held on Nov. 2, 2009. Excellent teaching extends from the classroom, to community social services and business partnerships as well as to the individual preceptor/student relationship at the patient bedside. Congratulations to the 2008-2009 winners!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Award</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Sercan Akyalcin</td>
<td>Department of Preventive Dental Science</td>
<td>Faculty of Dentistry</td>
<td>Classroom Teaching to Dentistry I Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Muthukumar Bagavathiannan</td>
<td>Department of Plant Science</td>
<td>Faculty of Agricultural &amp; Food Sciences</td>
<td>NACTA - North American Colleges &amp; Teachers Award of Merit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Lee Baugh</td>
<td>Faculty of Arts</td>
<td>Graduate Student Teaching Excellence Award</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Hubert Benitez</td>
<td>Faculty of Dentistry</td>
<td>Classroom Teaching to Dentistry IV Students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Hugo Bergen</td>
<td>Department of Human Anatomy &amp; Cell Sciences</td>
<td>Faculty of Medicine</td>
<td>Classroom Teaching to Dentistry I Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Joanna Black</td>
<td>Department of Curriculum, Teaching &amp; Learning</td>
<td>Faculty of Education</td>
<td>Provincial Affiliate Art Educator Award from the Canadian Society for Education through Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. James Blitz</td>
<td>Department of Civil Engineering</td>
<td>Faculty of Engineering</td>
<td>Students' Teacher Recognition Award for Teaching Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Tammy Bonstein</td>
<td>Department of Restorative Dentistry</td>
<td>Faculty of Dentistry</td>
<td>Classroom Teaching to Dentistry II Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Noriko Boorberg</td>
<td>Department of Restorative Dentistry</td>
<td>Faculty of Dentistry</td>
<td>Pre-Clinical Teaching to Dentistry I Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Derek Brewin</td>
<td>Department of Agribusiness &amp; Agricultural Economics</td>
<td>Faculty of Agriculture &amp; Food Sciences</td>
<td>NACTA - North American Colleges &amp; Teachers of Agriculture Teaching Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Ed Buchel</td>
<td>Department of Surgery</td>
<td>Faculty of Medicine</td>
<td>Annual Resident's Appreciation Award</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued on page 19)
Mr. Ken Gold
Marcel A. Desautels Faculty of Music
Students’ Teacher Recognition Award for Teaching Excellence

Ms. Leslie Goodman
Clayton H. Riddell Faculty of Environment, Earth & Resources
Award of Excellence for First Year Undergraduate Teaching

Mrs. Elly Haywood
Department of Respiratory Therapy
School of Medical Rehabilitation
SMR Graduating Class Teaching Excellence Awards (2008)

Dr. Stephen Hladkyj
Department of Psychology
Faculty of Arts
Excellence in Teaching: Sessional Instructor

Dr. Neile Holliday
Department of Entomology
Faculty of Agricultural & Food Sciences
Students’ Teacher Recognition Award for Teaching Excellence

Dr. Phil Hultin
Department of Chemistry
Faculty of Science
Science Students’ Association Teacher Recognition Award

Dr. Michael Johnson
Department of Surgery
Faculty of Medicine
Teacher of the Year (Orthopedic Surgery)

Ms. Mary-Anne Kandrack
Department of Sociology
Faculty of Arts
University 1 Excellence in Teaching Award

Dr. Stanka Kaplonski
Department of Psychiatry
Faculty of Medicine
Educator of the Year

Dr. Aaron Kim
Department of Restorative Dentistry
Faculty of Dentistry
Clinical Teaching to Dentistry IV Students
Most Inspirational Teaching to Dentistry IV Students

Dr. William Korytowski
Department of Mathematics
Faculty of Science
University 1 Ongoing Outstanding Excellence in Teaching Award
Students’ Teacher Recognition Award for Teaching Excellence

Dr. Sylvia Kovnats
Department of Pediatrics & Child Health
Faculty of Medicine
Hospital-Based Undergraduate Clinical Teaching Award

Mr. Rolly Lavallée
Department of Physical Therapy
School of Medical Rehabilitation
SMR Graduating Class Teaching Excellence Awards (2008)

Dr. Charles Lekic
Department of Preventive Dental Science
Faculty of Dentistry
Students’ Teacher Recognition Award for Teaching Excellence

Dr. Milos Lekic
Department of Preventive Dental Science
Faculty of Dentistry
Orthodontics Teaching to Dentistry IV Students

Dr. Corey Mackenzie
Department of Psychology
Faculty of Arts
Department of Psychology Teaching Award

Ms. Connie Magalhaes
Department of Human Nutritional Sciences
Faculty of Human Ecology
Students’ Teacher Recognition Award for Teaching Excellence

Dr. Ralph Mason
Department of Curriculum, Teaching & Learning
Faculty of Education
Students’ Teacher Recognition Award for Teaching Excellence

Dr. Susan McClement
Faculty of Nursing
Students’ Teacher Recognition Award for Teaching Excellence

Prof. David McMillan
School of Art
Students’ Teacher Recognition Award for Teaching Excellence

Dr. Archie McNichol
Department of Oral Biology
Faculty of Dentistry
Excellence in Graduate Teaching Oral Biology

Dr. Dana Medoro
Department of English, Film & Theatre
Faculty of Arts
Graduate Teaching Excellence

Dr. Isabel Mello
Department of Restorative Dentistry
Faculty of Dentistry
Pre-Clinical Teaching to Dentistry II Students

Dr. Colleen Metge
Faculty of Pharmacy
Bristol Myers Squibb Award for Excellence in Teaching (4th year)

Dr. Evelyn Milliken
Inner City Social Work Program
Faculty of Social Work
Students’ Teacher Recognition Award for Teaching Excellence

Dr. Lindsay Nicolle
Department of Internal Medicine
Infectious Diseases, Med. Micro.
Faculty of Medicine
Residents’ Teaching Award

Dr. William Norton
Department of Environment & Geography
Clayton H. Riddell Faculty of Environment, Earth & Resources
Students’ Teacher Recognition Award for Teaching Excellence

Dr. Karmin O
Department of Animal Science
Faculty of Agricultural & Food Sciences
2009 Health Sciences Graduate Students Association Award for Distinction in Mentorship

Dr. Loreen Onischuk
Department of Animal Science
Faculty of Agricultural & Food Sciences
Teacher of the Year, 1st year Diploma Award
Professor of the Year, 2009 Degree Grads

Dr. John Perry
Department of Dental Diagnostics & Surgical Sciences
Faculty of Dentistry
Classroom Teaching to Dentistry II Students

Ms. Kristina Petrusko
Faculty of Pharmacy
Faculty of Pharmacy Student Recognition of Outstanding Teacher Award, 2nd year

Mr. Jim Philp
Faculty of Agricultural & Food Sciences
Teaching of the Year, 2nd year Diploma Award

Ms. Melissa Pink
Faculty of Science
JC Rauch Memorial Prize (Science Grad Students)

Dr. Louise Renée
Department of French, Spanish & Italian
Faculty of Arts
University 1 Excellence in Teaching Award

Dr. Renato Roperto
Department of Restorative Dentistry
Faculty of Dentistry
Classroom Teaching to Dentistry II Students
Most Inspirational Teaching to Dentistry II Students
Classroom Teaching to Dentistry III Students

Dr. Tanya Sala
Department of Psychiatry
Faculty of Medicine
Educator of the Year

Ms. Bethany Schroeder
Faculty of Science
JC Rauch Memorial Prize (Science Grad Students)

Ms. Deborah Scott
Department of Interior Design
Faculty of Architecture
Students’ Teacher Recognition Award for Teaching Excellence
I believe that my teaching is most effective when I keep my students motivated and facilitate student-teacher interaction.”

Muthukumar Bagavathian
Plant Science, NACTA Teaching Award of Merit
The Robert J. Menges Award for Outstanding Research in Educational Development was established and first awarded at the 2000 POD conference in Vancouver. The award was established in recognition of Bob Menges, an honored scholar, whose long years of work and contributions to teaching and learning and faculty development in higher education can be characterized by his spirit of caring consultation, active participation, and rigorous research. Bob was a consummate mentor - challenging, guiding, and deeply involved. It was in his nature to share what he knew and to help others find their own wisdom. This award recognizes original research -- quantitative or qualitative that leads to systematic investigation and evidence-based conclusions.

Dieter Schönwetter, Director of Educational Resources, Faculty Development and Dentistry Computing Services, University of Manitoba
Faculty of Dentistry
Donna Ellis, Interim Director, Centre for Teaching Excellence, University of Waterloo

“Taking Stock: Contemplating North American Graduate Student Professional Development Programs and Developers”

Dieter and Donna’s research makes an important contribution serious work we do in preparing graduate students. Where most disciplinary educational organizations have identified and codified the core competencies essential for successful practitioners, Dieter and Donna have done that for graduate student professional development. Their survey shows us what competencies we have been emphasizing collectively, AND what faculty developers NEED to help graduate students develop those competencies.

“I believe that my teaching is most effective when...

I give examples, show graphs, pictures, tables, videos while delivering the course material.

I put some of the class notes on Angel. I do not put all the notes to encourage students to come to class and get the 40% notes that are not published. If a student misses a class and does not know anybody else in class, I allow him/her to come to my office and copy the missed notes. I give bonus marks on surprise quizzes that cover or review lecture material.

I am always available for the students, even after they completed my courses. The students must make an appointment via e-mail, if they wish to speak to me.

The students are allowed to view their tests in my office and compare their answers with the answer key. (In our department, the tests are not given back to the students)

I help the students with decision making regarding their career options, and volunteer opportunities to gain experience in their future profession.

Constance Magalhães
Students’ Teacher Recognition Reception, 2009
Department of Human Nutritional Sciences
Do you have a quick question on teaching and learning?

Email: cheryl_kristjanson@umanitoba.ca

and receive a response within 3 working days.