path to PEDAGOGY

University of Manitoba
Centre for the Advancement of Teaching & Learning
Educational Development and Educational Innovation at the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching & Learning

208-214 and 220-226 Isbister Building
umanitoba.ca/catl

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First and foremost – THANK YOU to all 700+ teachers who participated in our online Faculty Teaching Survey. In this issue Dr. Mark Torchia provides a preliminary look at what you told us about teaching at U of M (see p. 6). We know there are many great teachers at U of M and many teachers who would like to be even better. Our magazine is one way our unit facilitates teaching, shares experiences of colleagues and students who contribute to creating a rich teaching and learning community at the U of M. The Centre is a teaching and learning place creating a space to grow great teachers!

Some inspiring stories in this issue:

1. Judie Davies retired from her sessional position as an instructor in social work. Being a life-long learner she decided to participate in some MOOCs. As a result, she un-retired herself so she could try some new teaching ideas. The result – her best class ever! (see p.8).

2. Marzena Kastyak-Ibrahim refused to give up on a group of first year students who had difficulty with English and thought that first year should be a party year. She collaborated with colleagues and made a dramatic change in her teaching approach which changed the culture of failure in physics to a culture of success (see video on p.12).

3. Matthias Pielahn, a graduate student in engineering has developed a real passion for teaching and learning. He is a recent graduate of the Certificate in Higher Education and Teaching (CHET) program. He shares his very own model of Tutoring Math and Science (see p.16).

4. Kateryn Rochon found other newcomers to Winnipeg and spearheaded an informal interdisciplinary faculty club who support each other socially and professionally (see p.20).

5. Zulfiya Tursunova developed a new course based on her passionate philosophy of teaching, social justice and gender equality. She facilitates a huge shift in perspective for students in her class and for community members who work with her students (see p.24).

We are celebrating Summer at the Centre by:

Hosting our annual summer BBQ on Friday, June 13, 2014. (See page 19) We will give away an iPad™ for one participant in the Celebrating Teaching and Learning event. For details and to register: http://bit.ly/1erb3dF

1. We are offering our second annual Teaching & Learning Institute Aug 11-14, 2014. See p.11 for details and registration information.

2. We are celebrating the graduation of our CHET students – see p. 23 and our outstanding teachers who are honoured at the Student Teacher Recognition Reception (STRR) see p.47.
3. We've been busy working on the implementation of the new version of Desire2Learn. It arrives at U of M for your teaching pleasure in early May. Check p.14 for new information and ongoing training sessions. There is a summary of the changes written by our D2L trainer Jonathan Kennedy on p.44.

We have a full complement of suggestions for enhancing teaching and learning. Here are some ideas to get you started.

1. Steve Yurkiw offers some great instruction on ways to organize course content – for f2f or fully online or blended content. He has included an interactive object to further engage you in the content (see p.33).
2. Jeff Buhse from Student Accessibility Services shows us how to create accessible documents using an easy to follow step by step approach. All course content should be accessible for all students. (see p.36)
3. Chris Ellis shares some ideas on how to use multimedia for teaching and learning (see p.28).
4. Melanie Bridges Down gives us some great suggestions for using the Discussion Board in D2L (see p.38)
5. Ryan Nicolson presents the PeerWise program for our consideration in using assessment for learning (see p.40).
6. Amy De Jaeger provides 10 tips for developing great multiple choice tests. (p.43)
7. Phyllis Ritchie stretches our thinking through her book review of “Effective Social Media in the Classroom” (see p.31). She also gives us a collection of websites and links to get started (see p.32).

We are inspired and energized by great teaching and learning. This year we provided funds for four teaching and learning projects. Details on the successful recipients on p.27 and at: http://bit.ly/MFFGRP.

The Office of the Vice-President (Academic) & Provost established the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (TLEF) and the 13 successful recipients and their projects can be seen on page 30. There are some excellent projects represented by diverse faculties.

As always, a full issue for your summer reading pleasure!
As Eunice Friesen mentioned in the “In This Issue” section, we could not be more pleased by the engagement in our survey by so many instructors (>700) from across the campus – every Faculty was represented. Thank you so much for taking time to provide your input. We will use your replies to better inform our program development here at the Centre and to more fully support each of you in your drive to excel as teachers and have strong and positive impacts on learning!

We are just beginning to analyze the results, but let me provide a few important overview observations for your consideration.

• More than 60% of you felt prepared to teach your first course and that preparation came from a number of sources including attending workshop and conferences and the advice and mentoring of colleagues. We are especially pleased to see many graduates from the Centre’s CHET program now in teaching roles and applying their learning.

• Almost two-thirds of you were supported early on by a reduced teaching load, some for up to three years, to help launch your research but also to provide additional time to get your teaching well organized.

• Support from your Deans included rewarding and showcasing teaching excellence and encouragement to participate in professional development, whether at the Centre or from other sources while support from Department Heads consisted of advice and reflection on your teaching.

• Colleagues appeared to be your main support structure with over 80% of you indicating this as your primary source of someone to listen to and advise on teaching issues. This was further emphasized by the same number of you indicating that mentoring is a very valuable means to retain and improve the performance of faculty members. We are pleased that one-third of you indicated your willingness to become a mentor to another instructor. We’ll be in touch!

• More than two-thirds of you use multiple teaching approaches, take time to reflect on your teaching, and maintain a well-articulated teaching philosophy.

• Almost all respondents had heard of the Centre (of course, we were very pleased by this!) and most had participated in our programs and services especially workshops and training programs and then integrated that new knowledge into their teaching practice.

It is clear that by providing some protected time, recognizing your efforts on tenure/promotion, and having a simple reward that you would be even more engaged in professional development.

So, what are some of the areas in which the Centre could focus its attention to assist you in learning more about and enhancing your teaching?

• Instructional strategies including active strategies, designing assessments and especially alternative methods such as portfolios and self-assessment, questioning and discussion.

• Almost one-half of you have some experience with online learning (constructed or taught a course with an online component) but mainly focused on text-based content. The Centre will be continuing to support you with resources and workshops on topics such as multimedia content, discussion boards, and universal instructional design.

• We recognize that there are many competing interests for your time, so we are developing strategies and resources that can have the highest impact in small chunks of time. Stay tuned!

• The Centre will continue to offer our one-on-one consultations, workshops, and other PD opportunities, but we can see that further development around our discipline specific opportunities and Faculty in-house sessions would be helpful.

As we delve deeper into the data, we anticipate learning even more about you and your needs and how the Centre can best offer support. We are always pleased to assist in any way possible - feel free to drop by (208 and 220 Isbister), enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, have a chat about your teaching, plan a research project, develop a workshop, or learn more about our new initiatives.

Have a great summer! Hope to see you at our annual BBQ, Friday, June 13, 2014.

~ Mark
Connecting with you...

If you are looking for a new tool to use in your teaching contact Ryan Nicolson our Educational Technologist.

Have you found a new technology you need help implementing? Whether you are looking to flip, blend or try something completely different, he can help.

Phyllis Ritchie joins us with a creative and professional background in the media and corporate community. She has worked in various marketing and communications capacities including print production, journalism, advertising, desktop publishing, promotions, editing and writing for business. Phyllis, a believer of lifelong learning, is now office assistant for the Educational Innovation unit at the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning. She is thrilled to be part of the UM scene and continues to grow in exploring how social media can be defined and utilized in higher education.

Interested in moving your course into a blended or online format?

Wondering which educational technologies could help enhance your students’ learning?

Steve can help you explore a cornucopia of different options.
A Dream Come True for Life Long Learners!

It all started with a news story on CBC TV back in August 2013. Massive Open Online Courses or MOOCs were being offered for ‘free’ to anyone who was interested in taking them. And, they were not being offered by little known or recognized institutions of higher learning – they were being offered by some of the most prestigious colleges and universities in the world, by outstanding professors with gifted expertise in the courses they were teaching.

The biggest surprise I came across while researching was that the first MOOC, an online course on "Connectivism and Connective Knowledge," was offered by the University of Manitoba, Canada, in 2008. Using an open-peer learning model, the course enrolled a small number of paying students and also was offered to a group of online “auditors” who participated in the course for free. Unexpectedly, and with little or no marketing, over 2,000 auditors enrolled (Sandeen, 2013). EdX, www.EdX.org, offers interactive online classes and MOOCs from the world’s best universities. Topics include biology, business, chemistry, computer science, economics, finance, electronics, engineering, food and nutrition, history, humanities, law, literature, math, medicine, music, philosophy, physics, science, statistics and more.

The first paper to systematically review published literature from 2008-2012 related to MOOCs identified 45 peer reviewed papers. Since that time published research has grown exponentially (Liyanagunawardena, Adams & Williams, 2013). The authors comment that MOOCs have created wide interest as a change agent in higher education and the peer-reviewed research literature on them is growing but limited. Since the time of this publication research on MOOCs performance, from a number of perspectives, has grown exponentially.

My Experience with MOOCs

Most courses including the two I have taken so far, have an “intro video” that shows you how the course works. Typically deliverance is in week by week segments; you have lessons and homework to complete. Many courses are 8-12 weeks long. The lessons are
Learning & Teaching with MOOCs

Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) joined to form edX, a non-profit online learning platform, in May 2012. On January 21, 2014 Harvard and MIT released working papers in the Harvard Gazette, on open online learning reporting surprising insights on student engagement in analysis of 17 courses. Led by Andrew Ho of Harvard's Graduate School of Education and Isaac Chuang of MIT's electrical engineering and computer science and physics departments, the research effort was “to research how students learn and how technologies can facilitate effective teaching both off-campus and online.” The working papers determined that across the 17 HarvardX and MITx courses covered in the reports, 43,196 registrants earned certificates of completion. Run in 2012 and 2013, the course drew from diverse topics – from ancient Greek poetry to electromagnetism – and an array of disciplines, including public health, engineering, and law.

The papers analyze an average of 20 gigabytes of data per course and draw on interviews with faculty and course teams as well as student metrics. The following are the key takeaways from the HarvardX and MITx reports led by Andrew Ho of Harvard's Graduate School of Education and Isaac Chuang of MIT's electrical engineering and computer science and physics department.

Some key takeaways from this report:

- Course completion rates, often seen as a bellwether for MOOCs, can be misleading and may at times be counterproductive indicators of the impact and potential of open online courses.
- While typical MOOC registrants have a college degree already, hundreds of thousands or the registrants do not. Many of the MOOC registrants were from the United States, but 72 percent were from abroad. These MOOCs are reaching many non-traditional and under-served communities of students, very different from typical students on campuses at traditional universities.
- The rise of MOOCs has sparked and encouraged experimentation in teaching and in pedagogical research, benefiting both teachers and students. New tools give faculty more flexibility and offer novel opportunities to run experiments and gather data.
- “This isn’t just about MOOCs”, said Ho. “This is about the democratization of learning: Learners are in control. We are at the beginning of an exciting effort to understand how people learn and how to educate well and effectively at scale.”
- “The story hidden underneath this series of reports may be this: Institutions like ours are coming to appreciate how cross-institutional education collaboration involving many students and many courses can open new routes to understand and improve student learning – making a difference around the world and back here on campus,” said Chuang. (Rutter, 2014)
students who are not able to commit to all of the lectures, assignments, and tests. By auditing a course you have complete access to all of the course material, tests, and the online discussion forum. Really, you decide how much you want to do. I think it would be close to impossible for any life-long learner not to find a course they were interested in learning more about. A bigger problem is to decide, realistically, how many you can take.

For example, Coursera, another MOOC provider, suggests the following:

Join 5,879,488 Courserians
Learn from 559 courses
From our 107 partners
Check it out! http://www.coursera.org

I receive regular emails from the MOOC providers I have either taken a course with or have registered to start a new course. The providers update students with new course postings. The edX Team sent an email to join a meetup community in my city, “join and create a study group and work through problems together.” There are over 1100 local edX communities in over 1000 cities across the globe. With a click on ‘Find My Meetup Community’ – I was in! There was only one meetup group in Winnipeg that was in the process of starting up, or so it seemed. I say that because to date we have four students attending and waiting for the two planning members to arrange a time - we have the place.

My New Classroom Experience

By April of 2013 I had decided to retire from sessional teaching at the University of Manitoba. By November of 2013 I had a contract to teach starting in January 2014. Honestly, I was so excited by what I had learned after taking two MOOC courses that I wanted to try out some new teaching and learning understandings and apply them in the classroom.

My personal experience relates to the awareness on the need to upgrade my lecture model with the understanding that the model was outdated and ineffective. Some of the new ideas I learned in creating a positive learning model from the MOOC were: (1) I needed to think ‘outside the box’ I had myself in when it came to designing assignments and class lectures (2) I understood the value of students working together on projects, in other words, interactive projects and discussions, and I needed to create assignments to incorporate these ideas (3) I needed to do a better job of teaching through questioning more than lecturing, using fewer power point slides with limited focused content. The best professors in my MOOC classes reminded me I needed to review briefly the key learning points from the prior week as well as the key learning points throughout the class and at the end of the class to reinforce how ideas and concepts and class projects are connected. The best professors in my MOOC classes reviewed consistently, and although this was not a major change in thinking, it really did keep me on topic and clear about what learning I wanted reinforced.

I decided to try something new for me - group debates as an assignment for my policy class of 32 students. I hoped it would provide a vibrant learning environment where students came to each class, were highly involved with a project and discussion with peers, as well as have fun creating innovative debates. Students worked each week in their debate teams of four and presented two formal debates each in five classes related to specific policy debate issues and text chapters. The audience of peers voted at the end of each debate. We had so much fun and there was so much laughter I forgot where I was. I was amazed at just how creative and clever students were. What talent! This was a dream come true for me. Students not only came to class but often stayed after to work with their group. Students will be evaluating the experience as part of their assignment.

My Student’s Experiences

My first five debate reflection summaries have arrived from students. I am encouraged and delighted with the results to date. With student’s permission I have included four of the comments:

The textbook goes back and forth about opinions and different acts that were created and either pursued or dismissed in relation to social welfare issues. All of which turned out to confuse me more than educate me. By doing debates we were able to break down the information into different perspectives while getting the opinion from others. I also appreciated your approach in teaching us about the history of social welfare. History can be very dry, and boring. But with your approach and teaching style I was able to learn a lot more than I thought I would. By doing debates we were able to look further and be more creative in the issues we were discussing. It is very easy to think one way about an issue, but when the other debate team would bring up valid points it really made you reconsider and rethink who you originally believed.

As this was my first time doing a debate, I found the overall experience really good. Usually I do not like assignments that involve public speaking or presenting in front of the class, but in this case it was not horrible or nerve wracking like I expected. Everyone was really supportive and friendly which took some of those usual pressures off. I also liked that the focus was not on who would be the winner or who would be the loser, but rather it was more about being prepared and how we delivered our arguments. This made the debates a lot more fun and gave us the chance to pay more attention to the actual material we were learning instead of the competitive nature that debates can have. I liked this style of assignment better than writing an exam. I find trying to study and memorize all this historical information then purely
reproduce it for the exam, very pointless. The debates made the information a lot more interesting to learn in the first place and I liked looking at the topics from different angles you may not have considered before if you were just trying to remember the information to answer exam questions.

It was a lot of work putting together these debates as a team but because we were given class time to work on it we didn’t have to find time in our busy schedules to meet up. Preparing for the debates that I was a part of as well as listening to other debates during class time was a fun way to present the readings in class. The experience of learning is so different than other classes where most of the class you have to sit through PowerPoint presentations presented by the instructor talking the whole three hours. Since this experience was different and more exciting I found the content easier to learn and more interesting.

It helped me learn, that not all thoughts, ideas or perceptions may represent my own, but with an open mind and allowing the others on the team to speak it helps you engage in a realm where not everything in front of you is necessarily what you see. I was able to engage in active debates within my team that provoked me to think in more critical ways. The debate is now over, and my understanding and support has switched in favour for what I was initially against.

Note: student comments printed with their permission.

Resources
Sometimes a class or a course just doesn’t work out well. You try different strategies but the students are unresponsive. It is a frustrating experience for the teacher and can be an unsuccessful experience for students. What to do? Sometimes we are just too close to the situation and have exhausted our store of strategies and just need to talk to someone else. This is a story of how Marzena, a passionate teacher, came to talk to her colleague (me) about alternative approaches to her classroom challenges. The video is her story of how she used team based learning with a group of international undergraduate students to effectively teach physics. The video is organized as a Q & A. The text summarizes the main points of the video.

[Click here for video destination](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bOQXiMQgv4)
Team-Based Learning Transcript

Eunice Friesen: Can you describe Team-Based Learning for us?

Marzena Kastyak: Team-Based Learning is a teaching method developed by Larry Michaelsen. He would divide students into teams and they would work together throughout the whole term, and develop the connections that the team has from working together. This is a learning method, not just to let students do assignments together.

E: What factors contributed to your decision to use Team-Based Learning in your first-year physics course?

M: It was mainly poor performance of the students. Another factor was the lack of engagement. We had international students from different countries and, for most of them, it was their first term at a post-secondary institution. So they were very unfamiliar with the culture, how to interact, and how to learn.

E: How did you implement Team-Based Learning?

M: After having one very unsuccessful semester with international students, I came to speak with Eunice at the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning. She mentioned Team-Based Learning. I realized it might be something to help with the international students. We worked out a strategy. First, we worked out a list of questions to divide students into teams that are heterogeneous. Then I divided the material into blocks and sections, this division allows the students to focus more on a particular subject, and develop a better understanding of it. Next thing I had to do was develop quizzes. You give students pre-readings, and they need to prepare themselves for a particular subject, then they come to class and are tested. First they are tested individually, then as a team.

E: What were the outcomes of using Team-Based Learning?

M: The one that I was the most happy with was the student’s engagement. They were definitely more involved in learning and their colleagues. They also developed more connection with their instructor, and it was easier to ask questions, and for me to evaluate how much they learned. The result that was the easiest to quantify was performance. We went from 60% pass rate to 80% pass rate from one semester to the other. This was something significant. I think it was due to them learning that they are responsible for their own learning, and going from "this teacher should show me how to solve the problem and I should have everything prepared" to more independent learning and preparation.

E: How have you modified your approach during your second time teaching the course?

M: First time I taught the course using Team-Based Learning, I used multiple-choice questions and long-answer questions especially for assignments during class. I found that usually the strongest person in the team was writing the answers and other students were not very involved in the process. I decided to go uniquely with multiple-choice questions that allowed the students to discuss the answer and express their opinions. I also decided to break-out the quizzes to allow students to work on the questions at their own pace.

E: Would you recommend this teaching approach to other instructors?

M: Definitely yes. I would say if you like dynamics in the classroom and you don’t really like students sitting and staring at you for the entire lecture, this is a good approach for you. It allows students to engage much more in the learning process. It develops connections between the students, their peers, and the instructor. It changes the dynamics of the classroom, it brings something new into your teaching as well. Maybe you are bored at some point, that will definitely change the way things are going in the classroom. It is also important in Science courses because it stimulates problem-solving. You are probably familiar with students who are asked to solve a problem, some are solving the problem, some of them are not. This approach stimulates them, there is a team working together. They are trying to perform as well as they can in order to get the best team score possible.

For more information please contact Marzena (marzena.kastyak-ibrahim@umanitoba.ca) or Eunice (Eunice.Friesen@umanitoba.ca)
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For full descriptions and to register please visit: [umanitoba.ca/catl/workshops/](http://umanitoba.ca/catl/workshops/)
D2L Basic Course Set-up Workshop
- May 20
- May 27
- June 4
- June 9
- June 23
- June 26
- July 2
- July 3

D2L Tool User Series: Gradebook Indepth
- May 21
- June 10

D2L Tool User Series: Content Indepth
- May 26
- June 11

D2L Tool User Series: Quizzes Indepth
- June 5
- June 12

D2L Drop-in Question & Answer Session
- May 23
- May 30
- June 6
- June 13
- June 20
- June 27
- July 4
- July 11

for more information about D2L go to:
New Features in D2L LE 10.3 since LE9.4.1 on page 44
Tutoring has a very particular and appropriate place within student learning. There are two main reasons why a student (or the parents of a student) seeks tutoring. The first is that the student is struggling in a class and thus falling behind and perhaps even failing the course. The second is that the student is already advanced and wishes to go above and beyond the course to get a deeper understanding and excel. A tutor, when applied properly, is able to bridge the gap between struggling to understand the material to unaided ability of the student to perform the task successfully.

Although I was not aware of the pedagogical jargon until recently, over my 8+ years of tutoring privately and at a tutoring centre with individual face-to-face sessions and small group sessions, I have slowly come to realize an effective tutoring model. This article reflects on my personal tutoring experiences, which I have gathered over the years and presents a tutoring model I found to be useful in my practice. In my early days along my tutoring journey I had next to no pedagogical training in either theory or practice. Little did I know at the time that tutoring would become a large part of my life and develop into a passion.

The above-mentioned model is based on three pedagogical concepts/tools. The first concept is Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1987), which is the region, or zone, where a student borders on what s/he can do unaided and what s/he can do with full aid. To state differently, the ZPD is the realistic potential a student has given the current skill set s/he possesses. I find it useful to think of this as a set of centered circles in which the innermost circle contains all the skills and abilities a student has and is able to use without a mentor. The next larger circle defines the ZPD in which a student can perform tasks with the aid of a mentor where the aid increases away from the center. Anything outside of the ZPD is likely unattainable for the student even with full mentor support. As a student learns and develops a larger and more versatile skill set the innermost circle grows in size, taking over the area where the former ZPD used to be and thus expanding the ZPD to more complicated material.

“We remember what we understand; we understand only what we pay attention to; we pay attention to what we want.” – Edward Bolles
The next pedagogical tool is scaffolding (Wood, Bruner & Ross 1976). Scaffolding can be used as a tool within the abstract concept of the ZPD. Analogous to the scaffolding on a building during construction or renovation, educational scaffolding gives support to the student when needed. That is to say when a student is either first learning a particular topic or is struggling with said topic, increasing support is provided by the tutor. However when the student is demonstrating unaided or partially aided ability, the support of the tutor is faded until eventually the student is able to perform the task independently. The idea behind using scaffolding in the context of tutoring is to expand the ZPD while at the same time removing the scaffolding.

The last tool is rote learning (Keeley, 1997), or learning by repetition. Particular for mathematics and science tutoring rote learning is efficient and can be used to help promote deep learning. Rote learning shifts the knowledge a student has learned from the short-term to the long-term memory and thus allows for deep learning in the following manner. Ideally we want the students to be able to remember the formulae of the course, which is where rote learning comes in useful. Not just remember, but the student ought to also be comfortable with the mathematical notation and the practice of using and writing formulae and mathematical logic. I have noticed that a lot of students struggle with basic algebra and manipulating formulae. Rote learning is an excellent tool to surpass such struggles. As one of my former math teachers used to say, “Practice, practice, practice.” Once the student is comfortable with the notation and also has achieved a certain level of surface learning via rote learning then the tutor can focus on providing the tools necessary for the student to achieve deep learning, which is really what we want the students to achieve in the end.

An important distinction to make among tutees is the frequency at which a student is tutored. For simplicity I refer to this distinction as irregular or regular (say weekly) students. The difference lies within the teaching strategies one applies. Irregular students come for a drop-in visit and they usually have particular questions regarding the course material. Often they are stressed and have high anxiety due to an upcoming test or exam. Sometimes you meet with the student twice or thrice more in which case you can use some reflective methods to aid in review. Unfortunately, these students often tend to want answers as quickly as possible, and be on their way with the minimum effort required to achieve a passing grade. This of course is nothing but surface learning, enough to pass an upcoming test. Although these sorts of sessions are great to tone your own skills and knowledge in the course material, from a pedagogical point of view they are less rewarding.

Indeed it is generally the regular students who have, albeit often subconsciously, an interest in deep learning. With these students I have found several common features, which tend to be true. Regular students are often above-average students. Usually they want to tone their skills or stay on top of the subject and so they seek tutoring (or their parents seek it for them). Further these students tend to be more serious about their education and are thus willing to put more effort into their studies.

These qualities make tutoring regular students a very rewarding experience for a tutor. I discovered that at least for the regular students that a particular style of tutoring works quite well based on my model. I have been using this model actively for the last few years, which I call the RANT model. Many of my regular students know that I have a habit of going on tangents and rants so the acronym is quite appropriate. Keeping in mind that I developed this model for regular students with the session lasting one hour, RANT is outlined in four stages as follow.

**Review** – The beginning of the session is spent on reviewing the key points of the previous session. The review stage has a twofold purpose. I use the review stage to discuss and check any homework that I assigned the week prior as well as any returned tests or marked assignments the student received. When it comes to situations which demands the student’s skill set in an unaided environment, namely tests, assignments, homework, etc., I often use the ARCH mode (Westberg, 1993) to give effective feedback. Over the years I have completely thrown away the infamous sandwich model and adapted the ARCH model or a modified version of it. Next the review stage is to enforce rote learning, i.e., learning by repetition. This not only helps set the tone of the current session and gets the student in the proper mindset, it is also when the tutor realizes to what extent the scaffolding can be faded. The tutor has to be careful to pick up on the clues a student is showing and act accordingly (I discuss this later with my no-bluff philosophy). If the student is still
struggling with previous material then more support should be provided. However if the review goes smoothly and all scaffolding is removed, then the ZPD has expanded and so it is time to move on to the next stage.

**Answer** – This stage is really the crux of the tutoring session. It is here when the ZPD is bridged and confirmed to the tutor that the student has acquired the new skill set which was developed up to this point, i.e. the material covered in previous sessions and alongside the classroom learning is completely understood at a deep learning level. To help me as the tutor, I ask the student to keep a list of questions that may have arisen over the course of the week between sessions. If a common theme among the questions emerges this can be an indicator of perhaps a deeper theoretical problem. It is important to address any issues at this stage before moving on, even if this stage takes up the majority of the session duration. To ensure deep learning it is helpful to tie or merge this stage with the previous review stage and ask the student some well-chosen questions based on the review. Nothing too long or complicated, yet enough to demonstrate unaided, or with removed scaffolding, abilities of the student.

**Notes** – Once all review and outstanding questions are addressed it is time to address new material the student has covered in class since the last session. For this I often ask the student to refer to their class notes (and text book). Seeing the student’s notes is a good indicator of how the student is doing. Sometimes the notes are incomplete and in extreme cases incomprehensible, and so the student possibly did not understand the material as s/he wrote the notes in class. Further, following along with the notes keeps the session on track and also ensures that we stay on the curriculum of the class. While following along the notes, or demonstrating a key point, it is useful to help guide along with the means of particular problems. This works well in mathematics and science tutoring, as there are a plethora of problems at all difficulty levels available. I often employ rote learning as follows. The first time the student is exposed in the session to a key point I demonstrate via a problem and show them how to work it out (building up the scaffolding). Next I select a new problem of similar nature and difficulty and ask the student to solve it (starting to remove the scaffolding). Depending on how the student performs, more or less scaffolding is applied.

**Target** – In this last stage the goal is to focus the student’s attention, i.e., target their attention as well as their learning needs. I often assign homework based on the lesson and the student’s performance. If the student struggles to expand to the PZD to the new material covered, or is still a little uncomfortable with it, I assign particular problems to be finished next week. Not only does that continue to feed the RANT cycle, which starts off the review of the previous week, yet it also enforces deep learning. This stage is also used to wind-down the session and give closure to the student. Together we foreshadow and discuss what we will work on the next week and make an action plan.

For each student I adapt the RANT method to optimize his or her learning. Usually it takes a couple of sessions to get to know the student’s weaknesses and strengths, their needs and skill set. In the Notes stage I am flexible as often students have incomplete or even incorrect notes. This is usually when I start my rants and show the students tips and tricks of the trade. If the Answer stage takes up the majority of the time that is not a big deal as you meet with the student the following week and so you can make up lost time in the Notes stage accordingly. However it is important to not skip the Target stage. This last stage gives closure to the session and prepares the student for what is coming up thus providing him/her with structure.

Finally I want to mention a mistake that I made in my early tutoring years, which when corrected made the RANT method more effective. That is, my no-bluff philosophy, namely to call a student’s bluff. Especially with mathematics, as I explain a concept to the student and ask whether they understand, the student often simply nods and says they do. However as I discovered, often the student is bluffing and still has some minor confusion. This happens even with regular students that have been with me for years and the ones that are generally very comfortable with me as a tutor. I have learned to read the student’s face and when I suspect they are bluffing, I call them out on it. I do this by asking them to solve a similar problem. Although this does put the student on the spot, and I am careful doing this with the shy or anxious student, it ensures me they have understood the theory. If at the end of the tutoring session deep learning was not achieved, then as a tutor I have not done my job properly. Frankly the reality is that sometimes that is the case, at which point it is of utmost importance for the tutor to adapt their method of approach.

There are many small subtle things a tutor can do to improve their tutoring and in effect optimize the student’s learning. An important point to keep in mind is
that tutoring is not to replace the teaching in the classroom but only to supplement it. Indeed this is the appropriate application of tutoring which lies right in the ZPD as outlined in this article. Thus I always make sure that my tutoring is aligned and consistent with the classroom teaching and curriculum. As I can testify from personal experience, the one-on-one regular student tutoring can be greatly rewarding for both the student as well as the tutor. Often at the end of a session I jokingly say to the student that I have learned more than them during the session. Yet the truth of the matter is that as a novice educator I continuously improve my style and so my tutoring journey continues.

References:
I’m new to the U of M: 
You too? 

Kateryn Rochon, Entomology

Contributors:
Geneviève Ali, Geological Sciences
Regine King, Social Work
Vickie Albrecht, Libraries (Biological Sciences)
Alyssa Schwann, Environmental Design

“I love how we are all so different and our different perspectives makes for some of the most interesting and lively conversations.” (Vickie Albrecht)
The story of one informal New Faculty Club...

I started my academic appointment at the U of M in January 2012 – because December is when you want to move to Winnipeg, right? That means I had a full six months of “U of M experience” by the time the New Faculty Orientation was held in July. Despite the basic knowledge I had acquired, the whole orientation exercise was overwhelming: between acronyms, administrators, services, new colleagues, regulations and useful tips, it was difficult to remember who was who – and by the end, I really needed a beer. The 2012 orientation conveniently ended around lunchtime, so I thought I’d make my way upstairs to Degrees and have lunch on the patio. I had just met some really interesting people during the orientation, people I wanted to keep in touch with and learn more about, people who were just as passionate about their topic as I am about mine, so I invited some of them to join me. Considering it took me four months to figure out this place existed (and that they had local craft beer and a patio), I figured none of them would know about it, and I might as well share the joy! I guess that could be considered the beginning of our informal club, as most of the people who were around that table are still part of the group today.

For me, however, the group actually formed when we all went out to dinner at Inferno’s Bistro in December 2012. By then we had all lived through at least one semester, and I think that through our conversations, the realization that we were all going through the same thing resonated with many; it certainly did with me. I thought that maybe if all these awesome people I met were also overwhelmed, then maybe I wasn’t doing so bad. But really, it’s more than that. We’re all curious, and we love to share – that’s why we’re here. I can’t express how stimulating it is to discuss just about anything with a group of diverse, smart, and enlightened people who all understand what academia is. Thankfully, another member of the group can put that feeling into words.

Vickie Albrecht is the Biological Sciences Librarian, and she is part of the 2012 crop. When I asked her what the group meant to her, she very eloquently described some of my shared sentiments:

For myself, our group is one of the most enjoyable I belong to. I love how we are all so different and our different perspectives makes for some of the most interesting and lively conversations; however, our commonality in all starting new in our academic careers provides a way to compare and contrast our experiences at the U of M. I think we all decided to be a part of this group because we wanted to be social outside of our own departments but found that this has provided each one of us with more than a social outlet, but a way of sharing our experiences and understanding some of the bigger issues happening at U of M. I remember a bunch of us getting together at Degrees before the UMFA special meeting that was to see whether UMFA was to go on strike or not and that was not a typical thing a social group would do. Also, I know that many in the group have asked me specific questions related to library resources and services which is fantastic because sometimes you do not know who to ask.

Call it networking if you wish, I call it building relationships. A new faculty position usually means moving to a new city, and sometimes moving to a different country. Regine King, a new assistant professor in the faculty of Social Work, says moving to a new busy job and city can feel like a trap without people who truly understand what you are going through.

Many of my colleagues have been kind and welcoming and somewhat understanding. I needed to navigate the university setting, learn how things are done, prepare my courses and teach, and start up my research projects. At the same time, I needed to locate myself geographically and socially. Expecting my immediate faculty colleagues to provide orientation in all these areas was quite impossible. I needed “others” who understood what it means to feel lost, found, and be able to laugh about it. Our new tenure-trackers’ club offered a place to do that and on an equal footing.

My friend Geneviève Ali is an assistant professor in Geological Sciences. She also started her appointment early in 2012, months before the New Faculty Orientation, but that’s where we met. Here’s her take on how our little group fits in her life:

Being part of an informal “new faculty club” is one of the main reasons why I am not a walking pressure cooker on campus, and I see that club as my main armor to survive assistant professor-hood. It was only a short time ago that I was offered my first faculty position at the U of M and no need to say that I felt like I had won the job lottery. A couple of years later, my reality is that life as an assistant professor can be overwhelming at the very least. When one wins the “money” lottery, it usually comes with a sense of peacefulness, significant amounts of relaxation time and an incredible freedom to do what one wants. With the academic job lottery, though, peace is replaced with worry, relaxing is a luxury one can barely afford in a 60-70 hour work week, and one’s freedom only goes as far as his or her tenure requirements dictate. I smirk each time someone approaches me and argues that Forbes listed what I do as the top least stressful job of 2013. And yet I still love what I do and intend to continue for as long as I am able. While senior
academics often suggest that new faculty members develop, right upon starting, a six-year plan towards the big T, they do not insist as much on the necessity to develop a social support system, especially for people new in town. Winnipeggers have been extremely friendly to me on campus, on the bus, at the supermarket and in volunteering centers but when it comes to being integrated to their social circles... that is much (MUCH) harder than it seems. And this is where an informal “new faculty club” comes in.

After the July 2012 New Faculty Orientation, we set up our “user/support” group in order to keep in touch along the way, exchange tips with regards to getting used to the U of M system, develop inter-disciplinary research initiatives, settle in Winnipeg, find a doctor, a dentist or child day care, discover resourceful addresses for those of us with food allergies, or just make friends and start a social group in a new-ish city. The idea was also to have a go-to contact list in case one of us needed an occasional lunch companion on campus, a tennis buddy, or somebody to explore Winnipeg and rural Manitoba with. And the “user/support” group has definitely fulfilled its expectations. As Geneviève Ali puts it, …most of our gatherings have been about EDR (eating, drinking and ranting) but those activities, when performed as a group, have a therapeutic effect that is quite extraordinary. For me, it has been reassuring to realize that being overwhelmed does not make me an anomaly. It has also been stimulating to learn about other disciplines and research areas. And it has definitely been a blast to have some resemblance of social life and multiply the occasions on which I do not have to take myself seriously!” Along those lines, Regine King adds, “this group makes me feel human and normal. When we meet, we learn about each other’s work, and crack jokes at each other’s research interests. One that stood out during our first meetings was Kateryn’s fascination with ticks. I work with humans. As much as they can have their own complexities, I could not understand how someone can study ticks!”

Okay, they often make fun of my research interests, but we also find unexpected commonalities.

The opportunity to tap into the incredible knowledge base of other new faculty has such great potential. I have found it both invigorating and inspiring learning about the work of others in this group – there are sometimes surprising commonalities which we can connect on, says Alyssa Schwann, an assistant professor in the Faculty of Architecture. The individual expertise offered by those in our group only serves to enrich and enlighten my own understanding about my particular field of interest. Inviting others, such as Kateryn, into my classes has been a rewarding and unexpected outcome of this social support system.

When I met Alyssa and she told me she was in the Environmental Design Program, I had no idea what that meant. Our discussions have led to a recurring guest lecture in her “Natural and Human Systems” courses, where I get to explain how changes in the landscape can increase or reduce human interactions with insects and ticks. Alyssa adds...

I think that as we continue to foster and grow the network, the EDR’ing, our friendships hold a lot of promise to develop into future research collaborations. That aside, nothing makes me more happy to see an email from someone in the group extending an invitation to meet for a beer – they always seem to appear at just the right moment.

But we, the new Assistant Professors, are not the only ones benefiting from the group; it has also been beneficial for our spouses.

Our experience in Winnipeg is that it is easier to build friendships with other people who have recently arrived in the city than with individuals with an established social network” says Gordon King, Regine’s spouse. “Our friendships through the “faculty rookies” at U of M have helped me to understand more deeply the pressures and demands faced by my partner and her colleagues. The meetings have also been great fun as we share experiences, laugh at our foibles and enjoy food and wine. The rookie group provides meaningful support for new faculty and their partners on this challenging journey.

Our little group has been growing and changing as each of us meets other new people. There’s nothing formal, no set activities or schedule of events. We just meet when one of us sends out a signal (i.e., an email). If you can make it, great; if you can’t, it’s okay. If you’re a tenure-track faculty member and would like to join us, you are welcome to do so via LinkedIn (you can find us on LinkedIn under “University of Manitoba New Faculty Club”). So, join us if you will, or start your own group with the 2013 or 2014 new crop, but seek out some new connections early on. It will make your new life at the U of M that much more fulfilling.
Congratulations
2014 CHET Graduates

Back row: Maggie Ford (Centre for the Advancement of Teaching & Learning), Andrea Edel (Physiology), Javad Mirzaei (Chemistry), Hom Gartaula (Anthropology), Dinesh Gurusinghe (Electrical & Computer Engineering), Mohammed Abdullah (Economics), Don Petkau (Biosystems Engineering), Ahmad Byagowi (Electrical & Computer Engineering), Valery Agbor (Biosystems Engineering), Mathias Pielahn (Electrical & Computer Engineering), Havva (Filiz) Koksel (Food Science)

Front Row: Christine Scoville (Nursing), Rebecca Wood (Family Social Sciences), Sheena Graham (Kinesiology & Recreation Management), Anupama Konara (Electrical & Computer Engineering), Olivia Sylvester (Natural Resources Institute), Grace Kyoon-Achan (Peace & Conflict Studies), Jasbir Upadhyaya (Oral Biology)

Absent: Syed Tanbeer (Computer Science), Shannon Yashcheshen (Fine Art)

Program information at:umanitoba.ca/catl
Teaching from a Social Justice Perspective

“When I realized, that my voice was missing and perhaps silenced or stolen, I changed.”

Zulfiya Tursunova, Nursing
As a Central Asian woman who had done extensive research and teaching in Asia, Europe, and North America, I had questioned myself about my teaching methods and the types of assignments I outlined in my syllabi. Essays, think pieces, exams, analysis of journals were common standard activities. While all these assignments were linked to real-world socio-economic and environmental issues, I felt that my teaching was detached from an action-oriented paradigm. I felt that what constitutes my core, my perspective on social justice, my identity as an instructor-activist was partially missing in my teaching. As Parker Palmer (2007) suggests, teaching is rooted in a person’s identity and integrity. When I realized that my voice was missing and perhaps silenced or stolen, I changed. I decided to speak up to be true to myself and integrate my stance on social justice in my teaching. I started weaving a complex web of relations between myself, students, and the world. As Palmer asserts, these relations are not held in methods but in the teachers’ hearts when they renew heart, mind, and spirit through the search of the inner landscape of a teacher’s life and live authentic lives.

My way of living academic life authentically involved my constant search for connecting my teaching material with contemporary issues that affect every individual in the classroom. Today, more than ever before, the local and global are becoming interconnected through trade, migration of people and the movement of capital and resources such as seeds, water and energy. I prepare students to go beyond the basic skills of survival and knowledge of theoretical frameworks, methods of research, to a more holistic understanding of problems of income inequality, poverty, well-being, ecosystem collapse, food insecurity, waste management and exploitation of children, women and other vulnerable individuals. I encourage students to think critically and act with courage and honesty and engage themselves wholeheartedly in the global processes of social, economic, environmental, and health policies that often marginalize others.

As such, I will provide an example of the course “Food Sovereignty, Gender, and Development” that I taught from social justice paradigm in 2013. First, I will explain the concept of food sovereignty and then describe my food pedagogy and activities students were involved.

**What is food sovereignty?**

The paradigm of food sovereignty reinforces the right of peoples to healthy and culturally-appropriate food produced through ecologically sustainable methods, and their right to determine their own food and agriculture systems. Food sovereignty is based on six pillars that: 1) focuses policies on people’s need for food; 2) builds knowledge and skills; 3) works with nature; 4) values food providers; 5) localizes food systems to build self-sufficiency; and 6) localizes control (PFPP, 2007). The heart of this paradigm is to reclaim decision-making power in the food system and represent authentic food security (Patel, 2009; Wittman, 2009). Community food sovereignty is vital in examining the food systems’ geography, its production, distribution, consumption, power relations, access, and equity at local, regional, and global scales.

Through the lenses of food sovereignty, the students examined small, medium, and large-scale industrial farming, Indigenous knowledge systems, cultural food practices, health, food insecurity, livestock production, economics and globalization, poverty, and community gardening. We also looked at micro level and discussed changing family structure, household dynamics, gender relations, changing identities of femininities and masculinities, migration, and rural development. The food sovereignty and sustainability of livelihoods is also subject to fault-lines such as power, gender, ethnicity, race, age, generation, class, social status, marital status, household status, and location (rural vs. urban, center periphery), influenced by history, laws and regulations, demography, environment, trade, and market domains that may enhance and/or reduce people’s choices and opportunities. The course applied interdisciplinary lenses through the integration of concepts derived from gender, development, geography, political ecology, sociology, ecosystem science, and food and nutritional ecology studies.

**My food pedagogy**

Since the courses I taught were based on experiential and transformative paradigms of learning, I’ve used different levels of Bloom’s taxonomy of cognitive domain and focused on knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Bloom, 1956). I use teaching methods from Indigenous cultures such as sharing circles, storytelling, and holistic frameworks of well-being, knowledge of traditional plants, and traditional laws of nature and human interactions. I also apply active inquiry student-initiated learning, problem-solving learning, cooperative learning, and interactive teaching methods from Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (includes 60 teaching methods) Program.¹ These methods include brainstorming, small and large group discussions, problem-solving exercises, simulation exercises, and mapping conflicts with different stakeholders and their interests and goals. I also show films, use maps, pictures, pieces of art, and articles to address social issues and power relations so that students become conscious of their everyday environment.

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¹ The Reading and Writing Program is run by the Open Society Institute located in New York. I used to introduce teaching methods in the social science curriculum in Uzbekistan in a capacity of Higher Education Program Coordinator.
How my teaching fostered social justice

Mapping the food system. Students developed a map of their own community food system and their food shopping patterns to analyze food production, purchase and redistribution. The students situated their case study within the food production system in one neighbourhood by mapping large supermarkets, small or medium neighbourhood grocery stores, warehouse stores, specialty stores (butchers, halal stores, bakeries, and markets) and its proximity to houses, schools, and hospitals. The importance was to see linkages between individual and/or household choices, and the community food system in which the students reside. Some students expressed how their life conditions such as living in communities with prevalence or shortage of diverse corporate supermarkets, convenience stores, and few farmers’ markets affected their ability to buy local produce. Some students shared how gender was a critical factor affecting food preparation and expectations of being a good mother. Single mothers attending school, working part-time felt that the society expects them to sacrifice their own health and well-being and ensure that their child’s basic needs are met.

Community project on food and culture. The students of the course had a first hands on experience by interviewing West Broadway residents on food and culture and access to food. This assignment was aimed to foster community engagement to discuss connections between food, culture, community development, and food sovereignty. Each student interviewed one Broadway resident on food and culture. Students shared their writing in the class informally where they presented their research findings and spoke about the challenges they faced in interviewing and the meaningful experiences they had. The students said that interviewing participants was a transformative experience. They heard participants’ stories of personal and cultural connection to food and childhood memories tied to their mothers preparing family meals. The participants of the study shared how food was considered a family affair in family dinners or during various holidays. They also indicated that mothers transmitted knowledge about food preparation and preservation to the next generations. Also, they noticed that they had experienced a substantial change in the diet from childhood.

Field trip. The trip to the Dufferin school garden to hear experiences of an Indigenous gardener Audrey Logan was one of the influential experiences the students experienced. Audrey took us on tour and shared her teachings on how to grow and nurture plants. She stressed how “talking to the plants” is vital in understanding what your plants need and what message they are conveying by their appearance, colour, and shape. Audrey stressed how she is teaching the children of Dufferin School not only about gardening skills and nutrition, but also about how they can take responsibility for their stewardship and sustainable community development. Audrey shared her knowledge about such plants as comfrey, sage, mint, and other plants. Also, she was very generous with gifts from her garden and let students pick mint. Audrey also gave the roots of comfrey and students planted in their own gardens. Students also shared with people in my own community the healing benefits of comfrey. The passing of knowledge and skills was another key element in Audrey’s work. This passing of knowledge is a critical aspect of our holistic well-being, as we have often forgotten the skills to be producers and nurturers in our consumer world and no longer aware of how to produce in order to survive.

As one of the students of the course, Chantal Ramraj pointed out “During this trip Audrey facilitated praxis, supplementing theoretical tools with practical skills, a necessary component for feminist pedagogy. There are three specific ways that the practice of walking through the garden with Logan depicted the praxis oriented feminist pedagogy of this course; developing skills through intergenerational knowledge, engaging in activity promoting local control over food systems as well as through visibly informed narratives explaining the necessary practice of producing food for nourishment and not for generation of surplus for profit.” The knowledge and practice conveyed by Audrey showed how reclaiming food and local control of food systems are necessary in a neoliberal context.

Why teaching from social justice perspective matters

Teaching from social justice perspective matters because students as global citizens need to analyse and understand the processes of conditioning which often place arbitrary limits on personal fulfillment. I foster approaches to explore with students how we can, as individuals and society, deal with root causes of violence to reduce and eliminate poverty, injustice, fragmentation and pave the ways for social justice and peace. Students highly evaluated the course I taught this past summer. They felt that they gained a very positive learning experience. One student shared in the class how the course was life changing for her as she learned about traditional plants, gardening and started buying locally produced food together with a student from the class. This food course was part of education for social justice which empowered students for social change in their individual behaviors to promote Just food, Just society, Just self-reflection and accountability to people and ecosystem on this planet.
In 2014 the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning provided a funding opportunity for Innovation in Teaching and Learning Projects. Our purposes were to:

• transform a teaching and learning experience at the University of Manitoba
• support the development of ideas and innovations to improve teaching, learning and assessment in the classroom or learning environment
• encourage instructors and professors to actively research their own teaching
• promote knowledge translation of educational research practices
• advance the scholarship of teaching and learning

We received a great number of excellent submissions and are enthusiastic about the commitment to teaching demonstrated by our U of M teachers. The successful projects are described here.

**Supporting Student Learning through Facilitated Writing Groups**
Kathy Block, Academic Learning Centre
Kenneth MacKendrick, Social Work, Jason Redden, Religion

Writing academic papers is daunting for many students in their first years of university. In addition, it can be challenging for instructors to engage closely with the written work of individual students in large classes. Through this project, collaborators from the Religion Department and Academic Learning Centre will investigate a strategy to support undergraduate students with their writing. Writing tutors will work with small groups of students in the classroom at key points before assignment deadlines as students plan and draft their papers. The project will afford a framework for implementing facilitated writing groups in future undergraduate courses.

**CanU Explore: Innovative Teaching & Learning Spaces in Teacher Education**
Michelle Honeyford, Education

CanU Explore is an interdisciplinary afterschool program for Grade 5-6 students hosted in the Faculty of Education. In CanU Explore, faculty and teacher candidates work collaboratively to design, implement, and study teaching and learning with middle school students in a dynamic, authentic learning space. The grant will extend the program in three new directions: first, by inviting faculty/teacher candidate teams to create innovative and engaging approaches to teaching concepts (e.g., those traditionally difficult to teach and/or relatively new to the curriculum); second, by integrating technology and inquiry; and third, by expanding communication with participating schools through a student blogging initiative.

**CanU Explore: Innovative Teaching & Learning Spaces in Teacher Education**
Michelle Honeyford, Education

**Course Restructuring for Greater Student Success**
Darja Kalajdzievksa, Mathematics

This project will address the issue of student success in mathematics and overall numeracy by re-structuring the format of the course MATH 1010, Applied Finite Mathematics. The new structure will include an early alert mechanism to allow students to have a second chance to learn and be assessed on course content, while still covering the same course content as in previous terms. These struggling students would repeat the content in an environment with a smaller class size (allowing for more student-centered instruction).

**Collaborative Reflection in Large Mathematics Courses**
Derek Krepski, Mathematics

This project introduces a two-step self-reflective and collaborative learning activity for students to engage in during tutorial/lab sessions of a large first-year mathematics course. The two-step activity requires that (1) students write a quiz using carbon paper to produce a copy, submitting the original for assessment; and (2) that students discuss and defend their responses to the quiz in small groups, ultimately submitting the edited carbon copy for assessment as well. The underlying motivation is to facilitate a student environment for improved metacognitive monitoring leading to deeper understanding of mathematics through peer learning.
YouTube, Vimeo, TED-Ed. Online video sites are hot these days. Broadband internet access is becoming increasingly widespread in North America, and with it comes higher quality and easy to access video. People watch over 6 billion hours of video on YouTube every month. Forty percent of that content is being viewed on a mobile device. Online videos are referenced from every corner of pop culture, from the Wall Street Journal, to CBC Radio, to The Daily Show.

Students are on their cellphones, laptops, and iPads every day. Hallways and classrooms are filled with flickering screens. You’ve seen them out there, they are absorbed and entranced.

Why are we so drawn to video?
Video can be easier to grasp by people with diverse learning styles because it incorporates many kinds of data (audio, visual, motion, text) in a complementary fashion.

Students have more control over their experience by being able to pause, rewind, and re-watch content as much as they wish.

Students have access to the materials at any time, in any location where they have internet access. This can be at home, on the bus, or on the beach.

How can we best use video media in our courses?
Correct implementation of video is shown to have educational benefits in courses. Some lessons are better suited to video than others.

- Demonstrations and walkthroughs that are difficult to do otherwise, such as industrial processes
- Showing remote places, showcasing foreign countries and cultures
- When adding variety to material and enlivening topics with visuals and audio, such as showing maps, playing music by a composer, etc. Showing clips of figures in the material, such as presidential speeches
- Screen capture software to record lectures or class instruction and make available to students for asynchronous viewing and test preparation. There are many more situations where video can enhance a class.

What can be some of the difficulties of online video?
Video can disadvantage blind or deaf students unless transcripts are included.

Not all subjects are well-suited to video. Highly visual subjects are best served with video.

They are not interactive, the student is a passive viewer. It is difficult to keep the attention of a student for long video clips.

Videos take time to shoot and edit. Simple video can be created by an individual without much special equipment, but good-quality educational video benefits greatly from professional production methods, storyboarding, and editing.

What does this mean for the classroom?
While video is shown to have benefits in teaching, it is also shown to be best utilized as a supplement to the classroom. The issue is still up for much debate.
As a teacher you might be interested in exploring:

**YouTube:** The standard. It is easy to create an account, upload your video, and send the link out to your students. It is familiar and simple.

**TED-Ed:** TED-Ed maintains a video library of curated educational videos, many of which represent collaborations between talented educators and animators nominated through the TED-Ed platform. They also allow users to take any useful educational video, not just TED’s, and easily create a customized lesson around the video.

If you would like your students to create and submit videos you might want to explore:

**MixBit:** With the MixBit app, you can record, edit, and publish videos from your mobile device (iOS & Android). Their website allows users to collaborate with anyone and remix clips from any MixBit project. It is worth noting that each of these websites requires an account to be set up, and that users must agree to follow the Terms of Service. If you have privacy concerns about your material, it is highly likely that these options will not be secure. Read the Terms of Service carefully to verify.

If you would like to know more, or have any questions about video, shooting, editing, making it available online, or other forms of new media, feel free to contact me at chris.ellis@umanitoba.ca. Check our next issue for a more in-depth examination of YouTube and the process of getting your video up onto the internet for your students.

References:

**CELEBRATING TEACHING & LEARNING**

We invite all sessionals, instructors, non-tenure & tenured faculty to enter our annual teaching event.

**Submission Deadline**
**May 12, 2014**

To ENTER: Submit either a 250 word narrative OR a 1½ minute video describing how you have challenged yourself in your teaching recently...why you took the risk and the outcome.
For more details see umanitoba.ca/catl

**CENTRE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHING & LEARNING**

Prize Draw will be held June 13th at our Annual Open House & BBQ
The Office of the Vice-President (Academic) & Provost has established the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (TLEF).

This fund has been created to fund projects that enhance teaching and enrich the learning experience of our students (e.g., projects that explore new pedagogical approaches (such as blended learning) and the impact on learning, the scholarship of teaching and learning, the integration of research and teaching in the classroom, and more). The 2014 year recipients are:

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Rebuilding Corner

Using **SOCIAL MEDIA** Effectively in the Classroom: Blogs, Wikis, Twitter, and More

Edited by Kay Kyeong-Ju Seo

Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group, 2013
240pp. $45.12

ISBN - 10: 0415896800

Reviewed by Phyllis Ritchie, C.A.T.L.

*To blog or not to blog ... to tweet or not ... to podcast or vodcast ... these are not the real questions. But rather, how to successfully do so, in the classroom, is.*

Assistant Professor of Instructional Design and Technology at the University of Cincinnati, Kay Kyeong-Ju Seo together with a team of 21 other educators and researchers authored this useful guide as a framework to encourage and implement socially enriched pedagogies in the online world of today’s classroom.

Connecting beyond the basic explanations of rapidly expanding social media tools and how to use them, this in-depth collaboration explores the influence that new media continues to have in radically altering educational landscapes.

Well organized, innovative strategies for incorporating social media into various educational environs are divided into four main units instead of chapters. Each unit then has subsections which further discuss each phase of planning, designing, teaching and evaluating.

- Unit I: Planning a Socially Enriched Learning Environment
- Unit II: Developing Powerful Instructional Strategies with Social Media
- Unit III: Teaching Successfully with Social Media
- Unit IV: Assessing Instructional Effectiveness with Social Media

Based on research, Using Social Media Effectively in the Classroom clearly informs educators, jargon-free, how they can utilize social media to best assist learners, resolve potential problems, and create a powerful sense of community.

For example in Unit III, subsection 8: Everyone’s All A-Twitter About Twitter shares three individual case perspectives on using Twitter in the classroom. While each unit is unique in content and author, the well-laid out, easy-to-read format feels consistent and familiar beginning with introduction, followed by a literature review (heavily referenced), discussion questions, suggestions, final thoughts, conclusions and unit references.
At first glance, Using Social Media Effectively in the Classroom appears to be a little easy to read book. However, just after a few pages readers will discover it is huge in sharing the real-life cases and experiences of what works, what doesn’t, and why on the topic of social media. True to its title, this book proves itself to be a useful resource for instructional designers, professors, and teachers on how to successfully tap into these powerful technologies in order to facilitate interactive and meaningful virtual learning for students.

**Blogospheres are alive and well!**

*Here's some resourceful blogs of interest:*

- [http://tinyurl.com/mhgcfuc](http://tinyurl.com/mhgcfuc)
  edublogs: the world’s most popular education blogging service safe, secure & easy to use used for e-portfolios, class sites & much more trusted by over 2 million educators since 2005.

- [http://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network](http://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network)
  The Guardian Higher Education Network brings together the latest insight, comment, advice and best practice for professionals working in and with higher education.

- [http://higheredstrategy.com/blog/](http://higheredstrategy.com/blog/)
  Higher Education Strategy Associates believes that plotting the right strategy is key to ongoing success in higher education. Now, more than ever, decisions made in higher ed need to be strategic and calculated as both institutions and governments are facing unique challenges. Choosing the right strategy is vital to future success.

- [http://tinyurl.com/cf6czjd](http://tinyurl.com/cf6czjd)
  EdTech strives to create the most valuable resources for higher education technology professionals. Check out their 2013 Dean’s List of the top higher education tech blogs with contributions from professors, administrators, ed-tech startups and independent thought leaders.

- [http://edcetera.rafter.com/](http://edcetera.rafter.com/)
  Blogging with insight and expert analysis about education and trends in technology for everyone on campus including administrators and educators.

- [http://bit.ly/1r0n9Qc](http://bit.ly/1r0n9Qc)
  Getting Smart™ is a community passionate about innovations in learning and covers formal and informal topics in higher ed such as research, technology, entrepreneurs, methods and more.

**Podcasts & Vodcasts**

  Everything you ever wanted to know about Podcasts and Vodcasts is posted here. You’ll find answers to all your questions including: What is classroom podcasting or vodcasting? Why should I use it in my classroom? How can I use it in the classroom? Where do I find websites to download educational podcasts etcetera.
“How would you, for example, get young learners to appreciate the revolution in thought and culture brought about by the advent of phonetic writing systems? How would you get them to appreciate the amazing simplicity and beauty of base ten and place value...when these things are now taken for granted? How would you get them to understand what a profound transformation occurred in human thought by the scientific revolution in the 17th century? Or the challenges to traditional western perspectives Picasso introduced into art? How could you get them to experience for themselves the most profound shifts in perspective that occur throughout the whole dramatic evolution of formal intellectual culture?” (Carson, 2004)

Life is busy. You barely finish teaching one semester’s course load, mark the assignments and exams, and post the final marks before you have to start preparing for the next term. Incorporate some research and writing into that schedule as well as a small semblance of a personal life (if such a thing exists), and you find yourself racing through the same cycle over and over. It’s survival, plain and simple. And in order to survive, we find ourselves relying on the same toolkit – those techniques and strategies that have stood the test of time. They’ve worked well for us in the past, and they may have helped us avoid potential disasters as well.

In most instances, we not only achieve our goals, but we end up doing things well. And therein lies the issue. Our successes can help to build a sense of complacency. When was the last time we considered a new approach? Have we thought about how we can embody the type of excitement for learning in the courses we teach that Carson (2004) notes? How can we rework our courses to design (and redesign) for learning (Goodyear and Dimitriadis, 2013), to provide both our learners and ourselves with different yet effective ways of exploring the subject matter at hand?

One of the ways we can re-examine our teaching practice is by looking at how we are teaching our subject matter. In other words, what sequencing are we using to teach our course content. There are numerous ways that course content can be sequenced. This examination will focus on nine approaches identified by Rothwell and Kazanas (2008). These provide instructors with a variety of options, from the very familiar to some lesser-known but impactful sequencing approaches.

Strength through Sequencing?
This concept should not seem complicated or unfamiliar; it is one of the most commonly used sequencing strategies. Chronological or sequential ordering of course content presents concepts as they occurred over time or as they are laid out in a course textbook; A leads to B leads to C. There is a very clear progression of events or concepts. It is popular because it allows your students as well as yourself to follow the order which is presented in the course textbook. In addition, it is a great method to use because it is a safe entry point into a course’s subject matter for instructor and students alike. In brief, it works. However, there is evidence that this straight-forward approach does not always work best with all learners. While it is great for students who are new to a subject area, it may produce an expertise reversal effect, causing those learners who have a greater level of expertise with the course content to not learn course content as well as novice students (Clarke et al., 2005).

At some point, however, the safe, predictable road may seem a little less satisfying. You may find yourself wondering if there are any other options for working through your course content.

In Medias Res
Organizing your course by topic takes advantage of a time-honoured method, which turns the sequential concept on its ear by immersing the learner in the middle of the content. One of the strengths of this method is that it allows you to leverage the power of current events, making it more approachable to your students. If you are teaching a climate-related course, imagine how easily you could capture students’ attention with the concept of “polar vortex” after this year’s winter. Consider how
effectively the terms Crimea, Parti Quebecois, senate reform, Air Malaysia Flight MH370 all help to bring vivid images to mind or cause a visceral reaction. There is a rich source of contemporary issues which can be used as an engaging introduction of your course content to your students. While each of these topics may eventually become less meaningful, there is a never-ending stream of replacement topics. Some topics like the PQ seem to have staying power and remain relevant for an extended period of time. Likewise, some themes have the same longevity - as Canadians, we seem to always be obsessing about some aspect of our climate. However, if a particular topic loses its currency, it is reassuring to know that current affairs is a renewable resource.

Two Sides of the Same Coin

These next two approaches are mirror images of one another: arranging course curriculum either whole-to-part or part-to-whole. Whole-to-part stems from the work of David Ausubel and his work on advance organizers. This particular design choice provides learners with a schema of the concept being studied before branching out into the individual components that comprise the concept. Students can see how all of these pieces fit into the subject matter, which assists them in making sense of this content. Part-to-whole, which can also be seen in Robert M. Gagne’s bottom up approach, reverses this process, with learners studying the component parts first and constructing an understanding of the whole as a result of this process.

If either of these approaches appeals to you and you are also interested in incorporating some educational technology options into your course, you may wish to sign up for one of the workshops on Visual Understanding Environment (Vue) software from Tufts University, presented by our Information Technologist Ryan Nicolson when these are offered.

Another Coin to Consider

Two additional approaches also seem like opposite sides of the same coin: known-to-unknown and unknown-to-known. Known-to-unknown seems so obvious; guide learners into new knowledge by associating it to that which they already know. Reigeluth (1983) makes this a much richer topic by identifying seven different kinds of knowledge that can “be used to facilitate the acquisition, organization, and retrieval of new knowledge:

1) arbitrarily meaningful knowledge, (2) a superordinate idea, (3) a coordinate idea, (4) a subordinate idea, (5) knowledge of instances (experiential knowledge), (6) an analogic idea, and (7) a cognitive strategy” as well as identifying various instructional strategies that can be used with each kind of knowledge to optimize learning.

In light of the robust selection of options available for the known-to-unknown approach, the unknown-to-known approach seems very counter-intuitive. It is the andragogical equivalent of pushing learners in the deep end of the pool and advising them to swim. While this seems like an unsound (and heartless) approach, there are occasions where an instructor might want to consider using it to sequence course content for reasons very much in the best interest of the student. One instance where this approach might prove useful is with course content where students hold the belief that this content is far too simplistic or that they have already learned it and that there are no additional benefits to be gained from studying it further. I have witnessed many instances where students belittle the content of a course (the phrase “trained monkeys could do this” has been uttered) only to find themselves coming back to the instructor at the end of the semester, begging for an opportunity to make up 5% of the course mark in order to obtain a passing grade. A push into the deep end of the course content may have helped alert these learners that the course in question is more challenging than it seems and that there is definitely beneficial knowledge here that they can acquire. Unfortunately, in these instances, learners reached that understanding at a point when they could no longer pass the course and would, in fact, have to retake it at a later date!

There are some very common-sense ethical issues that need to be mentioned regarding this approach. If aspects of a course could place learners’ health or safety at risk, this is not an approach you will want to use. In these instances, it is far better to try other methods to convince learners of the benefits of learning the content in question that also allow them to be able to walk away from the experience safe and whole.

Steps and Parts

Some subject matter can be approached in a step-by-step manner. This approach focuses on content that covers processes or procedures. Content is arranged in the steps involved in the process or procedure. It is tempting to say “easy as pie” only pie isn’t easy. It is a process, though, and lends itself beautifully to this approach.

Part-to-part-to-part, on the other hand, is a more complex approach. Also known as spiral sequencing, it is a method that focuses on a starting point in one area of the subject matter, moving to other areas of the same subject before looping back to more advanced aspects of concepts covered earlier; and it continues to loop around and around, progressively increasing the level of complexity with each spiral. Sound complicated? Think of language acquisition. When learning a new language, students don’t focus solely on one part of a language,
such as vocabulary, and study it in an exhaustive way; rather, students move on to other areas such as grammar, syntax, cultural elements such as idioms, and so on, before expanding their knowledge in areas studied earlier.

One additional challenge in using this approach is that oftentimes the subject matter being studied is more extensive than can be contained in one single course. It requires a macro level of coordination between numerous courses or within an entire program that is beyond the control of one instructor. Despite the challenges, this can be an effective approach for some courses and programs (and yield results such as increased student success and decreased attrition), as noted by Grove et al. (2008), making it a worthwhile endeavour.

One with the Strength of Many

One final approach to explore is general to specific. This is a method that allows you to add options to your course that make it more applicable to your students’ personal interests. While this may seem like a tall order, it can work very well for students and instructors alike. Take, for example, a course that introduces students to qualitative research methodologies. The initial part of the course could focus on a general overview of all of the various methods this form of research uses. However, to then proceed to have all students focus solely on ethnographic research would be an amazing experience – for those students wanting to do ethnographic research. Less so for those interested in areas such as action research or postmodern research. Structuring your course to allow students to diverge along the paths of their own interests allows them the opportunity to have a more meaningful learning experience than when they are all guided down the same route. This approach can also further enrich the learning of every participant if the instructor incorporates debriefing or presentation sessions at the end of the course where each student has the opportunity to share their learning with the entire class.

Closing Thoughts

One of the hallmarks of the age we live in is that we are all busy people. As responsible educators, we focus on ensuring that we cover off the curriculum entrusted to us in our courses to our learners in order to ensure that they have the knowledge they require to succeed as they graduate into careers. There is no question that this is an important responsibility. However, this focus on efficiency and economy sometimes obscures the need to also convey to students the wonder and excitement of the knowledge that you are helping them develop.

Re-sequencing course content using one of these alternative approaches to the sequential approach may help to not only cover off these course content requirements, but to allow students to interact with this content in unique and memorable ways. These approaches do need to be applied judiciously. A class of novice university students may require the more linear “A leads to B leads to C” focus that the chronological/sequential approach provides. Instructors teaching a course for the first time will probably appreciate this structure as well. However, it is important to realize that there are other options for structuring the learning experiences we offer our students, so that they graduate as not only well-informed professionals, but also as curious, excited lifelong learners.

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Creating Accessible Documents - PDF

PDF’s are a widely used format that allows many different operating systems to access documents while knowing that the content will not be changed or altered. But did you know that depending on how you create it, your PDF can prevent someone with a disability from reading it? Below are a few tips on how to ensure everyone can read your PDF documents whether they have a disability or not.

Creating accessible PDF documents:
When creating PDF’s, it is important to know that if your source document is accessible, then your PDF should be accessible. For example, if you make a Word document (or PowerPoint, HTML, etc.) in an accessible format as explained in the previous Path to Pedagogy (or on our website), creating an accessible PDF is easy. Most programs have an option to “Save as PDF”.

Or, if not, you can change the file format to PDF.

Just be sure to not lock-down too many security features and ensure that “tagging” is left (tagging is the reading order a screen reader will follow) on so that the majority of your original formatting will carry over and readers can then access the full document. What you want to avoid is printing the original source document, scanning it, and providing the scanned PDF to your readers. Most scanned PDFs are an image. In order to have such documents read out loud by an assistive technology program (e.g. JAWS) they must first be run through an OCR (optical character recognition) – an additional step - which will result in an improperly formatted document leading to issues with reading order, omissions of headings, and typographical errors e.g. (confusing 1’s for I’s or I’s).

Adobe Reader will inform you of any accessibility concerns and how to remedy them, just go to “Tools”, “Accessibility” and select “Full Check”.

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Jeff Buhse, Student Accessibility Services
If you would like to see first-hand how text to speech software will read your PDF in Adobe, go to “View”, “Read Out Loud” and select “Activate Read Out Loud” (or shift + ctrl + Y), now you can click your mouse on a paragraph and see how the synthetic voice works.

Accessible PDF’s are often referred to as “search-able” which will benefit any reader as they will be able to search specific words or sections within the document. I encourage all instructors to follow universal design principles as a matter of practice as this will benefit everyone who reads your documents. There are many other small things that you can be doing to your documents to ensure accessibility and this article just goes through a few.

If you have any questions or would like further details on anything mentioned in this article (or any other assistive technology questions or concerns), please do not hesitate to contact Jeff Buhse, Assistive Technologist, Student Accessibility Services at Jeffrey.Buhse@umanitoba.ca or 204-391-4452.
Amidst a record heat wave in July, Boston was the backdrop for the University’s learning management system’s international conference. FUSION, D2L’s annual conference, brings together educators and all those whose work supports the development and delivery of learning. FUSION 2013 welcomed 1,000 people with the support of 150 D2L staff in attendance. Daily luncheon keynotes, more than 250 breakout sessions, and unique evening entertainment offered a continuous schedule of learning and networking opportunities.

As a result of a program offering financial support from the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning and funding from the Faculty of Continuing Education, I had the opportunity to attend FUSION in Boston. I’d like to share with you my three, key takeaways from the conference: 1) professional development through peer sharing of best teaching practices with D2L, 2) an appreciation for the history and culture of an iconic city for education, and 3) a list of ten ways my teaching with D2L could be improved.

**Best Teaching Practices**

Many, if not all of us, find ourselves too busy ‘doing’ to take the time to step back and examine how we do things. In the absence of a teaching community of practice, the conference environment of peers motivated to learn and improve is a rich option for peer learning. I suspect I will never forget what I heard during a focus group session called “Student-Driven Learning Plans”.

Listening to conference attendee Dr. Jeanette Cowherd, District Superintendent for School Improvement for the Parkhill School Division in Missouri, speak passionately about their grade school children creating their own learning and leadership development plans, was inspiring. Senior lecturers for the University of Wisconsin, Elizabeth Grbavcich and Beth Austin facilitated a high energy session with a standing room only audience who generously shared their best practices ideas using the discussion tool. Jason Thompson, University of Guelph presented the Peer Evaluation, Assessment and Review (PEAR) tool developed by the University of Guelph. PEAR, when integrated with D2L, provides instructors a means to manage the logistics of peer review, and a way to save...
faculty and administration, time. (http://www.uoguelph.ca/peartool) In all, 158 of the 250 sessions held at FUSION were led by peers identified as best practice leaders.

**WHERE BOSTON HISTORY MEETS MY DISCIPLINE**

I arrived in Boston a couple of days before the conference. Months earlier, I had contacted the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) to arrange a tour of Boston Symphony Hall. My lectures on gender equality in the workplace often involve the story of how BSO was the first major symphony to conduct blind auditions when hiring new full-time musicians. Although the Hall was closed for the summer, staff kindly agreed to give me a private tour. Now my lecture includes a richer, firsthand description of how these auditions are conducted.

**Ten Ways to Improve My Application of D2L**

From the pages of my handwritten conference notes I’ve compiled a list of practical and new (D2L 10.3 coming in May) ways to use D2L.

1. Establish a discussion specifically for course-related questions from students. This reduces the number of emails to the instructor and creates a “Help” area for students. Watch for the FAQ tool in the new version of D2L.

2. Invite a guest expert as a member of the discussion board. The guest posts and responds to student’s posts, and provides an additional perspective for students on the topic.

3. Assign peers for peer responses in a discussion instead of allowing the student to choose the peers to whom they respond.

4. Create instructions common to all of your course discussions and post them at the Forum level. This prevents the need to repeat the instructions each time at the discussion level.

5. Advise students they can subscribe at the post or thread level in a discussion. This insures they will be notified of peer responses so they can maintain the discussion. Students are often reluctant to subscribe at the discussion level if the discussion group size is large. The thread or post level option encourages them to subscribe.

6. Advise students to select “Do not include original post” in their settings for discussions. This significantly shortens each reply post and makes the discussion particularly in the reading view appear like a more manageable workload of reading.

7. After the version upgrade of D2L in May the universal course setting to allow peer rating of discussion posts will be replaced with a discussion-specific enabling for peer rating. You will be able to allow peer rating on some discussions in your course, but you’re not compelled now to have it enabled for all of your discussions.

8. After the version upgrade of D2L in May you will be able to set release conditions students must meet before they can view peer posts in a discussion. The most common release condition is for students to post their answer before they can see what others have posted.

9. Grading of documents submitted to a Dropbox in D2L can be graded using D2L’s free app for the iPad. Please note the mark up of documents will function only with pdf documents.

10. External, free tools such as Screencast-o-matic or Jing from TechSmith can be used to create video feedback and grading of assignments students have submitted to the Dropbox. Once the video feedback is created, the evaluator posts a link to the recording in the student’s Dropbox.

**IN CONCLUSION**

Advancements in technology will continue to influence how we teach; technology isn’t going to go away. No matter our discipline, we have an obligation to learn how to use the tools technology provides, and understand how we can use them to better engage our students. If we fail to invest in learning about tools such as D2L, we are teaching within our limitations.

To see some of the highlights from FUSION 2013, visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d81zL8GfiqM. FUSION 2014 will be July 12-14th in Nashville, TN. What’s in it for you?
Student assessment can be a time consuming and difficult part of teaching. Some of the web based tools available for this may not be as familiar as things like research papers, presentations, group work and multiple choice exams. PeerWise is a free web tool that students can use to create and share multiple choice questions with their peers. After sharing a question in PeerWise, their peers can answer, evaluate and discuss. You can also share questions, evaluate the questions they are creating, and be part of the discussion. Using PeerWise in your course can offer your students a new way of thinking about the material and an excellent study opportunity to improve learning. PeerWise can be used as both an assessment for learning and an assessment of learning. PeerWise is available at http://peerwise.cs.auckland.ac.nz/. In order to create an instructor account you need to scroll to the bottom of the page and request an instructor account. The account creation usually happens overnight. You will receive an email with your account information once it has been created.

Join Us! PeerWise is free to use - if you would like to use PeerWise in a class you are teaching and are ready to get started, please request an instructor account. If you are a student, your instructor will have sent you a link to help get you started.
After logging in you will need to click on create a new course. Provide the course name and click preview new course. Ensure the name is correct and click “Yes, create this course.” You should now see your course in the pending courses list. Now you will need to assign identifiers to all of the students. If you want to ensure students are not showing favoritism when rating questions, you should assign random identifiers for each student. An easy way to come up with random identifiers is to use a random name generator website like http://www.rinkworks.com/namegen/. These names can be pasted into a D2L text grade-book item. You will also paste these identifiers into the PeerWise website in the identifier list. This way each student will see only their identifier and know what to enter when signing into your course.

Once students have registered for your course by visiting your course page and entering their identifier, they can start creating questions. When creating their questions there are certain things that must be entered. The first requirement is the actual question stem. Next the student must enter each alternative and select one as the correct response. They also have a box to enter an explanation for the answer they selected as being correct. It may include things like where in the course material the answer can be found. It may also include some information about why the distractors are incorrect. The last piece of information is the topic. Depending on how you setup the course these can be topics that you have created or the students can enter their own if you allow it. After everything is entered, the student will be offered a chance to preview the question and then publish or edit it. This now takes the student to a summary of all of the questions they have created.

As others answer their questions they will find the statistics about how many have answered it correctly, if anyone has asked for help with your question and how many comments have been made. They will also see the question rating for difficulty and overall rating.

After students have created questions, they will need to start answering them. The process for answering a question is simple however to get the most from this software students should not just answer the question but also think about the validity of the question. Do they think that it is a good question? If not, why not? If they feel there is something that could be improved, they can comment on the question and the author can respond.

Often motivating students to engage in an assignment like this can be difficult. There are a few ways you can incorporate PeerWise into your instruction. One way is to make participation in the website a small part of the course grade. Depending on the size of your class, there may be different ways that you wish to do this. If your class is small you may want to read each question posted by the students and evaluate them based on your assessment of the question as well as the assessment of their peers. If the class is larger it may be more efficient to use one of the rating systems available in PeerWise or a combination of rating systems. For more information on scoring in PeerWise see the blog entry Scoring: for fun and extra credit in the additional reading section at the end of the article.

Another interesting aspect of PeerWise that may help with student motivation is the use of badges. PeerWise has incorporated a gameification system to allow students to compete with each other to earn badges. There are badges for simply creating or
answering questions or for activities that require more engagement and commitment like the “Super scholar” badge for answering at least 50 questions correctly.

Another method for getting students to engage with the tool is to offer to put some of the questions on the final exam for the course. If the students come up with well written questions and the students know that some of them will be on the final or the midterm exam, engagement may increase as well.

There are many ways to use PeerWise as a learning tool and we have discussed some in this article. If you have questions about how to use PeerWise and how to incorporate it into your course contact me at Ryan.Nicolson@umanitoba.ca. Also make sure to look at some of the information provided in Amy De Jaeger’s article in this issue of Path to Pedagogy on how to write good multiple choice questions. (p.43)

Additional Reading


How to avoid misleading the masses:
tips for creating multiple choice tests

Multiple choice tests are commonplace in many faculties and schools because of their versatility and usability. We all want to assess various levels of learning without confusing our students, but writing high-quality multiple choice questions is hard work!

Try these simple tips to ramp up your multiple choice writing skills.

Clarity in the question stem. The stem should include as much of the item as possible and present your question clearly as possible. If you are testing for a definition, include the definition in the stem to avoid long response options. When using the stem as a statement, the incomplete portion of the sentence should come at the end of the stem.

Avoid negativity. Negatively worded items unnecessarily challenge reading ability and cause confusion. Try stating the question positively. When you cannot avoid using a negatively worded question try visually emphasizing the negative word to increase readability.

How many is too many? Including four or five responses that are equal in length will decrease the probability of student guessing. More than five responses usually leads to confusion and poorly constructed options.

Logical ordering. Use a logical pattern when ordering response options. Alphabetically, numerically, or chronologically listing options are a few easy choices. Students who know the material will have mentally answered the question before looking at the alternatives. When the options are listed in logical patterns students spend less time trying to locate the correct response.

No nonsense. Try to steer clear of humorous or ridiculous response options. Nonsense options are easily identified and leave students who have not adequately learned the material fewer options to choose from. Common student mistakes or questions often make quality incorrect responses.

All of the above or none of the above? Neither! Including an all of the above or none of the above response option facilitates guessing. Often these options are obviously wrong or obviously correct and do not test student learning.

Item discrimination. The relationship between an individual’s response to a certain question and their overall performance on the test can be identified using the point bi-serial correlation located on your scantron output. Item discrimination will help you to flag questions that are poorly constructed or particularly confusing for students.

Challenging multiple choice questions will require thought and time to prepare, but when constructed properly multiple choice tests result in high levels of student learning.

References:
New Features in D2L LE 10.3 since LE9.4.1

Jonathan Kennedy, C.A.T.L.

Content

- Streamlined layout for students and instructors
- Quick access to course content with new content map
- Notifications for students when content is updated

Discussions

- Post are automatically marked as read after reading
- New option ‘must post to participate’ require student to post before commenting on other posts
- Cleaner reading style used in all discussion
- Instructors can now restore deleted forums
- Rubrics can be associated with topics
- Reply text is off by default
- New voting styles for posts
Dropbox

• Grades can be released all at once instead of individually
• Instructors can now bulk download and upload feedback files
• Deleted dropbox folder can now be restored by instructors
• Due date supports late submission window
• Feedback is marked as draft until ready to return to students
• Instructors can evaluate non-submissions and external submission

Grades and Quizzes

• Improved recalculation of grade when question is fixed
• Improved logging and recovery of deleted items
• Quicker access to question editing tab
• New milestone calculated grade item
• New assessment tab
Grades and Quizzes CONTINUED

Navigation

- Finding your courses and accessing personal settings is streamlined in the new Navigation Minibar located at the top of your D2L page
- Home pages and widget feature a cleaner interface and require fewer button clicks to accomplish the same tasks as before
- Access Pager and email from any page
2014 Students’ Teacher Recognition Reception

Each year outstanding graduating students are given the opportunity to honour teachers who have made an important contribution to their education. Recognizing that academic growth and development occurs over many years, the outstanding students are asked to recognize two teachers; one from Kindergarten to Grade 12 years and one from their years at The University of Manitoba. Each student speaks about the impact their honoured teachers have made on their lives. Below is the list of students and their chosen teachers for this 22nd year of celebrating Teaching Excellence at the Students’ Teacher Recognition Reception on May 7th 2014. To see a list of new and past recipients visit: http://bit.ly/Sah7A2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty/School</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>K–12 Teacher</th>
<th>U of M Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural &amp; Food Sciences</td>
<td>Danica Swaenepoel</td>
<td>April Popple</td>
<td>Anita Brule-Babel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Kayla Antonowich</td>
<td>Elizabeth Wiens</td>
<td>Gary Martens</td>
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<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>Tatum Lawlor</td>
<td>Tracy Youck</td>
<td>Dietmar Straub</td>
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<td>Arts</td>
<td>Alexander Pawlowsky</td>
<td>Claire Lussier</td>
<td>Karin James</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>Michelle Ward</td>
<td>Kelly Smith</td>
<td>Jennifer Theule</td>
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<td>Clayton H. Riddell</td>
<td>Timothy Hayward</td>
<td>Richard Humphreys</td>
<td>Ian Ferguson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty of Environment, Earth and Resources</td>
<td>Aaron Szucsik</td>
<td>Timothy Beyak</td>
<td>Laura MacDonald</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dental Hygiene</td>
<td>Vanessa Hunzinger</td>
<td>Cloyd Barth</td>
<td>Frank Hechter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dentistry</td>
<td>Shirley Ewanchuk</td>
<td>Jim Stein</td>
<td>Orest Cap</td>
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<td>Education</td>
<td>Kevin Sagan</td>
<td>Larry Franz</td>
<td>Shawn Clark</td>
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<td>Engineering</td>
<td>Michelle Stevens</td>
<td>Deb May</td>
<td>Connie Magalhaes</td>
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<td>Human Ecology</td>
<td>Samantha Wagner</td>
<td>Kathy Slovinski</td>
<td>Kyla Ray</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kinesiology &amp; Recreation</td>
<td>Liam Black</td>
<td>Larry Franz</td>
<td>Philip Osborne</td>
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<td>Management</td>
<td>Thomas Roberts</td>
<td>Sandra Roberts</td>
<td>Oleg Pokhanovski</td>
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<td>Nursing</td>
<td>Rachel Usick</td>
<td>Greg Lawson</td>
<td>Diana Clarke</td>
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<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>Jillian James</td>
<td>Sharon Labossiere</td>
<td>Robert Ariano</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Uliana Kovaltchou</td>
<td>Lorne Richards</td>
<td>Deborah Court</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Rebecca Sherbo</td>
<td>Erin Kowel</td>
<td>John Sorensen</td>
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