

Canadian Journal of Higher Education

Special Issue: December 2015

Enhancing the Quality of Graduate Student Teaching

Call for Papers

Special Issue Editors: Executive Committee of Teaching Assistant and Graduate Student Advancement (TAGSA) SIG of the Society of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE):

Lianne Fisher
Brock University

Lorraine Godden
Queen's University

Shaya Golparian
University of British Columbia

Aisha Haque
Western University

Betsy Keating
University of Windsor

Cynthia Korpan
University of Victoria

Suzanne Le-May Sheffield
Dalhousie University

Christina Skorobohacz
Brock University

Roselynn Verwoord
University of British Columbia

Kim West
University of Saskatchewan

Background

Graduate students at most Canadian universities are tasked with performing many duties associated with teaching, such as grading, preparing materials, and assisting professors with various tasks. A significant number of graduate students provide classroom instruction for first- and second-year courses. Piccinin, Farquharson, and Mihi (1993) brought attention to the important link between preparing graduate students to teach and quality education over 20 years ago. Despite the steady increase in teaching assistant (TA) preparation programming, and research and publications about the need for graduate student professional development, a careful look at this growing field is required to address the issue of quality enhancement in the context of graduate students' teaching preparation.

The recent quality assurance movement in higher education around the world brings attention to how undergraduate students are supported in their learning but is primarily imposed by external forces demanding accountability and efficiency (Pratasavitskaya & Stensaker, 2010). In opposition to quality assurance, quality enhancement emphasizes process rather than the end product. A quality enhancement approach is holistic and involves all individuals in the process to work on continuous ways to improve (Turner, 2011). How does graduate students' teaching preparation address this quality enhancement approach?

To ensure that the most effective education is provided for undergraduate students, it is essential to take a close look at aspects of higher education that determine and influence quality education. One of these aspects is the role that graduate students provide in undergraduate courses, either as TAs, sessional instructors, or as they prepare for future faculty positions. This special issue will address the professional development efforts that work to enhance the quality of support provided for graduate students in the academic workplace as they learn how to teach.

Focus

This special issue encourages contributions that address the growing concern for quality graduate student teaching in higher education. Submissions are welcome from all involved in the preparation and support of graduate students in their teaching, and from graduate students who can share insight into current issues they are experiencing. Possible topics that may be considered include:

- Incorporating a TA Competency Framework
- Mentorship programs
- Evidence-based programming
- Specialized or experimental programming
- Program evaluation

Call for Papers

You are invited to submit articles (5,000 words excluding graphics, title page, and bibliography) by **MAY 1, 2015** that will be subject to peer review. Final submissions with revisions will be expected by September 2, 2015. For further information, or to submit your article, please contact the TAGSA editorial team at tagsa@stlhe.ca.

References

Piccinin, S. J., Farquharson, A., & Mihi, E. (1993). Teaching assistants in Canadian universities: An unknown resource. *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 23, 140-117.

Pratasavitskaya, H., & Stensaker, B. (2010). Quality management in higher education: Towards a better understanding of an emerging field. *Quality in Higher Education*, 16(1), 37-50, DOI: 10.1080/13538321003679465

Turner, D. A. (2011). Quality in higher education. *Comparative and International Education: A Diversity of Voices*, 10. Boston: Sense.