

EDC Discussion Paper - Potential accreditation of post-secondary educational development programs in Canada: What is the role for EDC?

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Introduction

At the invitation of the Executive of the Educational Developers' Caucus (EDC) a Working Group was formed from volunteers to examine the issue of accreditation of educational development professional programs. We use program here to refer to any workshops, series of workshops, courses, modules, or other professional development activities that are formal in some way, designed for such a purpose in a context, and repeatable. The group was asked to explore the feasibility of such accreditation, to find out what forms of accreditation are currently available internationally, to identify the current situation in Canada, the advantages and disadvantages of program or course accreditation, what a Canadian accreditation process might look like, and whether the EDC would be an appropriate body to institute such a system.

Executive Summary:

This discussion paper sets out to review accreditation schemes for faculty, looking first at international provision, where we found two accreditation systems in the UK and a national compulsory professional development scheme in Sweden. We go on to review the current situation in Canada, where some institutions have elected to use the SEDA accreditation process while others have internal recognition such as including TA training on degree transcripts. We give a selection of approaches which is intended to be illustrative of the range of approaches and is certainly not exhaustive. Next we consider the advantages and disadvantages of a possible accreditation system in Canada. This starts with a summary of the key issues then we explore the implications in some detail. Bearing in mind the range of possible models we briefly explore what a Canadian model could look like, before discussing the suitability of EDC to take on this role. Finally we present a list of questions for the EDC community to consider.

The working group did not come to a firm conclusion about the questions raised, as we feel these issues need to be discussed by the wider community. However there was general consensus among the group that the benefits of accreditation likely outweigh the disadvantages and that being the case, if EDC does not take ownership of this another body may do so.

International forms of accreditation

We found two countries with an accreditation system: the UK and Sweden.

United Kingdom: The most widely known external accreditor for faculty development programs in Canada is the UK's Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA). However, the Higher Education Academy (HEA) in the UK is another potential source of accreditation as in recent years they have implemented the UK Professional Skills Framework (UK-PSF).

SEDA has a range of 'Named Awards' (details may be found at <http://www.seda.ac.uk/pdf>). Accreditation involves the submission of extensive documents which describe the program and indicate how the particular Named Award outcomes are met. A mentor is appointed to assist the submitting institution, this is someone from outside the institution who has been trained by SEDA to this end. Two recognizers read the documents and engage in discussion with the program team. This may involve changes to the documents and or to the program. In the UK this includes a site visit but in most cases Canadian programs have

met the requirements via other means such as Skype and email. The cost of accreditation is around \$2000 to \$2800 for one program (members receive the cheaper rate); this cost includes a one off institutional recognition, further programs cost around \$1000 per program. The charge covers the costs of the mentor and recognizer and is not seen as a revenue generator by SEDA. Once recognized an institution may run the course with an unlimited number of participants.

The HEA has a system called the Professional Skills Framework (UK- PSF). This is similar to the SEDA framework, but it includes the potential for individuals to become Fellows of the HEA (there are 4 levels) either through individual applications or by completing a course that has been accredited as meeting the relevant UK PSF level. The scheme is expensive - around \$1800 per person, or \$10,000 per program - the latter is awarded to an institution which, as with the SEDA process can then award an unlimited number of successful candidates. Full details can be found here: (<https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/professional-recognition/uk-professional-standards-framework-ukpsf>)

An account of an example of an institution using the UK PSF can be found here - http://staffdev.ulster.ac.uk/index.php?/higher_education_practice/first_steps, this describes the University of Ulster's First Steps program.

Sweden:

Martensson et. al. (2011) describe the move from high participation rate pedagogical courses to mandatory programs in Sweden in 2003. Accreditation as such does not seem to be an element, but the compulsory nature and move toward a national framework qualifies the program for inclusion here (Norway, too, has had mandatory training for much longer, but the national framework evolving in Sweden is more like what we are seeking to understand for Canadian consideration). The Swedish framework was based on consensus amongst the rectors at Swedish universities, who adopted proposals from Lund University based on their successful track record of program delivery:

The learning outcomes were based on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (see Lindberg-Sand and Sonesson [2008] for an account of this process and of the suggested learning outcomes). The result was also a consensus decision among all rectors for Swedish higher education institutions to recommend 10 weeks of training to be concluded within two years of employment. Thus, the development can be seen as a process where increased voluntary participation in pedagogical courses during the 1990s was recognised by the government and the rectors, who then decided to make pedagogical courses compulsory. (Martensson et. al., 56)

Aside from these examples, there do not appear to be any similar national schemes available in the US, Australia or elsewhere.

The current situation in Canada

A survey of Educational Development Centres (under the titles of Academic Development Offices/Centres or Centres for Teaching and Learning and various other titles) reveals a

vast array of programming options in Canada for faculty and graduate students (see **Appendix A** for a cross-section of Canadian and international programming). In the absence of a formal, national accreditation body for professional development programs in educational development, these programs have sought/achieved recognition from a variety of sources, including: international accreditation through SEDA, provincial recognition, institutional recognition in the form of both senate approved designations and notations on transcripts/co-curricular transcripts and/or tenure and promotion documents, and recognition from faculties of Education and/or teaching and learning centres. This range of sources has been described by Kenny, Watson and Watton as ranging from “highly formalized recognition” to “less formalized recognition” (2014, 12-13). We note that some programs have sought recognition from multiple sources, resulting in programs that may be simultaneously accredited by SEDA, the institution’s senate, and the teaching and learning centre, for example. We should also note a subtle, but important, difference between *accreditation* and *recognition*. While both imply some kind of oversight of program design, delivery and evaluation, accreditation has the added meaning of accountability and measurement of standards.

Rather than offer a catalogue of the range of programs offered across the country by type of recognition - a catalogue that could only hope to be transitory and mutable - we pose here some representative programs for each form of recognition and suggest some of the principles underlying the form of recognition.

SEDA Accredited Programs: University of Windsor, University Teaching Certificate

The first institution in the country to offer a [SEDA](#) accredited teaching program, the University of Windsor’s certificate is open to “any academic in any teaching role” (Potter, para.3) and addresses the scholarship of teaching and learning, reflective practice and practice/feedback on teaching. Since its inception three other Canadian institutions have also had programs accredited by SEDA (University of Guelph, Ryerson University and York University).

SEDA recognition affords a program: mentorship during development, external review, opportunities for collaboration across programs and an internationally recognized framework for program development, delivery and evaluation. Further, SEDA accreditation has perceived benefits from participants, including the ability to have their participation in professional development programs recognized as “valid” or “legitimate” by other institutions. However, recognition by a non-Canadian accrediting body, or any accrediting body, may not appeal to all faculty or institutions.

Provincial Recognition: British Columbia Provincial Instructor Diploma offered at Vancouver Community College

This provincially recognized diploma program is offered in different formats (face-to-face, online, blended) for participants interested in the instruction of adults. With core learning outcomes related to the design, delivery and evaluation of adult learning, professional and ethical conduct, reflective practice and use of instructional strategies, the program advertises that it is a required certification for instruction at many institutions in British Columbia; however, no list of institutions requiring the diploma is provided.

With education as a provincial mandate, the regulation of such a diploma program stands as a model (or harbinger!) for other provinces in Canada, indeed the Province of Manitoba has recognized Red River College's Certificate in Adult Education. That the British Columbia diploma is required at some colleges and universities suggests a perception of utility in preparing instructors for adult instruction.

Institutionally Recognized Certificates & Programs (Graduate Students): University of Alberta, Post-baccalaureate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

This institutionally recognized certificate program involves the completion of two courses - Philosophies, Theories and Methods of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, and the Design and Development of Learning Teaching and Assessment in Higher Education. The certificate program is open to all graduate students in good standing at the institution, with each course costing participants \$750.

Like other institutions across the country offering graduate courses in university teaching, the courses at the University of Alberta focus on learning outcomes, assessments, course design and writing teaching philosophy statements. While other institutions may offer these courses as course credit, the University of Alberta's decision to offer the courses as part of a post-baccalaureate certificate signals oversight and recognition from the University. For graduate students eager to differentiate themselves on the job market, such recognition may be appealing. Research on graduate student programming in North America does indicate the value of certificate programs for the acquisition of skills; recent research has affirmed that, at the very least, those graduate students who *facilitate* such programs for their peers are often better equipped for job markets (Thacker Thomas and Border, 2011).

Institutional Recognition - Transcript Notations and Co-Curricular Transcript Notations (Graduate Students): University of Saskatchewan

Whereas the University of Alberta post-baccalaureate certificate provides a credential *beyond and in addition to* the graduate student's core program of study, many institutions offer certificate programs, courses or workshops on teaching and learning topics that are formally recognized within the program of study either with course credit and a transcript or non-credit and/or co-curricular transcript notation.

For instance, the University of Saskatchewan offers three non-credit courses recognized with a transcript notation, including: Introductory Instructional Skills, Philosophy and Practice of University Teaching and Mentored Teaching. In this instance the courses are approved by the University Senate but do not 'count' towards the graduate degree requirements (rather like Waterloo's Certificate in University Teaching, comprised of three transcriptable courses). Similarly, Dalhousie University's Certificate in University Teaching and Learning appears on official university transcripts as does the "0 credit" graduate course in teaching which is part of the Certificate but may be taken as a stand-alone course. Other institutions, for instance McMaster University, recognize these courses within the degree program requirements. Accountability in these courses is thus maintained by the processes and procedures of new course approvals through program committees and Senate.

In terms of less traditional forms of institutional recognition a few institutions in the United States have implemented digital badges as a form of recognition and an incentive for

participation (see Indiana University and Texas Wesleyan University's Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning). In Canada, McGill's "Skillsets" program is jointly offered through the Teaching and Learning Centre and Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

Institutional Recognition: Permanence, Tenure and Promotion (Faculty)

Several institutions offer programs for faculty that are recognized institutionally and may be required for promotion or tenure or as a condition of employment. This category appears to be more common in the college sector across Canada with universities offering programs on a more voluntary basis; interestingly, one university runs an induction program that is required by two faculties but not their other four (see under Teaching and Learning Centre Recognition). Another factor distinguishing whether universities adopt anything mandatory is whether a program is online or face-to-face. In some cases, instructors who wish to teach online courses must take specific training. In general though, the College sector seems to be more readily amenable to mandatory programming.

For instance, Sheridan College requires new faculty, as per the the New Teacher Education Policy, to complete the "Academy of Teaching and Learning 1,2,3" for new full-time faculty and the "Foundations of Teaching and Learning" for new contract faculty. Both programs are a condition of employment and required after hiring.

While the *requirement* to participate in a teaching development program, course or workshop is at this time almost exclusive to the college sector in Canada, there are formal, if *uneven*, modes of recognition for these programs available within the tenure and promotion processes at universities. For instance, the University of Guelph's SEDA accredited EnLite program is recognized within some Colleges at the University as part of "teaching" within tenure and promotion, with a concomitant recognition for scholarship of teaching and learning research projects within the "research" agenda of T&P. However, other Colleges within the same institution do not recognize either participation in EnLite or SoTL projects as meritorious within T&P. We highlight the disparity in recognition within a single institution as a way of drawing attention to the variability of tenure and promotion recognition for participation in teaching and learning development within and between institutions, and indeed individual instructors. Anecdotally, this reflects the situation at other universities as well. If one impetus for participation in an accredited program is to be their value in tenure and promotion, faculty and institutions deserve the open communication of the unevenness of this recognition and/or a collective advocacy for the inclusion of these programs within these processes.

Faculty of Education Recognition

At a few institutions across the country the institution's teaching and learning centre is housed within a Faculty of Education (for instance, Mount Royal University and the University of Windsor). Where the teaching and learning centre is a partner with a Faculty of Education the teaching development programs receive recognition through the centre and the Faculty.

Teaching and Learning Centre Recognition

Of the forms of accreditation currently available in Canada, certification from the Teaching and Learning Centre itself is a very common method for both graduate student and faculty teaching development programs. These certificates vary in duration, requirements and

audience. Some programs, like the University of Manitoba's "Teaching and Learning Certificate" claim to provide "enhanced tenure prospects," while programs like that at the University of Regina and at Cape Breton University offer more intrinsic motivators like "mak[ing] teaching/learning more enjoyable for you and your students."

Instructional Skills Workshop

The ISW is a long standing approach to providing support for university level instruction. The ISW is a 24 hour program delivered over 3 or 4 days, usually consecutively, but can be adapted to meet local needs. The format of the course is well defined, with small groups of participants facilitated by a trained facilitator. The ISW is based on peer feedback, reflective practice and experiential education. Facilitators may or may not be educational developers, the approach is one of encouraging thoughtful constructive feedback from peers rather than 'teaching'. That said, there is an emphasis on how to design instruction to improve student learning, with a focus on instructional skills rather than educational theories, approaches to assessment and so forth. There is considerable attention given to ensure the consistency of ISWs as they are run at a range of institutions.

Course Design and Teaching Week

It is worth mentioning this course redesign process, common to many universities in Canada since the mid-2000s, not because it is in any way accredited, but because of its common roots in Saroyan and Amundsen (2004). Their Rethinking Teaching in Higher Education described what has often been called the "McGill model" of course design, informally. McGill and SFU, Concordia, Victoria, Guelph, Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier, and many others have adopted and adapted this model with local instantiations looking remarkably alike. A community of practice formed around this model in the late 2000s, and although the group has not been active lately, versions of the four-day workshop have been run as far away as Japan as recently as September 2014. It may be the case that, as with ISW, a grassroots approach has led us to a *de facto* recognition that could offer us an example of program similarities across provincial boundaries and already well-established in educational development practice. Perhaps to turn it into *de jure* recognition would be to limit its creative flexibility (Victoria experimented with an International Course Design process, for example), but it ought not to be ignored in any account of faculty development in Canada.

Others

CSTD (Canadian Society for Training and Development) offers accreditation for members who have completed their program or programs that they recognize. These include adult education programs offered by Canadian colleges and universities. "Students enrolled in these programs are eligible for student membership with CSTD and graduates are given a credit of **one year** towards the work experience requirement of the certification, Certified Training and Development Professional™ (CTDP)." (<http://www.cstd.ca/?page=RecognizedPrograms>).

While we do not have an evidence-based understanding of the motivation for seeking particular forms or sources of recognition yet (though we eagerly anticipate pursuing such a line of inquiry), our experience in designing, delivering and evaluating these programs suggests that our constituents perceive value in formally recognized programs. Indeed one

distinction we draw in the delivery of these recognized programs is that for some instructors in the Canadian higher education context these programs are mandatory, while for others they remain an optional exercise in professional development.

The advantages of program or course accreditation

Key Benefits

1. Development of consistent, high quality programming across Canada while maintaining flexibility to meet institutional and geographical contexts
2. Profile and visibility for educational development and EDC in Canadian Higher Education
3. Institutional profile in support of excellence in teaching and learning
4. Enhance student learning by enhancing the professional development of teaching
5. Provide early career and T&P faculty with Canada-wide recognized credential, which may eventually have a positive impact on hiring/T&P
6. Overview of teaching expectations for public/participants/employers
7. An opportunity for educational developers and our Centres to get feedback on our work, drive change, and raise the profile of teaching / learning
8. Allow for collection of impact data within and across institutions
9. Accreditation cycles could help us to assess the quality, and possibly impact, of a significant portion of our work both locally and in the service of potential SoTL research
10. Mapped appropriately to existing professional accreditation systems, an EDC system could increase visibility and add uptake for development activities

An accreditation process provides educational development courses/programs with regulation by a professional body (e.g. SEDA as the UK equivalent of EDC). Such a process could enable EDC to take a leadership role in ensuring development programming of a consistently high quality across Canadian institutions. Such a role would enhance the profile and visibility of educational development as a profession and EDC as a professional body. It could also provide consistency in the accrediting process across Canada if adopted by all. If EDC does not undertake this role, and the need is agreed, then another body (or bodies) will do so. For example, in the US, the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy noted that due to “a lack of outcomes-orientated faculty-development programs in colleges and schools of pharmacy” that it may make sense for them to “endorse” faculty development programs and work to develop a best-practices model “toward the creation of the optimal faculty development program” whose outcomes could be evaluated on a regular basis. (Guglielmo et al., 2011) Alternatively, EDC could map criteria onto or in connection with other professional bodies’ accreditation processes for teaching such as CSTD. Other associations and accrediting bodies might also consider taking on such a role. Interestingly, Ann E. Austin and Mary Deane Sorcinelli in their recent discussion of the future of faculty development (2013), did not include any discussion of accreditation of faculty development programs, despite pointing to the necessity for expansion of faculty development programs, the growing institutional leadership role for Centres, and the growing professionalization of the field of educational development. As their article was based on a survey of 494 developers at 300 higher education institutions in the US and 31 in Canada who did not

seem to view program accreditation as a future direction for faculty development, this should give us pause for thought. Alternatively it could be argued that the lack of an accreditation system may reflect something about the current infrastructure. In Canada in particular the provincial oversight of education leads to smaller groups and resources, which make a wide-scale system harder to implement than when education is managed at a national level.

At the same time, in his discussion of how quality teaching “transforms students’ perceptions of their world”, Biggs also argues that it “transforms teachers’ conceptions of their role as teacher”. In the context of ‘quality enhancement’, he believes staff development should play an institutional role rather than only focusing on the individual teacher. (p.222) Thus, thinking about the advantages of accreditation we need to consider the impact of such a process on faculty and future faculty’s teaching, the impact on student learning, and the impact on educational developers’ practice. It has been argued that faculty and graduate student development programs, that introduce ‘best practices’ in teaching and learning can enhance their students’ learning experience, engagement and ultimately academic success. Ideally, accrediting such programs would further enhance them via a peer review process and, in turn, play an important role in supporting learners in higher education. In this way, faculty development programs should be making “strategic contributions” to institutions that are increasingly emphasizing retention and the importance of the student experience. (Holt, Palmer and Challis, 2011)

While an accrediting body could draw upon the literature to establish professional standards from which courses/programs would be reviewed and accredited, it may be preferable to establish a broad and flexible framework or guidelines. Generally speaking there are key aspects of quality teaching and learning that members of EDC could likely agree upon and that subsequently course/program participants would recognize as valuable regardless of varying contexts and needs. Already existing frameworks, such as the TA Competencies Framework created by TAGSA to frame the skills and development needed for Teaching Assistants (as opposed to future faculty) is one example. Yet institutional and geographical context and disciplinary differences may be relevant considerations, so any accreditation framework that was established would need to allow for a specific institution to be able to mold and adapt foundational guidelines to the needs of their particular contexts. Ideally, an accreditation process would also balance the need for consistency via a general framework while providing space for course/program participants to take risks and engage in innovative teaching and learning approaches that they would then integrate into undergraduate and graduate education.

Accredited programs can provide course/program participants with clear credentials that are recognizable by and easily transferable to other institutions. Thus, accreditation is useful in job searches and in tenure and promotion processes where the participant can point to a course/program as accredited and therefore as being a credible and valid course of study. Similarly it may enhance participants’ employment opportunities when an accredited program has been completed implying that a certain level of recognized achievement has been reached. This could result in more efficient use of resources in the receiving institution as someone with such a certificate would not be required to repeat the experience. Accreditation can also outline what participants, employers, and society more broadly, can expect from a teaching professional in higher education.

Accreditation provides educational developers themselves with opportunities to give and receive peer-review of courses/programs cross-institutionally to enhance program creation, development and review, and ensures that programs/courses continue to be timely and relevant. Ideally, such a peer review process should stimulate innovation through conversation, allow for shared ideas and implementation thereof, and provide qualitative peer review that provides feedback in context. Moreover, it should enable educational development collaborations across institutions.

The accreditation process would result in the need to provide data that would establish that such courses/programs were creating and supporting the teaching development of faculty over time. Accreditation reviews do raise questions about how the 'success' of faculty development programs would be measured in terms of the impact on the professional development of educators and the subsequent impact on student learning. What data will be considered useful and how will it be analyzed? Certainly, educational developers will need to continue building habits of and capacity for collecting and analyzing data about their courses/programs.

The disadvantages of program or course accreditation

Key disadvantages and challenges:

1. Uncertainty about the perceived and/or real need for accreditation of programs
2. Uneven resourcing of institutions and teaching and learning centres that may impact ability to staff and fund accreditation process and accredited programs.
3. Risk of stifling program creativity, innovation or local specificity in an effort to align with or conform to accreditation requirements.
4. Risk of counting and measuring more than simply doing our work, and all that this entails for local centres as well as for our national executive
5. Ethical challenges of ensuring equity and transparency of accreditation processes within a relatively small educational development community
6. Changes to the nature of EDC's core mission and aims, for better or for worse

Impetus, Influence and Value

In considering whether to pursue accreditation of teaching development programs, one of the first questions to consider is: what motivates the accreditation of these programs? Without good evidence to suggest that higher education instructors themselves are asking for accredited teaching development programs; or, as pointed out in the previous section, that those designing and delivering these programs do not reference accreditation in projected trends in educational development, we hypothesize a link between the impetus for accreditation of teaching development program and the wider culture of accreditation, quality assurance and accountability. While this cultural impetus is not, on its own, a disadvantage or challenge for pursuing accredited teaching development programs, the absence of demand from the users and producers of teaching development programs prompts us to ask whether the cultural pressure to accredit is sufficient motivation for doing so. In this discussion we need to ensure that all parties are heard, not just the developers who produce the programs or the teachers who are their targets, others with a vested interest may include, among others, students, administrators, professional bodies and the general public.

Linked to the absence of evidence of widespread demand for accreditation from teaching development program users is an absence of evidence of the impact or value of accreditation *sine qua non* on hiring, tenure or promotion decisions. That is to say, if one of the benefits of accredited programs is thought to be the likelihood of accreditation itself shaping hiring and promotion practices (and not the learning outcomes of the teaching development program), there ought to be some certainty that accredited programs are, in fact, viewed more favourably in Canada and abroad than non-accredited programs by hiring and tenure committees. However this is a difficult argument to prove or disprove unless and until there are a significant number of accredited programs.

Similarly, in addition to not knowing whether users of these programs want accredited programs, we do not know whether, or to what extent, users of these programs value institutionally recognized programs or the content of the programs themselves. With diverse anecdotal information about the perceived value for participants and the perceived value from hiring and promotion committees, value differs depending on context.

“Value” in this instance is intended to encompass both perceived worth - are accredited programs viewed by users as more beneficial or more trustworthy than non-accredited programs? - and accepted cost - what will the resource burden of accreditation be; and, are users and institutions willing to pay? Although it is worth remembering that individual users are not usually asked to pay for development opportunities at most Canadian universities currently so it may be reasonable to assume that any accreditation costs would be absorbed by the institution along with delivery costs.

Context, Resources and Diversity

Resources and cost emerges as one of the most troublesome disadvantages of accreditation. One concern we have is that accreditation could unfairly disadvantage teaching and learning centres without the financial or human resources to pursue accreditation. However this could be addressed within the accreditation process whereby institutional size could be a factor in the pricing system.

Across Canada higher education institutions receive provincial funding, in addition to revenue generated through tuition, donors, research funding and other sources. Significant disparity both between provincial funding schemes and within provincial contexts means that access to financial resources at each institution differs. Where different institutions choose to prioritize their funding - a prioritization that can shift depending on administration and leadership - can impact the resourcing of teaching and learning centres. The particular leadership and strategic directions of a specific teaching and learning centre adds further complexity to this funding and resource landscape. In short: just as the financial costs of accreditation are unknown, so too is the availability and prioritization of financial resources for accredited programs (or teaching and learning centres at all).

Compounding the differences in allocation of financial resources, is the difference in human resources among institutions. While many institutions have established teaching and learning centres with dedicated staff and rich histories of robust programming, many other institutions do not. Moreover the documented trend in the frequent restructuring of teaching and learning centres means that programming direction is subject to unpredictable change.

(Grabove et al, 2012). Those centres without these financial and human resources risk designing and delivering programs that are not valued - in both senses of the word - because they cannot resource accreditation. A nationally agreed accreditation process could help to support the need for centres and thus help secure their position; EDC would need to consider how to equitably support and recognize institutions with diverse resource availability.

A related challenge in the resourcing of accredited programs is the temptation to shape programming decisions based on the likelihood or possibility of receiving accreditation. While the guidelines for accreditation may be flexible and may account for local contextual factors, accreditation processes nevertheless put strictures around what can be imagined in a programs design, delivery, evaluation and learning experience. In an effort to achieve accredited recognition, we risk foreclosing creative and innovative programs because they do not immediately or easily fit the determined criteria; or, we risk unduly shaping programming to meet established standards and expectations from the beginning of the design process.

Potential conflicts of interest and ethical dilemmas

Should EDC take it upon itself to be an arbiter of program quality, review, and accreditation, we may open ourselves up to ethical dilemmas in which we are called upon to support actions in conflict with our stated values and communities. Conflicts could easily arise if an institution (by way of a VP or Dean) not well-disposed to its teaching centre “called us in” as EDC to “help” said teaching centre, against the will of the Director or staff. How do we know that invitations to review or accredit a program are actually driven by the best intentions rather than more nefarious ones? That said this has never arisen in the case of SEDA accreditation.

Too, the pool of accreditors would surely be small enough in a national setting as small as Canada’s, that we would often find ourselves in positions of potential conflict of interest, working on accrediting programs mounted by close colleagues. Definitions of arm’s length rather like those in discipline program reviews would need to be developed, and may in fact be unworkable in a relatively tight-knit community of practice like EDC’s. However this has not been the experience in the UK with the SEDA scheme. While the sector is larger there than here in Canada and managed at a national level, the educational developer community is, if anything, closer-knit than here, and yet there have been no reports of concern over conflicts of interest.

Accreditation of teaching development programs undoubtedly offers opportunities and challenges. Our task may be to both weigh these opportunities and challenges and to determine how we are collectively and individually prepared and able to proceed.

Potential Aspects of a Canadian Accreditation Process

Accreditation frameworks vary from discipline to discipline. In general, there are several common elements in program accreditation (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK43596/>):

- a national organization

- an application process
- threshold criteria or standards
- a process of self-evaluation
- an external evaluation process
- an appeals process
- a repetition of the self and external evaluation processes

One accreditation model which may serve as a useful comparison for the accreditation of educational development programs is that of Education programs at Colleges and Universities. For example, the Ontario College of Teachers accredits teacher education programs in Ontario at 18 post-secondary institutions; they also accredit numerous “Additional Qualification” courses that teachers take to develop professionally for specific teaching experiences. In many ways, Educational Development Programming offered by Educational Development Centres could be seen as analogous within post-secondary to these programs and the process, standards, and criteria could provide a starting point for the development of an EDC Accreditation process.

Additional Qualification programs are reviewed every five years for criteria that include (<http://www.oct.ca/public/accreditation/in-service>):

- the application of theory in practice
- the appropriateness of the program's format and structure
- methods for assessing candidate achievement
- the qualifications of educators teaching the program
- the learning materials for the program
- the governance and accountability structures of the provider
- the commitment of the provider to continuous improvement and quality assurance

For post-secondary teacher-education programs in Ontario, accreditation involves meeting numerous requirements designed to ensure an accepted level of quality. Examples of full accreditation reports can be found on the website: http://www.oct.ca/-/media/PDF/Accreditation%20Decisions/2013_10_13_Nipissing_Decision_EN.pdf).

Another existing model that EDC might draw upon to establish an accreditation framework is the *Framework for Teaching Assistant (TA) Competency Development* that outlines areas for improvement of TA knowledge, skills, and abilities once appointed and during their work terms. This is not an accreditation scheme, rather it sets out a framework against which providers may choose to map their courses.

An EDC led system could offer a framework similar to this TA model, or a far more structured accreditation process similar to the SEDA model. If the decision is made to follow the latter model, then EDC would need to consider the management of the scheme. For example would the process include a site visit, who from EDC would be involved in accrediting a program, how would these decisions impact on the costs of accreditation, and who would bear these costs?

Perhaps the best fit would be a stratified approach that offered multiple forms of support ranging from feedback on programs to full accreditation.

Is the EDC the right body to handle an accreditation program?

In historical and practical ways, it makes perfect sense for our community of practice to organize and sustain a credible and quasi-professional accreditation system for the programming that our members, largely, deliver. We find compelling the suggestion that if we don't come up with a way to accredit educational development programs, some other body invariably will, and may attempt to accredit *or discredit* such programming with perhaps something other than the theory and practice of educational development in mind. Such a danger may explain why some of our institutions have already looked abroad to fill a need with, simultaneously, the rigour and supportive ethic of care to which educational development aspires (SEDA accreditation). Many feel that a homegrown, equally robust model would be preferable to seeking approval overseas. We also find that there is no particular reason we must create a model or framework that assumes a regulatory role in recognition or accreditation; it may well turn out that the EDC model of collaboration and community "certifies" programs more as a supportive feedback exercise than as a rigid approval process.

Also, a clear and transparent statement of elements of quality programming for faculty, instructional staff, graduate students and other TAs, and postdoctoral fellows would serve many purposes. It could help newer centres to form programs, older centres to think strategically about what to keep doing and why, and our various stakeholders on campus and beyond to understand how teaching development can be a positive force for enhancing learning.

Apart from the advantages and disadvantages raised herein, the Executive and Membership need to collectively consider the issues. We anticipate that conversations outside the scope of this discussion paper but parallel to any work on accreditation frameworks could include:

- Whether EDC would need to formalize the professionalization of educational developers.
- If so, how. For example, through professional accreditation of our own learning and development, or some kind of designation / credential.
- Changes may be needed to our current *governance structures* to admit such a novel development, shepherd it, and oversee it.
- Changes may be needed to our *current resourcing* -- secretariat support, income from STLHE and from individual memberships and conferences, administration of income from accreditation functions and human resources.
- Changes may need to be made to our *Mission and Aims* (see Appendix C) in order to acknowledge this changing role.
- Technologies exist or are just now emerging that could assist us in this and other projects as a nationally healthy but often locally often underfunded group. For example, might we consider "microcredentialling" or "badging" as a means to several ends?

We do not presume to comment on how to handle these parallel conversations, but we are aware of their inter-implicated nature with the question at hand. Overall, for us, accreditation of educational development programs seems feasible should the will be present among members and we proceed with appropriate caution.

Discussion points for EDC audience:

- Do you believe that some form of accreditation is needed in Canada for ED programming?
- Would you (and/or your institution or Centre) prefer a system of peer feedback or a more formal pan-Canadian accreditation/recognition system?
- What challenges would accreditation face in the Canadian context?
- How might accreditation change the nature of EDC for you?
- Would this be a positive or negative change?
- Are ED practitioners a self-regulating body that has the mandate, or even the right, to undertake program accreditation on behalf of members? If not:
 - a) how would we move in that direction? and
 - b) who would authorize us to do so?
- Who would pay, and how much?
- How ought the Executive to manage creating and sustaining some model of an accreditation framework, whether for peer feedback or more formal pan-Canadian recognition?

Next Steps

This report will be circulated to EDC members before the 2015 EDC conference. Participants have the opportunity to contribute to the discussion in person at our session on Thursday, February 12, 2015. Those who cannot attend in person will be able to make comments electronically beforehand using a web form created for this purpose see https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1tKJUp5VHlgE97xtU049emUuyDZALAFYC9aDtWBGgdyw/viewform?usp=send_form We will forward this report and feedback obtained both electronically and at the conference session to the EDC Executive for further action.

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Appendix A: Sampling of Post-Secondary Institutions Worldwide with ED Programs (by Province, West to East)

- **Note:** This table is intended to give a short environmental scan of the types of programs offered in Canada and beyond. It is not intended to be exhaustive and information may have changed since the table was created.

Canada	Internal/External Recognition
British Columbia	
<p>Vancouver Community College</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC Provincial Instructor Diploma <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognized by Ministry • Total Hours: 315-350 • Courses and Capstone • Diploma in Adult Education • Certificate in Online Instruction • http://instructordiploma.com/programs/bc-instructor-diploma/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>External: Ministry recognized, required for employment at some BC post secondary institutions.</u>
<p>Thomson Rivers University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomson Rivers University uses the VCC Programs. • http://www.tru.ca/ctl/support/workshops/instructor_education.html 	
<p>UBC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various Programs • http://ctl.ubc.ca/programs/faculty-programs/teaching-practitioner/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISW: External • Others: Internal
Alberta	
<p>Red Deer College</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-Secondary Teaching Certificate • 3 Year Program • Module Based with Capstone Program • http://ctrlrc.ca/teaching-development/etal/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal: Career Development Certificate through Continuing Education so yearly renewal and approval by Deans' Council.
<p>Lethbridge College, Educational Enhancement Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor Certification Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 Course Certificate including ISW in one course • http://goo.gl/6dXqBv 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Internal: required for employment</u>
<p>NAIT, Scholarship of Teaching & Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming a Master Instructor (BMI 1, 2, and 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal and offered to

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BMI 1: overview of adult learning principles, practice teaching sessions, critical reflection, enhanced teaching competencies “participants will examine strategies that support a dynamic and inclusive student-centred learning community, the design of assessment tools for a variety of outcomes and learners, and the embedding of scholarly practice in their teaching.” http://www.nait.ca/39248.htm 	<p>external clients as a non-credit certificate.</p>
<p>University of Calgary, Centre for Teaching and Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University Teaching Certificate (for Grad Students) University Teaching Certificate for Faculty http://ucalgary.ca/taylorinstitute/edu/programs <p>Note: These two programs are no longer listed on the website. ISW is listed with consultations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal ISW is externally recognized
<p>Mount Royal University, Academic Development Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Faculty Support Program and a Contract Faculty Support Program “Classroom Communication Course” (6 classes in course) http://goo.gl/h8vo5n 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Internal</u>
<p>Saskatchewan</p>	
<p>University of Saskatchewan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Gwenna Moss Teaching and Learning Centre</u> Several programs aimed at Faculty and Graduate Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Faculty programs: internal recognition</u> Graduate Student programs and courses: appear on transcripts
<p>Manitoba</p>	
<p>Red River College (Manitoba)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Certificate in Adult Education (acknowledged by provincial Minister)</u> <u>Description: “The Certificate in Adult Education (CAE) program is designed to develop skills for teaching adults in an applied or technical-vocational college setting. A successful college education depends on the competence of the institution's faculty, subject area expertise, as well as knowledge and skills related to teaching and learning. Both skill sets enhance the effectiveness of college and adult educators as well as adult technical-vocational education. Upon successful completion of all CAE course work and a practicum (200 hours of experience teaching in adult programs and the presentation of a professional portfolio) two parchments are awarded: 1) Certificate in Adult Education from Red River College, and 2) Certificate of acknowledgement from the Minister of Advanced Education and Literacy.”</u> http://goo.gl/Vx6oBk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Credit Certificate Required for employment (varying) at Assiniboine Community College, Red River College, and University College of the North

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation agreement with the University of Winnipeg
<p>Ontario: <i>Note: Numerous Ontario institutions have introduced the Instructional Skills Workshop program as part of (or in addition to) internally offered programming.</i></p>	
<p>Carleton</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Certificate Programs for Faculty and Grad Students • Certificate in Blended and Online Teaching • Certificate in University Teaching (10 sessions) • http://carleton.ca/edc/programs/certificates/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal
<p>Sheridan College</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Foundations of Teaching and Learning: shorter, blended, weekend program for part-time/sessional faculty ○ Teaching and Learning Academy 1, 2, and 3: for permanent faculty (tenure track). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal • Many Ontario Colleges appear to have similar programs as part of employment standards
<p>Windsor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.uwindsor.ca/ctl/utc • Teaching Certificate Program for Grad Students and Faculty (accredited by SEDA in the UK) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEDA
<p>University of Waterloo, Centre for Teaching Excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/support-new-faculty • New Faculty Support Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required for Engineering and Applied Health Sciences; optional for other faculties. • Internal program
<p>University of Guelph</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EnLite program for faculty • Graduate certificate in the scholarship of teaching and learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEDA
<p>Quebec</p>	
<p>Concordia University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate Seminar in University Teaching • http://www.concordia.ca/students/graduate/workshops.html 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Graduate Students • Results in Certificate (internal)
<p>Atlantic Canada (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, PEI)</p>	
<p>Dalhousie University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate in University Teaching and Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Doctoral

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.dal.ca/dept/ct/services/CUTL.html 	<p>students and Post-Doctoral Fellows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Newfoundland	
<p>Memorial University (Newfoundland)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs in Post-Secondary Studies through Faculty of Education • http://www.mun.ca/educ/grad/postsec.php 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credit programs (not necessarily to be included in this list since this is not a program hosted by an ED)
Non-Canadian Programs (Australia, UK, USA)	
<p>Canberra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.canberra.edu.au/tlc/programs/intro-tertiary-teaching • Tertiary Teaching Certificate Programs for Grad Students and 1 for New Faculty with less than 2 years teaching experience 	
<p>Melbourne, Teaching Certificate for Faculty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://cshe.unimelb.edu.au/prof_dev/uni_teachers/mtc/ • “The Melbourne Teaching Certificate (MTC) is a professional development program for University of Melbourne staff with teaching responsibilities. It is a cohort-based program completed across one semester comprising two face-to-face seminars, a short written assignment, and peer review of teaching activities.” 	
<p>Cardiff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/pcutl • Postgraduate Certificate in University Teaching and Learning • 4 Modules completed over a period of 5 years 	
<p>University of Nottingham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/teaching/teaching/enhancement/pgche.aspx/ 	
<p>University of Western Australia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.education.uwa.edu.au/courses/postgraduate/Gradcerttertiary • 4 Modules • EDUC8708 Digital Technologies in Education • EDUC8736 Assessment, Measurement and Learning 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDUC8760 Education Studies • EDUC8709 Pedagogy in Tertiary Teaching 	
<p>University of Southern Queensland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.usq.edu.au/handbook/2012/edu/PGTT.html • Postgraduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning (PGTT) • http://www.usq.edu.au/handbook/2012/edu/PGTT.html#programprogram.structure • 1 Year Full Time • 3 Years Part Time 	
<p>Minnesota State University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CETL has a year-long program for faculty: Faculty Teaching Certificate Program • Certificate presented by President of University. • Small groups of 6-10 based on faculty availability. • Complete 7 out of 8 available modules • Capstone Project presented to cohort and Dean • 50% of faculty completed program within 5 years. • http://www.mnsu.edu/cetl/programs/ 	
<p>Brown University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://brown.edu/Administration/Sheridan_Center/ • UTC for Faculty, Grad Students, and Fellows • Certificate I (Sheridan Teaching Seminar): This program introduces participants to the basic elements of a reflective teaching practice. • Certificate II (Classroom Tools Seminar): This program gives participants the opportunity to explore a variety of pedagogical topics and consider them in the context of a single course of their own design. • 4 Certificates total (each designed to take 1 year with no more than 2 per year recommended) 	

Appendix B: EDC Mission and Aims

[\(http://www.stlhe.ca/constituencies/educational-developers-caucus/about-the-edc/\)](http://www.stlhe.ca/constituencies/educational-developers-caucus/about-the-edc/)

The Caucus defines itself as a community of practice with a mission to work within the aims and structure of the STLHE to facilitate the advancement and evolution of educational development as a field of practice and scholarship by communications, networking, professional development opportunities and advocacy strategies.

Aims

- To strengthen the position of STLHE as the professional/academic organization of choice for educational developers, and particularly for those practicing in Canada.
- To pursue the aims of STLHE with particular attention to their application in educational development contexts.
- To provide leadership in the professionalization of the educational development role.
- To foster the advancement and evolution of educational development as a field of practice and scholarship.
- To create a national forum where emerging and problematic educational development issues can be candidly discussed.
- To create a collegial network within which information, strategies, and resources can be shared.
- To facilitate communication among educational developers who are members of STLHE.
- To provide professional development opportunities for experienced, new and potential educational developers.
- To advocate, through STLHE, for educational development issues at a national level.