

Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

Number 41

Fall 2005

Measuring Student Learning and Teaching Excellence A view from Australia

John Dearn

Vice-President and Pro Vice-Chancellor
(Academic) at the University of Canberra

It is not often that higher education makes the front page of a national newspaper, but this is what happened recently in Australia. The occasion was the release of the first "official" ranking of Australia's universities in terms of their learning and teaching performance. Official in this case means the Australian Commonwealth Government – Australia's universities are almost all public and under the control of the government.

The ranking was derived by using seven indicators related to student satisfaction, student success and student outcomes based on nationally available data.

The ranking showed some highly regarded research intensive universities scoring poorly according to the particular indicators and methodology used to assess learning and teaching outcomes. In turn this has initiated a fascinating debate as to how excellence in learning and teaching should be measured and, indeed, whether it is possible to make such an assessment at all.

However, the ranking takes on extra significance because it will be used as the basis for distributing a large amount of Commonwealth Government funding to those universities that best demonstrate excellence in learning and teaching. This funding is aimed at raising the status of teaching in universities compared with research and is part of a major reform of higher education currently underway in Australia, driven by the Commonwealth Government.



Professor John Dearn is the immediate past president of the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA).

One effect of the current reform of higher education in Australia is greater attention being paid to learning and teaching in our universities. This can only be welcomed by those of us committed to improving learning, teaching, and scholarship in higher education but it does raise some interesting issues.

One issue is related to the effectiveness of faculty or academic staff development. Most universities allocate considerable resources to supporting learning and teaching. However,

questions are increasingly being asked about the effectiveness of this investment, the models of staff development and how the outcomes of faculty or academic staff development can be measured.

It is becoming clear that unless academic developers can provide evidence of their effectiveness in terms of improved student learning they will run the risk of being seen as ineffective in an environment of increasing accountability and funding pressure.

A related issue is our capacity to provide evidence of what students are actually learning. The learning and teaching performance fund initiative in Australia has been criticised on the basis that the indicators are all indirect and not actually measuring student learning outcomes. Finding better ways of assessing student learning outcomes in higher education remains a critical and urgent challenge.

The issues raised by the learning and teaching performance fund are not unique to Australia and represent a critical agenda for higher education worldwide. HERDSA, STLHE, POD and SEDA have an opportunity to play an important leadership role in shaping this debate.



This article is the first in a series of international articles. In the spirit of collaboration, the presidents of STLHE, POD and HERDSA will contribute articles for each other's newsletters on a regular basis. Since this Fall issue celebrates excellence in teaching, it is a perfect place to begin an international collaboration.

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Electronic Discussion: STLHE Forum

The STLHE electronic mail forum has been active since October 1988, to support the exchange of opinions, ideas and experiences concerning teaching and learning in higher education.

To subscribe, contact the list coordinator, Russ Hunt, e-mail: hunt@stu.ca or visit the STLHE website at www.stlhe.ca. See Communication.

Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Number 41, Fall 2005

Newsletter of the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE/SAPES)

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Fall Newsletter: Celebrating Teaching Excellence

Once again, the STLHE is the proud sponsor of three unique national awards that celebrate and recognize excellence in teaching, leadership, collaboration and achievement. The winners for the 2005 3M Teaching Fellowships and the Alan Blizzard Award are profiled in this Newsletter. The Calls for nomination include the 3M Teaching Fellowships, Alan Blizzard Award and the Chris Knapper Life time Achievement Award.

This year, the examination of excellence extends beyond national recognition, to international collaboration. The presidents of **STLHE** (Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education), **POD** (Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education, www.podnetwork.org/) and **HERDSA** (Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia, www.herdsa.org.au/) have agreed to contribute articles for each other's newsletters on a regular basis.

If you have any items for Recent Publications or any other suggestions regarding the STLHE Newsletter, please contact the Editor.

Recent Publications by STLHE Members:

Jenkins, H., Ferrier, B. & Ross, M. (Eds.). (2004). *Combining Two Cultures: McMaster University's Arts and Science Programme: A Case Study*. University Press of America.

Lerch, M. (Ed). (2005) *Making a Difference: A Celebration of the 3M Teaching Fellowship*. Published by the Council of 3M Teaching Fellows and STLHE.

Van Gyn, G., Ford, C. & Associates. (2005). *Teaching for Critical Thinking*, Green Guide No.6. Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education / La société pour l'avancement de la pédagogie dans l'enseignement supérieur. (in press)

STLHE Green Guides Series



Green Guides are short handbooks that offer pragmatic advice on a wide variety of teaching and learning issues, with the aim of encouraging reflection on current practice and enhanced effectiveness. For details: www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/publications/green.guides.htm

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Leading from Your Strengths Institutional Identity and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning¹

Richard Gale

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

In 1999, Carnegie Foundation President Lee Shulman referred to the future of campus support for the scholarship of teaching and learning as “visions of the possible,” and addressed directly the role of the research university in making those visions a reality. He challenged all institutions of higher learning to create a new role for teaching academies as interdisciplinary centers, to give greater attention to all four scholarships (and especially teaching) in the preparation of graduate students, to pay closer attention to the use of technology, and to distribute the leadership for such changes so that all campuses could become leaders for the future. And in closing, he posed an important challenge to institutions, especially those for whom research is considered paramount.

What it means to be a research university is that everything is a proper subject of investigation, and that there can be no political correctness that makes certain kinds of questions out of bounds. [The University of Chicago's first president Rainey] Harper held a vision of the research university as an institution that did not limit the objects of investigation to those matters outside of itself. Indeed, it was critical that a research university treat itself as a proper subject for investigation and its own work as an ongoing experiment for such investigation. The university must be constantly and critically asking about its own work, its own efficacy, its own role, vis-a-vis its students, its community and its society. This vision of the university is also the vision behind the scholarship of teaching and learning. We can hardly be a moral community with mission statements that talk about the central place of teaching and learning if we are not also places that investigate those processes and place them at the center of the scholarship in which we properly take such pride.²

Of all the myriad ways to study classroom teaching and student learning, one of the most powerful is captured in today's movement for a scholarship of teaching and learning, which invites faculty to examine their own classroom practice, document what works, and share lessons learned for others

to build on. Yet developing new approaches to scholarship requires new levels of awareness, engagement, scaffolding, and leadership; it requires an understanding of broader institutional contexts, campus cultures, and community identities; it asks faculty and administrative leaders to think creatively about ongoing initiatives, distinctive structures, and instinctive approaches to collaboration. It asks that you lead from your strengths.

Methods to Foster the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
Campuses have fostered support for the scholarship of teaching and learning through a variety of structures. Undergraduate research initiatives are fertile ground for commitment to the teaching that encourages understanding. Regular campus dialogues structured around shared texts or questions can serve as an early entrée into this kind of scholarship. The ongoing review and revision of departmental criteria for excellence offers an opportunity for like-minded colleagues to situate areas of interest within a disciplinary framework.

Likewise, establishing faculty mentoring programs and formal peer review can open new insights into new scholarship.³ This last example has been particularly important at institutions as diverse as Georgetown University and Middlesex Community College.

Many of the most successful instances of campus support have capitalized on allied initiatives, building the scholarship of teaching and learning into pre-existing institutional agendas already supported by faculty and proven to address the needs of students. Consider Howard University in Washington DC, where a long and distinguished history of preparing future faculty through attention to graduate student teaching was made even more significant through formal instruction and participation in the scholarship of teaching and learning. Likewise, the University of Wisconsin System had for many

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(Picture courtesy of McMaster University)

¹ This essay draws on presentations made during “Leadership for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: A National Symposium of University and College Administrators,” held at the University of Toronto Scarborough Campus on April 22, 2005.

² www.carnegiefoundation.org/elibrary/docs/Visons.htm.

³ A brochure highlighting “Leadership for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning” can be downloaded at: www.carnegiefoundation.org/CASTL/highered/docs/CarnegieCASTLBrochure2003.pdf.

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Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
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years awarded distinguished teaching through their scholars/fellows program, but in recent years shifted the emphasis from scholarly teaching to the scholarship of teaching and learning and in so doing provided a valued entrée for classroom inquiry. A similar story is told at Malaspina University College, where a strong faculty development program has been re-tooled to encourage more scholarly approaches to evidence of student learning.

Another approach to building capacity for the scholarship of teaching and learning is the initiation of collective inquiry around common concerns (perhaps beginning as campus dialogues, mentioned above). These often fall into two categories: campus mission and shared, large scale or meta-questions. During times of change or challenge, when institutional identity is in flux, the scholarship of teaching and learning offers an opportunity to look more deeply at what, how, where, when, and why your students learn the way they do. Also, when a campus has larger aspirations with regard to growth and outreach, an investigation into student learning can often provide the impetus for re-definition.

Likewise, when an institution has come to be identified with a signature program, a cross-campus understanding of how and why students learn differently in different venues can prove fruitful. Another approach might be found in more specific yet far reaching questions of student learning. The University of Akron is committed to helping students learn how to be critical civic thinkers and turned to the scholarship of teaching and learning as a means to that end. The College of San Mateo is working through learning communities, and found a new way to access student growth in this context via new considerations of scholarship. For some institutions, the questions grow from a new way for students to engage with material (or vice versa), as with Royal Roads and their unique on-line/on-site hybrid courses.

No matter what the circumstances, how idiosyncratic or familiar the curriculum or the community, institutional commitment to the scholarship of teaching and learning must be linked to the work of students and teachers,



(Picture courtesy of McMaster University)

Institutional Identity and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

the realities on the ground. Furthermore, it must address three specific questions of context:

First is the issue of perception or potential.

What's already in place or in practice, and what is your vision of the possible?

Second, there are questions about colleagues and constituencies. Who are your allies and who are your audiences?

Third is the consideration of motivation and momentum. How are ideas generated, and how is work sustained?

Leadership for a scholarship of teaching and learning does not come without thoughtful consideration and concerted effort, but it does make sense within the ways and means of the modern university. Indeed, in some cases it is a logical outgrowth of both institutional origins and ongoing commitments, identity and strengths.

In her welcome on the University of Manitoba website, President and Vice-Chancellor Dr. Emöke J.E. Szathmáry reaffirmed that “[w]hat has remained constant since our founding is our University’s commitment to facilitate learning and increase understanding.”⁴

What better description can there be of the modern university’s mission and value, what better opportunity for the scholarship of teaching and learning, and what better vision of the possible for student learning at the University of Manitoba and throughout Canada.

Resources on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning can be found at:

- The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching at www.carnegiefoundation.org/index.htm
- The Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) at www.carnegiefoundation.org/CASTL/highered/index.htm
- CASTL Leadership Clusters at www.carnegiefoundation.org/CASTL/highered/clusters.htm
- Knowledge Media Laboratory (KML) at www.carnegiefoundation.org/KML/index.htm
- Carnegie Foundation Resources available from www.carnegiefoundation.org/elibrary/index.htm
- www.carnegiefoundation.org/CASTL/highered/resources.htm

For a more extensive list of resources see the UTS newsletter:

www.umanitoba.ca/academic_support/uts/resources/newsletters/October2005.pdf

⁴umanitoba.ca/admin/president/5
www.carnegiefoundation.org/aboutus/staff/gale.htm

Transforming Learning in Science Education Through PBL

Can it work?

Yves Mauffette

Université du Québec à Montréal

Ever increasing amounts of information, specialized training and constantly changing technology challenge educators. These changes have created pressure to re-examine what scientists do and therefore what is expected of science education. This has led several institutions to evaluate their science programmes and to reorganize curriculum by developing new pedagogical approaches (McNeal & D'Avanzo, 1997). Our educational approaches must be revised not to teach an everlasting compilation of facts in an authoritative framework of thinking but to promote scientific reasoning (Cowdroy & Mauffette, 1999).

These concerns prompted faculty to question our present educational approach, such as the content-laden lectures, and to seek alternative methods. Problem-based learning (PBL) has been introduced into various professional university-level programmes throughout the world (Kingsland, 1995; Marinissen & de Graaff, 1994; Schmidt, 1983). It emphasizes understanding, learning how to learn and critical thinking skills. Some (Gallagher *et al.*, 1995), have stressed the importance of using PBL to promote scientific reasoning. Duch and colleagues have clearly demonstrated the use and value of PBL in science for a diversity of science classes at the University of Delaware (Allen & Duch 1998; Duch *et al.*, 2001). Thus, because PBL addressed many of our concerns and to overcome some of the educational shortcomings of our present teaching of science, we developed a PBL programme in biology at the University of Quebec at Montreal (UQAM).

A Change

A committee in our biology department devised a curriculum based on PBL to promote the desired objectives (e.g. autonomy, sense of responsibility, and social implication) and enhance integration within the different fields of biology throughout the programme. Another critical issue was for students to master and to apply the scientific method. Poliquin and Mauffette (1997)

demonstrated the parallel that can be drawn between the procedure followed during PBL group sessions and application of the scientific method. Therefore, the pedagogical format used to acquire specific knowledge also becomes an apprenticeship of the scientific method, but carries on at the same time as the programme objectives.

Since the Implementation

The new PBL programme started in 1996 and the first cohort of students graduated from the programme in the spring of 1999. A total of about 300 students have graduated within this programme. First semester students are often very enthusiastic although somewhat destabilized by the approach, and it is towards the end of the semester that they gain confidence in their abilities and realize they can learn by themselves. We also find that students lack motivation during their second year. The novelty of the method may have worn off and fatigue may occur because the PBL method requires the students to constantly pace their learning.

In the third year we diversify the students' learning activities. Students experience intensive lab sessions or fieldwork ranging from six to eight weeks. However the major shift is within the tutoring process itself. The problems are much more research-oriented, with specific learning objectives that also lead to more open questions. The learning objectives that students seek out are more multidisciplinary in nature and have multidimensional elements that contribute to understanding the problem rather than solving it. Over time we have noticed that the quality of the problems play a key role in the learning process of the students (Mauffette *et al.*, 2004).

The Question

Departmental and external colleagues have expressed doubts and concerns regarding the content coverage for each discipline for this new programme. However, a recent study has argued that students in PBL programmes gained slightly less knowledge but

remembered more of the acquired knowledge (Dochy *et al.* 2003). It is also important to recognize that students acquire novel skills (e.g. working in groups) valued by future employers. The first cohort of students that completed the programme was very satisfied: 90% said they would do a PBL programme again and were satisfied with the relevance of the programme objectives and the extent to which the programme served those objectives (Leckman *et al.* 1999).

Overall, our experience strongly suggests that the PBL method does provide a platform for students to acquire the basic knowledge required for a scientist, and at the same time develops the thought process used by science majors.

Hence to our initial question: can PBL work in science education? Yes, but we did not discuss making the change and that is another story.

References on page 6



Yves Mauffette, 2004 3M Teaching Fellowship award winner.

Transforming Learning in Science Education Through Problem Based Learning *continued from page 5*



Workshop on Problem Based Learning for Faculty at the University of Wisconsin www.wisc.edu/cbe/workshops/cbl/photos_mauffette.html

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Skill Development with Students and Explicit Integration Across the Curriculum

Abstract from the Winners of the 2005 Alan Blizzard Award

Sponsored by: McGraw-Hill Ryerson - Higher Education Division, Coordinated by STLHE

Sheila Barrett, Julie Butler, Elizabeth Cates, Carl deLottinville, Delsworth Harnish, Manel Jordana, Erika Kustra, Jennifer Landicho, Annie Lee, Andrea McLellan, Jennifer McKinnell, Stash Nastos, Debbie Nifakis, Sean Park, Stacey Ritz, Margaret Secord, Henry Szechtman and Kristina Trim
McMaster University

How would an educational narrative unfold if we had specific and explicit goals to develop an entire programme for undergraduate students that promoted the ability to identify and solve problems, to think critically, to work in groups and to communicate more effectively? Here is an actual snapshot of how this story is being written in the BHSc Programme at McMaster, as conveyed in a letter from a BHSc student:

"I learned today that I was accepted into the McGill Bioethics Programme. An interesting situation considering they initially said I had to be from a professional programme. I guess I made quite an impression at the bioethics meeting. I seemed to be the only one asking questions at dinner. Looking back at my education in the McMaster BHSc Programme, I now see why my education was so different from my peers. The difference was that it was me who learned to define my needs and match them to opportunities.

It started in Inquiry IE06. My facilitator was Margaret Secord. What a live wire. I had no idea what was going on. She gave me a course outline and a time to meet but did not tell me what to do or give me any deadlines. She told

me that the course was focussed on skills. I would have to meet with Margaret four times over the year to discuss evidence supporting my ability to self-evaluate my skills and knowledge. I quickly learned that my ability to do this was much weaker than I thought. I would have to negotiate a mark based on a review of evidence. I could not even figure out what evidence she was talking about.

Our class was divided into groups of five and my group interviewed a standardized homeless person. The group was supposed to explore a question. What question? Margaret did not tell us and it took awhile to get going. In the end, we had answers to questions but that was not really what we learned. We learned to work with each other, to ask questions, to find answers, to think about the answers.

By the end of the year, I had a better understanding and I knew that I had grown in so many ways. I was not looking forward to lecture courses. Were there any more opportunities like this?

The rest was fun. I worked in groups in second year Inquiry and Cell Biology. I learned to learn, to know what was important and what was not. They used the same evaluation models and a great deal of reflection was required. In third year, I built my communication skills with Carl deLottinville and then went to South America to satisfy my learning objectives in a community clinic.

As I ran out of Inquiry courses, I asked for new ones so I could "get my learn on". I reinforced it all with my skill set as I went along and, from where I sit now, I can see that I am a much more mature learner than many students I know from other Faculties.

I think I will stay in school - my school."

The Alan Blizzard Award Call for Nominations

This award for collaborative projects that improve student learning will be conferred during the STLHE annual conference held at the University of Toronto, June 14-17, 2006. Download the application form at the following address:

www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/awards/alan.blizzard.award.htm

Submit all copies of the completed application by **January 13, 2006**, to the address below.

La Société pour l'avancement de la pédagogie dans l'enseignement supérieur (SAPES) est heureuse d'inviter les candidatures pour le Prix Alan Blizzard 2006.

Ce prix, qui récompense les projets en collaboration pour l'amélioration de l'apprentissage des étudiants, sera remis aux lauréats lors du congrès annuel de la SAPES qui aura lieu du 14 au 17 juin 2006 à l'Université de Toronto. Les formulaires sont déjà disponibles sur le web à l'adresse suivante: www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/awards/alan.blizzard.award.htm

Merci d'envoyer les dossiers de candidature, avant **le 13 janvier 2006**, à l'adresse suivante:

Aline Germain-Rutherford
(Alan Blizzard Award/Le Prix Alan Blizzard)
Centre for University Teaching
Université d'Ottawa
621 rue King Edward
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5



Alan Blizzard Award winners discovering PEI.

Introducing the 2005 3M Teaching Fellows

The 3M Teaching Fellowship Program celebrates excellence in teaching each year, as ten individuals are selected from outstanding nomination packages submitted from across Canada. The following brief descriptions highlight their leadership in teaching.



Anton Allahar

Department of Sociology
University of Western Ontario

The inaugural and only two-time winner of his University Student Council's Award of Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, Anton has also received the highest teaching honour that his university bestows. According to his students, he is: "absolutely great," "amazing," "incredible," "thought-provoking," "charismatic" - "an inspiration!"

Anton describes his philosophy of teaching as "critical, democratic and egalitarian. It deals with the dynamic tension between the individual and society, and highlights the need for individuals to be made aware of their social responsibilities."

Anton is a teacher with reach, who has made his influence for good teaching felt far beyond the bounds of his home institution. From St. Petersburg, Russia to Suva, Fiji to Kingston, Jamaica and Havana, Cuba as well as elsewhere in Canada, he has forged strategic partnerships in support of effective teaching with regards to sensitive and controversial issues, such as ethnicity, race, religion and nationality. At Western, he has played a leadership role in the drafting of his university's policies on race relations and sexual harassment.

He has been an ambassador for active, student-centered teaching practices with a focus on getting students to read, write, and think analytically. As a dedicated mentor of both students and colleagues, Anton has been described as a "teacher's teacher."



David Dunne

Joseph L. Rotman School of Management
University of Toronto

In a relatively short period of time, David Dunne has managed to build bridges and lead initiatives that are remarkable and transformative. The ground-breaking student agency project is one example where students translate theory into practice by producing ads for clients, including the Salvation Army and the Alzheimer Society. Students work with the Ontario College of Art and Design as well as with industry leaders - an integrative experience that has students lining up for more.

Students consistently remark on David's professionalism and the numerous ways in which he engages them. They also note his care and "respect for their time." David's numerous teaching excellence awards and curricular accomplishments are not only setting new standards in his faculty, but he is also the first one there to help his peers. His innovations extend to future faculty (a new teaching course for Ph.D students) as well as to his colleagues (co-founding the Teaching Effectiveness Centre).

David's creative energies are valued beyond his institution and recognized in peer-reviewed publications including *Harvard Business Review*, and, more recently, *STLHE Green Guide* "Teaching With Cases," co-authored with Kim Brooks. David consistently demonstrates concrete ways of student-centered learning and contributing to the scholarship of teaching.



Kenneth R. Bartlett

Director, Office of Teaching Advancement
University of Toronto

For Ken Bartlett, the world is his classroom, as is the community in which he lives. Others echo this view in recognizing his local and global spheres of influence. The winner of several outstanding teaching awards from his faculty and university, he is especially proud of the Undergraduate Teaching Award that students adjudicate.

Ken wants his students to experience history first-hand, through primary source material. This is evident in his study-abroad program where multicultural students work in groups generating research from museum archives in London and Oxford. "I want my students not just to know what happened during the Renaissance, but to see the past through the eyes of people who lived in those years."

Ken's ability to engage students, whether it be in intimate first-year seminars or 500+ survey courses, resonates in his relationships with his peers. His commitment to support and recognize teaching at one of the largest research intensive universities in Canada is evident in his collaborative and transformative views on faculty development, in his contact with his peers, and in new initiatives. Thanks to Ken's vision, the university plans to create an Academy of Teaching that will recognize a new university-wide rank equal to the rank of University Professor.

As founding Director of the Office of Teaching Advancement, Ken Bartlett's vision of the world is a "classroom without walls, a universe of human interaction built on the extension of knowledge."



Aline Germain-Rutherford

Director, Centre for University Teaching
University of Ottawa

One word comes to mind when we think of Aline Germain-Rutherford: energy! Students and colleagues use these superlatives: "The best professor I ever had," "a nuclear bomb," "amazing teacher," "do what you're doing forever," "overwhelming accomplishments." Aline is one of the most intense and passionate teachers that students will ever have a chance to meet in their university lives. Aline is also known in both francophone and anglophone academic communities as a leading educational developer.

Aline is a second-language education specialist who earned her doctorate from the Sorbonne. During the past twenty years, Aline has created interactive learning environments using a unique blend of international collaborative research. Through that collaboration, she developed speech technology that helps students learn French online, technology that is now being used by undergraduate students in Canada, France, and the US.

As the Director of the University of Ottawa's Centre for University Teaching, Aline channels her tremendous personal energy to her peers in many incredible ways. Aline is a founding member of the Institute for the Advancement of Teaching in Higher Education (IATHE), and she is a generous contributor to organizations that help make teaching count.



Georg Gunther

Department of Mathematics
Sir Wilfred Grenfell College
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Georg Gunther transforms students: they write that he expands their minds and makes them think more about the universe. As one student put it, he “forever changed my life and outlook on things around me.” Though he is a creative advocate for mathematics – witness teaching strategies like his original problem-solving cartoon characters “Jack and Jill” —, his central concern is always with the student more than with the subject. As he states in his teaching philosophy, “I will be content if I open the minds of my students, not only to the beauty or utility of mathematics, but to the tremendous potential inherent in their own minds and souls, regardless of whether that potential expresses itself in the sciences or the humanities, in mathematics or music.”

Georg he has found practical ways to ensure that first-year students realize their minds’ and souls’ potential. Under Georg’s leadership, Wilfred Grenfell College began a program of Supplemental Instruction (SI) that targets “high risk” courses and then trains student leaders to offer peer support. For its first five years, Georg shepherded the project, and through his workshops and presentations across the country, he has become a leading advocate for Supplemental Instruction. Georg has been recognized with Memorial’s President’s Award for Teaching and the AAU Distinguished Teacher Award.



Janice Newton

Department of Political Science
York University

“I see myself as a strong, smart, and independent woman, and I know that you and your class played a crucial role in me finding my way to such a good place.” So wrote Gina Sinclair, one the many students that Janice Newton has touched with her teaching.

In the classroom, Janice is constantly searching for ways to improve the learning experiences of her students and develop the skills that they will use in their lives after university. She has innovated in a variety of ways, creating journal assignments, one-minute tests, pre-writing assignments, collaborative projects, and new modes of classroom assessment.

Janice models leadership by reforming curriculum, speaking on academic integrity issues, and serving as the undergraduate Program Director; most notably, she established York’s outstanding School of Women’s Studies. Her co-edited text, *Voices from the Classroom*, continues to be a source of inspiration for university teachers. Janice has done all this with vision, patience, tenacity, and collegiality.



Srinivas Sampalli

Faculty of Computer Science
Dalhousie University

He is known throughout his campus by his nickname, “Srini”. Srini is unique in many ways, not least because his students created an annual award for teaching excellence in his name. He was, of course, the inaugural winner of this award, one of many he has received in recognition of his superlative teaching.

Srini exudes enthusiasm, energy, and professionalism, coupled with a profound love of teaching and of his students who reciprocate with many endorsements of him as “the greatest teacher ever.” Not one negative comment can be found in pages and pages of glowing student assessments . . . they simply love him.

While assuming demanding administrative duties in support of his institution’s computer science program, he continues to teach five courses per year for which his students have rewarded him with an overall average teaching assessment of 4.94 out of 5 over a twelve-year period.

Srini is a prolific contributor to teaching workshops, panel discussions, and faculty orientation sessions. He has made major contributions to Dalhousie’s faculty and student mentoring programs and currently supervises the research activities of a large group of both graduate and undergraduate students.



Richard Schwier

Department of Curriculum Studies
University of Saskatchewan

Richard Schwier is a self-proclaimed teaching junkie whose passion for teaching and commitment to sound pedagogy have been enhancing student learning for years. An exceptional leader in the field of instructional technology, Richard is respected by a generation of learners and colleagues for his dedication, his compassion, his innovation, and his mentorship.

Whether he is teaching large classes or small ones, at a distance or up close, what distinguishes Rick is how seamlessly he integrates new research into his course content and uses it to initiate relevant discussion and to motivate students. As one colleague states, Rick demonstrates “a special gift for listening to his students, and encouraging and supporting them as they endeavor to find their place in the world of research, teaching, and learning.” In his reflections on his teaching, Rick states that “the most powerful technologies are the soft technologies – how we do things in the classroom, how we engage students, excite them, and empower them.”

Outside of the classroom, Rick has shared his insights and research on online learning communities with the rest of the world through his publications and workshops. Rick has also revised, redesigned, and implemented new programs within the College of Education and was instrumental in promoting a coordinated approach to instructional support services for faculty.



John Thompson

Department of Sociology
University of Saskatchewan

Forty-three years ago, after three sleepless nights worrying that he'd made a career mistake, John Thompson stepped into his first classroom; ten minutes later, he knew he wanted to teach for the rest of his life. And his sociology students—who, one after the other, write that his courses teach them mindfulness, openness, and civic responsibility—are very lucky that he did. He is the recipient of four major awards for teaching.

A leader on his campus and beyond, John has dedicated himself to changing the way student learning and faculty teaching are valued. His presentations, workshops and publications on topics such as the vocation, the evaluation, and the scholarship of teaching have that underlying theme in common: revaluing undergraduate education through attention to student development, and especially through attention to writing as critical thinking.

In fact, he encourages extensive student writing, from informal end-of-class "two-minute memos" to three-stage formal essays; and he regularly enters into the risk and vulnerability of student learning by composing an essay "live" as the students watch him write. And John recognizes the power of story in teaching, but, as one of his nominators writes, his goal, "rather than having students remember *his* stories, is for students to hear their own."



Brian Wagner

Department of Chemistry
University of Prince Edward Island

Students wait in line at pre-registration to make sure they get into Brian Wagner's first-year chemistry class, and no wonder. From his interactive anonymous quizzes to his writing-across-the-curriculum techniques to his use of real-life research in the classroom, Brian connects the student to chemistry and chemistry to the world. In 1998, he won UPEI's Merit Award for Excellence in Teaching, and his student evaluations include comments like "better than the best" and "Dr. Wagner, you are a chemistry god!"

But Brian's passion goes beyond chemistry; he was a founding member of UPEI's Environmental Studies Group, and he team-teaches in the core course of a new Environmental Studies Minor. That collaborative spirit extends to his colleagues on campus and beyond. Even with a heavy load as Chair of his Department, Brian volunteers each year as a teaching mentor in UPEI's New Faculty Program.

A leader in promoting active learning even in large science classes, Brian shares his passion for teaching with international university and college teachers as a facilitator in UPEI's Faculty Development Summer Institute on Active Learning.

Call for Nominations Appel de Candidatures

2006 3M Teaching Fellowships Program Prix d'enseignement 3M 2006

The Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and 3M Canada invite nominations for the 3M Teaching Fellowships Program. Up to 10 awards, presented annually at the STLHE Conference in June, recognize exemplary contributions to educational and teaching excellence in Canadian universities. Awards are open to all individuals currently teaching in a Canadian university, regardless of discipline or level of appointment.

La société pour l'avancement de la pédagogie dans l'enseignement supérieur et 3M Canada lancent un appel de candidatures. Dix prix, remis chaque année au mois de juin lors du congrès de la SAPES, soulignent les contributions remarquables à l'avancement de l'enseignement supérieur dans les universités canadiennes. Est admissible toute personne qui enseigne actuellement dans une université canadienne, quels que soient sa discipline et son niveau hiérarchique.

Details: www.mcmaster.ca/3Mteachingfellowships
Deadline/Date limité: Received by March 3, 2006
Telephone/téléphone: (514) 848-2424, ext. 2928 or 2793
Email/Courriel: Arshad Ahmad (arshad@jmsb.concordia.ca)

Christopher Knapper Lifetime Achievement Award

2006 Call for Nominations

This award was created to honour individuals who have, over their career, made significant contributions to teaching, learning and educational development in Canadian higher education. The award comprises a citation and a small gift, presented at the annual STLHE Conference. This year's award holder will be invited to make a special presentation at the 2007 STLHE Conference which will be held at the University of Alberta. Travel expenses will be paid by the Society.

STLHE members may make a nomination of one or two paragraphs summarizing the nominee's career contributions and reasons why he or she merits the award. This may be followed up with more detail if needed. Nominees will normally be a member of the Society and service to the Society will be an important factor considered by the selection committee.

The deadline for this round of nominations is **April 14, 2006**. Nominations should be sent electronically to:

Sylvia Riselay, Administrative Coordinator, STLHE
riselays@mcmaster.ca

For more information:
www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/awards/chris.knapper.award.htm

Building Bridges for Instructors and Students: Active Learning Green Guide Review

Alice Cassidy

University of British Columbia

Most teachers wish to help students use knowledge and practise thinking skills. But where do we start? Philosopher and educator Jon Dewey posited, in 1915, that, "... education is not an affair of *telling* and being told, but an active and constructive process" that requires "direct and continuous occupations with things." In the 90 years since then, research on constructivism, experiential learning, teaching perspectives and learning styles has told us much about how people think and learn.

How do we use a broad and rich body of scholarly knowledge to inform our teaching practices in our class meeting or online course? Bev Cameron, author of "**Active Learning**", bridges the theoretical and empirical with the practical, modelling active learning in this STLHE Green Guide.

Instructors considering a move to more active student learning might ask "Exactly how do I do this?", "Is there a way I can try it on a small

scale first?" and "What's the pedagogical basis for teaching this way?" As an instructional developer I draw on these excellent questions when organizing seminars and other professional development activities for instructors. The questions are all answered in this 1999 publication, already a classic in the Green Guide series.

Bev Cameron introduces David Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model to describe learning in four distinct but interconnected phases. She beautifully illustrates each phase with teaching and learning activities you will recognize. The only other author I have seen do this as well is Marilla Svinicki.

The Guide provides practical techniques, including a synopsis of the process and suggestions to consider, in each of three categories: 'Least risky', 'Adding a bit more risk', and 'Making course-altering changes'. Further sections discuss communicating expectations, accountability, and the all-important evaluation of learning.

Every time I re-read this Guide, I am inspired to adapt yet another example or two for my next Zoology class or faculty workshop. I used the Guide in recent day-long workshops on "The Use of Problems and Cases in Teaching and Learning". The participants, instructors from a wide range of disciplines, found the examples helpful and left with concrete plans.

I highly recommend "Active Learning". It is a treasure trove of gems you can use as is or adapt to your discipline, setting, or context. Bev Cameron's Guide also 'sets the stage' for the consideration of techniques and tools such as problem-based learning, team teaching, and teaching with technology, approaches that instructors and educational developers continue to explore today.

Cameron, B. (1999). *Active Learning*. Green Guide No. 2. Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education / La société pour l'avancement de la pédagogie dans l'enseignement supérieur.

The Music...and the Magic Book Review

W. Alan Wright

Université du Québec

Under the inspired leadership of Mount Allison Professor Alex Fancy, the Council of 3M Teaching Fellows marked the twentieth anniversary of the outstandingly successful STLHE-3M Canada partnership with the recent launching of "Making a Difference: A Celebration of the 3M Teaching Fellowship." Orchestrating the timely publication of reflections of over fifty contributing 3M Fellows as well as the testimonials of many students and colleagues represented a major challenge, one that Editor Marilyn Lerch compared to bringing a large number of musicians together to prepare a concert.

According to the Editor, it was imperative to put egos aside, roll up sleeves, and to remember that *it is about the music*. Marilyn



praised her Editorial Committee colleagues for never losing sight of the goal, for remembering that *it is about the book*.

The brief essays by many of Canada's most effective teachers deal with precious memories, important events in their lives as teachers, teaching philosophy and pedagogical approach, inspirational moments, the importance of teaching awards, the status of teaching in higher education, and lessons learned from students.

The small bites and the wide variety of writing approaches of the contributors make

for a delectable read, even when one can spare but a fifteen-minute sampling during a commute via public transportation. The overall impression is of a rich smorgasbord. Has the status of teaching improved in Canadian higher education since the inception of the 3M Teaching Fellowships? Some contributors would lead us to celebrate progress, while others claim that the recognition of teaching effectiveness is still not a widespread reality in this country's universities.

Whatever the case may be, Alex Fancy and Alastair Summerlee remind the reader that when the music of teaching and learning is in sweet harmony, a miracle happens and there is magic in the air.

Lerch, M. (Ed). (2005) *Making a Difference: A Celebration of the 3M Teaching Fellowship*. Published by the Council of 3M Teaching Fellows and STLHE.

Dirt Shirts and Backpacks The Student Experience of Learning at UPEI

Philip Smith, Brent MacLaine, and Shannon Murray

Conference Co-chairs
University of Prince Edward Island

highlights. The conference also saw the meeting of the Educational Developers Caucus, a gathering of international teaching fellows, and the 20th anniversary of the 3M

Teaching Fellowships Program. We are pleased to report that the conference made a profit of approximately \$20,000.

What an honour and a pleasure it was for us to host the 25th annual STLHE conference in June! Over 440 participants, including 70 students and almost 250 new members, met to talk, hear about, and live the conference theme: "The Student Experience of Learning."

The meeting featured keynote addresses by MaryEllen Weimer and Alastair Summerlee, and special streams for educational developers and university administrators. BodyBreaks, a preconference kayaking workshop, an Acadian kitchen party, and a conference-long demonstration of problem-based learning by a very lively group of Guelph students were some of the meeting's



An Acadian Kitchen Party.

ED Caucus Corner Educational Developers Caucus Report

Joy Mighty

EDC Chair
Queen's University

On behalf of the Educational Developers Caucus (EDC), I join the rest of the STLHE community in congratulating the UPEI conference organizers on a very successful conference last June. The conference schedule included a two-hour EDC session during which the EDC held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) and an interactive professional development workshop.

At the AGM, the Nominating Committee reported on the results of the electronic elections for the two Executive positions with one-year terms. Trevor Holmes (Guelph) was re-elected as Vice-Chair (Communications) and André Oberlé (Scranton) was elected as Secretary/Treasurer. The EDC is enormously grateful to outgoing Executive member Angie Best (Trent) for her excellent service in her role as the inaugural Secretary/Treasurer.

Also at the AGM, Lynn Taylor (Dalhousie), the Vice-Chair (Professional Development), provided the results of the needs assessment done during the 2005 EDC Winter Meeting.

Based on these results, Lynn presented an ambitious five-year professional development strategy and implementation plan which members can access on the EDC Web Community.

The interactive professional development workshop, facilitated by Lynn Taylor and Trevor Holmes, took the form of a stimulating best practices exchange, during which participants shared successful ideas, strategies, or events. These successful practices can be downloaded from our Web Community, accessible through the profiler at www.tss.uoguelph.ca/edop. Although our group has grown so large that it is no longer practicable to have the old roundtable sharing of Centre Updates, this dynamic best practices exchange met a strong need expressed by members in the needs assessment. Members will continue to submit written Centre Updates at the Educational Developers Conference, previously known as the EDC Winter Meeting. The 2006 Educational Developers Conference will be

hosted by the University of Victoria on February 23 and 24. Watch for the official Call for Submissions on the theme of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

The EDC continues to work closely with the STLHE Steering Committee to advance the Society's strategic goals. With over 170 members representing nearly 60 centres, educational developers are uniquely positioned to promote the Society within our institutions. Last June, through our listserv, we assisted in the collection of data on centres requested by the Steering Committee for its advocacy initiatives. I encourage you to support the institutional membership drive by discussing the benefits of membership with your senior administration. Information about institutional membership and an online registration form may be found on the STLHE website at www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/membership/institutional.memberships.htm. I wish you all a successful and enjoyable term and look forward to seeing you in Victoria next February.

Message du Conseil des Récipiendaires du Prix d'enseignement 3M

Alex Fancy

Président, Conseil des Récipiendaires du Prix d'enseignement 3M.

La conférence très réussie du mois de juin de la SAPES a aussi encadré un lancement de livre, une assemblée du Conseil des Professeur(e)s 3M et un forum international!

Une lectrice de "Toute la différence: Hommage au Prix d'enseignement 3M" nous a confié que le livre lui rappelle un remontant, alors qu'une autre l'a comparé à un assortiment de truffes! Nous en avons offert un exemplaire à tous les congressistes; veuillez commander un ou des exemplaires auprès de Sylvia Riselay (\$39.95; \$29.95 au-delà de dix copies).

Conçu en atelier, notre deuxième assemblée annuelle nous a permis de réfléchir à de nouvelles initiatives; un dialogue plutôt intense s'est déroulé dans une ambiance très détendue. Nous avons eu le très grand plaisir d'y accueillir Sue Romyn de 3M Canada.

Suite à l'assemblée nous avons accueilli, au deuxième 'Multi-national Forum of Teacher Scholars', des collègues de cinq pays qui ont exploré pendant cinq heures l'amélioration de la qualité dans le domaine de l'apprentissage et l'enseignement. Pour lire notre rapport: (www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/3M.council/index.html) (nouvelle adresse). Le forum a

fait aussi l'objet d'une présentation devant les congressistes de l'ISSOTL (Vancouver, octobre).

Pendant l'été le comité exécutif s'est penché sur la question de liens entre le Conseil des Professeur(e)s 3M et la SAPES, aussi bien que sur notre rapport avec le programme des Prix 3M de l'excellence de l'enseignement. En

plus, nous réamémegeons notre site Internet où nous accueillons PositivePedagogy, qu'un groupe très enthousiaste est en train de relancer.

Le dernier meeting du comité exécutif actuel se tiendra à Vancouver, suite à quoi nous organiserons la deuxième série d'élections.



Multi-national Forum of Teacher Scholars

Council of 3M Teaching Fellows Report

Alex Fancy

Chair, Council of 3M Teaching Fellows

The Council of 3M Teaching Fellows has completed its sophomore year! The Charlottetown STLHE Conference was also the stage for activities sponsored by the Council: a book launch, our second assembly and a multi-national forum!

"Making a Difference: A Celebration of the 3M Teaching Fellowship" has been extremely well received. Described variously as a tonic and a box of truffles, the book prompted the following statement in *The Teaching Professor*: "... the collection is a marvellous affirmation of how teaching inspires, enriches and satisfies both teachers and students. If you need a shot in your teaching arm, this book will supply it." The book was given to all

those who attended the conference, and copies (\$39.95; \$29.95 for more than ten) are available from Sylvia Riselay.

Structured as a workshop rather than as a conventional meeting, the assembly featured discussion of possible new initiatives. We were very pleased to welcome Sue Romyn, from 3M Canada, to our meeting. The assembly was followed by the Second Multi-national Forum of Teacher Scholars, a lively five-hour think-tank sponsored by HRSDC and during which scholars from five countries addressed the following issue: "Towards a Framework for Quality Enhancement in Teaching and Learning: An Exploratory Seminar." A report can be found on our website ([www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/3M.council/](http://www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/3M.council/index.html)

[index.html](http://www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/3M.council/index.html)) and comments are welcome. The forum was the subject of a workshop at the October ISSOTL conference in Vancouver.

Since June, we have been drafting rules of engagement for the Council, the 3M Teaching Fellowships Program and STLHE; and reconstructing our website.

3M Teaching Fellows are key players in a number of projects, and we are pleased to report that another of these is about to take off: a group of enthusiastic colleagues are remounting the electronic journal, PositivePedagogy, which will now be hosted on our website. The current executive held its final meeting in conjunction with the Vancouver ISSOTL conference.

Message de la présidente

Julia Christensen Hughes
Présidente de la SAPES
Université de Guelph

Ce bulletin souligne les cérémonies et les événements spéciaux qui ont marqué le congrès tenu en juin à l'Î.P.É. Toutes nos félicitations encore une fois à l'équipe de l'Î.P.É. pour le succès de ce congrès inoubliable. Plusieurs personnes m'ont fait parvenir des courriels pour me dire que ce fut "le congrès de la SAPES le plus réussi jusqu'ici". On m'a mentionné entre autres la grande qualité des plénières et des séances présentées simultanément, la participation à point nommé des étudiants et la chaleureuse atmosphère. Nos remerciements vont tout particulièrement aux organisateurs Shannon Murray, Philip Smith et Brent Maclaine de leur accueil attentionné.



Toutes nos félicitations encore une fois à l'équipe de l'Î.P.É. pour le succès de ce congrès inoubliable.

Le comité directeur de la SAPES a donné suite à de nombreuses initiatives discutées à l'assemblée générale tenue en juin. Nous serons en pleine campagne de recrutement des établissements lorsque vous recevrez ce bulletin. Il me fait plaisir de vous annoncer que nous avons maintenant reçu l'inscription des membres fondateurs. Nous remercions ces établissements de leur appui et nous sommes reconnaissants à tous ceux qui ont vanté les avantages d'être membres auprès de leur établissement.

Nous avons également donné suite à notre intention de devenir une corporation. Margaret Wilson de l'Université de l'Alberta est responsable de ce projet en collaboration avec le bureau d'avocats Barr Picard. Nous demanderons l'avis des membres lorsque l'ébauche des articles de la corporation sera rédigée. Nous voulons nous assurer que la Société est en mesure de profiter des avantages d'être incorporée tout en respectant nos racines et notre culture. Nous faisons face à une étape importante et nous comptons sur votre participation.

Nous voulons aussi faire avancer le dossier des bourses en enseignement et en apprentissage. Lors du symposium national tenu en avril dernier, on a recommandé que la SAPES élabore un programme à ce sujet en collaboration avec d'autres associations. Nous avons donné suite à cette recommandation et nous élaborons un cadre avec l'appui du RHDCC, du CRSH, du CHERD et de la SCEES.

Un travail préliminaire a déjà été fait et des discussions ont eu lieu le 13 octobre à Vancouver avant le congrès. Le cadre sera ensuite peaufiné par des discussions avec des associations nationales et provinciales, un questionnaire auprès de nos membres, une présentation au congrès de la Fédération canadienne des sciences humaines dont le thème est "le dialogue national en études supérieures" qui se tiendra en novembre et à l'assemblée d'hiver du réseau des formateurs à Victoria. C'est un projet qui nous tient à cœur et il me fera plaisir de vous tenir au courant des développements.

Pour conclure, je vous informe que l'organisation du congrès "La science et les communautés" qui aura lieu à Toronto du 14 au 17 juin 2006 va bon train. J'ai visité récemment le site en compagnie de Margaret Wilson et des co-présidents Ken Bartlett, Teresa Dawson et Pam Gravestock et ce qu'ils vont nous offrir sera très intéressant. Il me fait plaisir de vous annoncer que Bob Rae sera le conférencier invité à l'ouverture du congrès. Veuillez consulter le site web de la SAPES pour en savoir plus.

Si vous désirez en savoir davantage sur ces initiatives, n'hésitez pas à communiquer avec moi ou avec un représentant régional membre du comité directeur de la SAPES.

Bon succès pour le semestre d'automne.



La grande qualité des plénières.

President's Report



Julia Christensen Hughes
STLHE President
University of Guelph

This newsletter focuses on celebration and highlights special events that took place at our June conference in PEI. Congratulations again to all our award winners!

Congratulations also to the entire PEI team for putting on such a memorable and successful conference. I received a lot of e-mail following the conference, with many people suggesting that it was the "best STLHE conference ever." Of note, people mentioned the highly quality of the plenary and concurrent sessions, the welcome addition of student voices, and the wonderful ambience. Special thanks to conference organizers Shannon Murray, Philip Smith, and Brent Maclaine who made us all feel so very welcome.



Congratulations to the entire PEI team for putting on such a memorable and successful conference.

The STLHE Steering Committee has been busy since we last met, working on many of the initiatives that were discussed at the AGM in June. Our institutional membership campaign will be in full force by the time you receive this newsletter. I am delighted to let you know that at the point of writing we have several founding institutional members: Concordia University College of Alberta, Conestoga College, Mount Allison, Queen's University, Saint Mary's, Simon Fraser University, the University of Alberta, the University of British Columbia, the University of Guelph, the University of Manitoba, the University of Ottawa, the University of Toronto, the University of Waterloo and the University of Western Ontario. We are grateful to these institutions for their support and to all of you who have been highlighting the benefits of membership to your administration.

We have also proceeded with our plans to incorporate. Margaret Wilson from the University of Alberta is coordinating the process on our behalf, and we have hired the legal firm Barr Picard. Once we have produced draft articles of incorporation we will be sharing these with the membership for input. We want to ensure that the Society is able to realize the benefits of incorporation, while remaining true to our roots and culture.

This is an important step for the Society and your involvement will be much appreciated.

Another initiative is our work directed at advancing the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). One of the recommendations coming out of last April's National Symposium was that STLHE develop, in partnership with other associations, a national research agenda on the SoTL.

We have followed up on this suggestion and with the support of HRSDC, SSHRC, CHERD and CSSHE are now proceeding to develop a framework for supporting the SoTL in Canada. Preliminary work towards this framework has already begun and was the focus of a meeting held on October 13th in Vancouver, in advance of the ISSOTL conference. The framework will be further developed through a variety of mechanisms, including direct contact with other national and provincial associations, a mailing to our members, a presentation at the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences' November conference, "the National Dialogue on Higher Education," and at the EDC winter meeting in Victoria. This is an exciting initiative and I look forward to updating you on our progress.

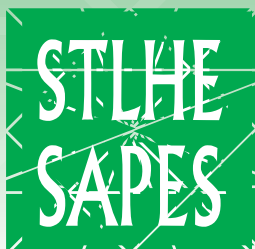
Finally, plans are well underway for our 2006 conference, Knowledge and its Communities, being hosted by the University of Toronto, June 14 – 17th. Margaret Wilson and I recently completed our site visit with conference co-chairs Ken Bartlett, Teresa Dawson, and Pam Gravestock, and we are very excited by what they have planned for all of us. I am delighted to let you know that Bob Rae has been confirmed as the opening keynote speaker. For further information please see the STLHE website.

If you would like to know more about any of these initiatives, please do not hesitate to contact me or your regional representative on the STLHE steering committee.

Best wishes for a rewarding Fall term.

En français à la page 14

Society for
Teaching and Learning
in Higher Education



La société pour
l'avancement de la
pédagogie dans
l'enseignement supérieur

What's inside?

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