

# Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

Number 47

Fall 2007

## Conference to Classroom: Successful Strategies in Action

### A Scientific Approach to Science Education

**Carl Wieman**  
University of British Columbia

Science education can no longer aim only to educate the next generation of scientists. It must also provide an effective and relevant science education for a large fraction of the general population so that people can make wise decisions on the global challenges humanity faces. Science education also imparts the technical literacy and complex problem-solving skills people need to thrive in the modern economy. Science education needs to change how students think, so that they understand and use science more like scientists do. This is an unprecedented challenge, but applying science teaching practices that have been responsible for the success of scientific research will help. These practices include but are not limited to the following:

- supporting practices based on good data not tradition;
- utilizing basic research on how people learn;
- disseminating proven advances in a scholarly manner and duplicating what works; and
- utilizing modern technology effectively.

Science education  
can no longer aim only  
to educate the next  
generation of scientists.

*This article is a summary of Carl Wieman's opening plenary presentation at STLHE 2007 University of Alberta, Edmonton, June 14.*

### Research on Learning

Over the past two decades, a body of research from classrooms, cognitive science labs, and brain function studies, support the idea that many elements of teaching can be approached in a scientific manner. These studies show that there are much more effective practices than those traditionally used in the university classroom. I will briefly describe three examples:

#### 1. Retaining Information from Lecture

A number of classroom studies have shown that only a tiny fraction of the information presented in a science lecture is retained. This is entirely consistent with the cognitive science research showing that the short-term working memory has an extremely small capacity, insufficient to the task of absorbing the amount of material presented in the typical science lecture.

#### 2. Understanding Basic Concepts

Physics education researchers have documented that the average student successfully completing an introductory physics course, taught in the traditional lecture style, masters less than 30% of the essential concepts that they did not know at the start of the course. The consistency of these results over a wide range of institutions, lecturers, class sizes, and even subject areas, clearly demonstrates that the problem is in the basic pedagogical approach.

#### 3. Affecting Beliefs About Science and Science Learning

Survey instruments have now been developed that measure student beliefs on a scale from novice to expert. Novices see the content of physics as isolated pieces of information unrelated to the world outside the classroom that they can only learn by memorization. Experts see physics as a coherent structure of concepts that describe nature established by experiment. The survey data show that students typically have more novice-like beliefs after they have completed an introductory physics or chemistry course than they had when they started, but explicitly addressing student beliefs during instruction has a substantial effect.

*continued on page 3*



Carl Wieman

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## Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Newsletter

### Number 47, Fall 2007

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## Recent Publications by STLHE Members

Plusieurs membres de la SAPES ont  
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L. Langevin (Ed.), Formation et soutien à  
l'enseignement universitaire: Des  
principes et des exemples pour inspirer  
l'action des administrations et des  
professeurs, Québec: Les Presses  
Universitaires du Québec.

Pour en savoir plus, ne manquez pas le  
compte rendu qui en sera publié dans le  
numéro d'hiver du Bulletin.

## Fall 2007 Newsletter Conference to Classroom: Successful Strategies in Action

As a follow-up to the 2007 STLHE  
Conference, this issue explores the theme,  
"Conference to Classroom: Successful  
Strategies in Action."

## New Co-Editors for the STLHE Newsletter Nouvelles rédactrices du bulletin de la SAPES

Sandra Bassendowski  
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## A Scientific Approach to Science Education

continued from page 1

These and many other studies show us that traditional science teaching is not developing the desired expert-like thinking. Again, this is what cognitive science would predict. The expert brain does not simply have more information; it functions in a different way.

**Essentially, students learn by creating their own understanding and by developing their brains.**

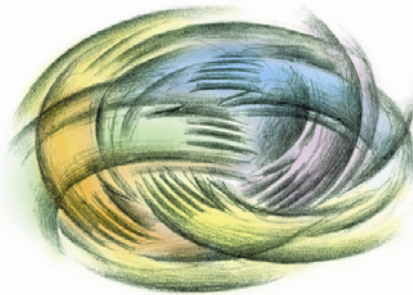
To develop expert-like brain function, students need to devote extended and focused mental effort to that end.

Essentially, students learn by creating their own understanding and by developing their brains. Effective teaching facilitates that process by getting students engaged in thinking deeply about the subject, then monitoring that thinking and guiding it to be more expert-like. Pedagogical approaches based on these fundamental principles have quantitatively demonstrated improvements in learning physics and other disciplines. This evidence supports the claim that a scientific approach to teaching has great promise for improving education in the future.

### Some Useful General References

Bransford, J., Brown, A., & Cocking, R. (2000). *How People Learn: Brain, mind, experience and school*. National Academies Press: Washington, DC.

Redish, Edward F. (2003). *Teaching Physics with the Physics Suite CD*. John Wiley & Sons Canada, Ltd.: Toronto, ON.



## ALAN BLIZZARD AWARD

### Recognizing Exemplary Collaboration in University Teaching and Learning

The Alan Blizzard Award encourages, identifies, and publicly recognizes collaborative university teaching that makes a significant difference in student learning. Nominate a faculty team from your university whose outstanding collaborative teaching contribution and achievement deserve national recognition.

For more information and application forms, please visit the STLHE website at [www.stlhe.ca](http://www.stlhe.ca)

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Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

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## Special Interest Group (SIG) within STLHE

Attention all those who teach/work in a college or university-college setting.

There has been some expression of interest in creating a special interest group (SIG) within the Society that would be related specifically to teaching and learning in the college setting. Ruth Rodgers (Fanshawe College) is initiating a Call for anyone interested in helping to draft the necessary proposal to form this special interest group. The proposal will be presented to the STLHE Board of Directors for approval.

If you are interested in participating on a small working group, please contact Ruth by email at [rrodders@fanshawec.ca](mailto:rrodders@fanshawec.ca)



## Reflections of an Innovative Teaching or Group-Work Method: The World Café

Sheila Cunningham

Middlesex University

London, England

The role of university lecturers and facilitators is not simply to impart expert knowledge on a given subject or professional area, but to facilitate purposefully created situations in which learners engage and learn (Cowan, 2006). Delaney, Daley, and LaJoie (2006) highlight the fact that scholastic dialogue supports self-empowerment in students and advocate the use of the World Café format. As a lecturer, I search for ways to engage my students and enable them to develop not just technical knowledge and practical skills, but also to harness their own personal knowledge. My experiences of the World Café have not been limited to its value as a teaching tool, but also as a networking, idea generating and sharing process.

This article provides background information about the World Café strategy and describes its use as a workshop format during a 2007 conference. The goal of the workshop was to share activities that foster engagement, motivation, and a sense of deep learning used with nursing students in two different universities (Middlesex University, London, England and the University of Saskatchewan, Canada). The World Café format used to explore these creative activities inspired a living network of collaborative dialogue. This method relies on a café atmosphere to develop clusters of conversation evolving through progressive rounds and culminating in collaborative dialogue, active engagement, and constructive suggestions for action on a central issue.



The World Café format was devised in 1995 but has not been widely publicized. In a recent search of the healthcare databases (CINAHL, Medline, and British Nursing Index), only eight instances of its use arose and only one of these pertained to education settings.

The World Café appears to share similar underlying tenets with appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005) in that epistemological understanding is not the main issue, rather a desire to seek a shared understanding about what is meaningful to each individual. Given that learners cannot all share the same perspective on what is true, the main purpose of this strategy is that each learner has the opportunity to share what is true and meaningful.

**The World Café format was devised in 1995 but has not been widely publicized.**

Brown (2001) refers to the World Café format as both a methodology and a metaphor. As a methodology, it enhances the capacity for critical thinking and collaborative communication about shared issues resulting in a deeper source of creativity and knowledge than would be available through more traditional processes. As a metaphor, the World Café is evocative in enabling participants to experience aspects of organizational life such as naturally occurring networks of conversation and social learning. The six main principles which guide the World Café (Brown, 2002) are to:

1. Clarify the purpose or set the context.
2. Create a hospitable space.
3. Explore the questions that matter.
4. Encourage everyone's contribution.
5. Connect diverse perspectives.
6. Listen for insights and share discoveries.

The room was set up in a café style format with tables set in clusters sufficient to accommodate six people comfortably; paper table cloths were placed on the tables along with a set of pens and post-it notes. In addition, while it was not possible to provide hot beverages or food, bottles of water were placed on the table to try and emulate a relaxed and convivial atmosphere. Each group was given the same topic and one person was asked to be a voluntary scribe (or table host) and summarize two or three salient points from the conversations on the post-it notes for the 'ideas wall.' Participants were encouraged to doodle or scribble notes or pictures or anything they wished on the paper tablecloths as their thoughts and ideas emerged. Participants were encouraged to introduce themselves to the others at the table and then to converse on the topic for approximately 15 minutes.

After 15 minutes, the participants or 'travellers' in Brown's (2001) terms, were encouraged to move to a different table with different people and to do the same, greet the other travellers, and continue their conversation. The table host briefly summarized the main points of the last conversation and the new participants were asked to change their conversation topic slightly from the previous discussion points. The results of this particular workshop will be explored at a later date.

The strength of this format as a teaching tool is that it does empower participants by valuing their contributions and encouraging them to deliberate upon ideas and questions throughout the conversation cycles. Overall, the World Café is a powerful format for the educational arena as it fosters social interactions that enhance an open learning culture and provide endless developmental possibilities.

*continued on page 5*

## Reflections of an Innovative Teaching or Group-work Method: The World Café

Sheila Cunningham

continued from page 4

## Evolving Scholarship/ L'évolution des connaissances STLHE 2007, University of Alberta

Sarah Ross  
Margaret Wilson  
University of Alberta

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Brown, J. (2002). The World Café: A resource guide for hosting conversations that matter. California. Whole Systems Associates.

Cooperrider, D., & Whitney, D. (2005). *Appreciative Inquiry: A positive revolution in change*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Cowan, J. (2006). *On Becoming an Innovative University Teacher: Reflection in action*. 2nd edition. Maidenhead, England: Open University Press.

Delaney, C., Daley, K., & LaJoie, D. (2006). Facilitating Empowerment and Stimulating Scholarly Dialogue Using the World Café Model. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 45(1), 46.

The University of Alberta was pleased to host this year's annual conference at its beautiful Edmonton campus from June 13 to June 16, 2007.

The Conference was a successful event with 509 delegates attending and 97 actively participating volunteers. Delegates came primarily from across Canada; however, there were attendees from a variety of countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and the United States.

The Organizing Committee worked hard to coordinate the 136 concurrent sessions, 46 roundtable luncheon discussions, and 44 poster sessions held over the course of the Conference. They skilfully arranged meetings of the Educational Developers Caucus (EDC) and the Society's Board of Directors, while at the same time paying exceptional attention to the banquet, welcome reception and all the other special events that go into making the annual conference the dynamic event for which it has become known.

The Committee's ultimate goal was to provide an environment that encouraged vibrant discussion around session streams such as the scholarship of teaching and learning, integrating research, and many other aspects of teaching and learning.

The banquet was held at Fort Edmonton, a living history park that traces the growth and development of Edmonton through four historical periods. The dinner and formal proceedings were held in a 1920's airfield hangar to which delegates could arrive in style riding the 1919 steam train, an open air wagon or by taking a leisurely walk through the historical period streets.

The 2007 3M National Teaching Fellows were formally acknowledged during the banquet by Sue Romyn from 3M Canada Company, co-sponsor of the Award. The Fellows entertained the crowd with a rousing song, penned by this year's recipients, and accompanied by Frank Robinson on his keyboard. An enjoyable evening was had by all.

One of this year's highlights was the number of actively participating volunteers, delegates and presenters from the student body that provided a rich contribution to the Conference proceedings. The student volunteers particularly appreciated being able to access the Conference by this means, since obtaining funding to attend can sometimes be difficult.

The annual STLHE conference is consistently jam packed with sessions, discussions, food, special events, networking and many other activities, and it always seems to be over far too soon. Everyone looks forward to the next year's conference with renewed vigor. The stunning University of Windsor campus will be a delightful venue to resume our face-to-face discussions and conversation around *A World of Learning* in June 2008.



# Le Campus Saint-Jean : un établissement centenaire adapté aux besoins d'aujourd'hui!

Denis Fontaine

University of Alberta

Campus Saint-Jean

À l'aube de l'an 2008, le Campus Saint-Jean se prépare à fêter un événement unique dans l'histoire de l'Université de l'Alberta. Déjà 100 ans se sont écoulés depuis la fondation de cet établissement d'éducation post-secondaire par le premier-ministre albertain, Alexander Rutherford. Mais l'UdeA n'est pas la seule à se draper de ses plus beaux atours pour célébrer 100 ans d'histoire et de succès. En effet, par un heureux hasard, le Campus Saint-Jean soufflera 100 bougies en 2008.

Cet établissement d'éducation post-secondaire a été fondé en 1908 par les pères Oblats de Marie-Immaculée. À cette époque, seuls les jeunes hommes désirant embrasser la vocation de prêtre pouvaient fréquenter le Collège Saint-Jean, un pensionnat juniorat situé à Pincher Creek. Mais environ trois ans plus tard, après l'acquisition d'un terrain dans le quartier de Strathcona, le Collège Saint-Jean a enfin ouvert ses portes à Edmonton : c'était le début d'une belle histoire d'amour avec la population franco-albertaine.

Le Campus Saint-Jean a connu d'importantes transformations au cours des années qui suivirent. En 1928, le juniorat est devenu un établissement d'enseignement de langue française affilié à l'Université d'Ottawa. Puis, à la suite de la fermeture du Collège des Jésuites en 1943, Saint-Jean s'est transformé en collège classique, permettant ainsi aux jeunes Franco-albertains d'acquérir une éducation en français de grande qualité. Les

filles ne seront acceptées au Collège Saint-Jean qu'à partir de 1960.

Yvette d'Entremont, responsable de la Division Education à la Faculté Saint Jean



Dès la fin des années 1950, le Collège est devenu pionnier dans la formation d'instituteurs et d'institutrices pouvant enseigner le français. Tout commence par des cours d'été en pédagogie et en enseignement de la religion, en partenariat avec l'Université Laval et l'Université de l'Alberta. C'était pourtant encore trop peu de l'avis du père Lacerte, recteur du Collège à l'époque, qui a travaillé avec acharnement pour ouvrir, en 1962, le Collège de Pédagogie. Cependant, il n'était pas au bout de ses peines puisque l'UdeA a refusé de coopérer à la réalisation de ce projet jusqu'en 1966. Par la suite, eut lieu une série de pourparlers entre les deux établissements afin, d'une part, de faire valider les cours de l'Université Laval et, d'autre part, d'offrir en français au Collège Saint-Jean les cours de 1<sup>re</sup> et 2<sup>e</sup> années universitaires menant au diplôme en éducation.

Les Oblats ont dirigé le Collège jusqu'en 1977. Entre-temps, le processus d'affiliation à l'Université de l'Alberta avait été bien entamé : tout d'abord il y a eu le partenariat pour les cours de pédagogie puis pour ceux du programme d'arts. Finalement, en 1978, le Collège est transféré à l'UdeA pour devenir la Faculté Saint-Jean. La transformation finale a eu lieu en 2006 alors que la Faculté a pris le nom de Campus Saint-Jean.



De nos jours, le Campus Saint-Jean est une partie intégrale de l'Université de l'Alberta. Il est un véritable joyau francophone croissant au cœur de l'Ouest canadien dans un environnement anglophone et permet donc aux étudiants de vivre une expérience unique en son genre. Le Campus Saint-Jean offre toute une variété de programmes qui préparent les étudiants à se faire une place dans une économie et une société multilingues mondiales en évolution rapide.

## Le Campus Saint-Jean : quelques statistiques (2006-2007)

- Quatre programmes réguliers de 1<sup>er</sup> cycle : Arts (9 majeures, 12 mineures, 5 spécialisations), Sciences (8 majeures et une multitude de mineures en sciences ou en arts), Éducation, Éducation/Sciences (5 ans).
- Quatre programmes bilingues en partenariat avec d'autres facultés de l'UdeA : sciences de l'environnement et de la conservation, sciences infirmières, génie (1<sup>re</sup> année) et administration des affaires.
- Deux maîtrises : études canadiennes et sciences de l'éducation.
- Certificat de 2<sup>e</sup> cycle en orthophonie avec *Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine*.
- Effectifs étudiants : 627 étudiants du 1<sup>er</sup> cycle et 70 étudiants du 2<sup>e</sup> cycle.
- Effectifs professoraux : 28 professeurs et 72 chargés de cours.
- Ratio étudiants/professeurs exceptionnel : 20 étudiants pour 1 professeur.

# Challenges and Dilemmas for Australian Academics

**Shelda Debowski**

President of HERDSA

The higher education context in Australia has changed markedly in the last few years. Academics are experiencing many dilemmas as they try to sustain their academic activities in the face of an increasingly bureaucratized sector.

The external pressures on universities have significantly increased as our federal government focuses more intensively on university governance and the outcomes it requires. A major influence has been the Teaching and Learning Performance Fund which allocates funding to universities based on feedback from students and comparative rankings with respect to graduate outcomes. This has greatly increased the focus on teaching and learning in universities with many administrators aiming to lift their rankings to a more positive positioning. Unit evaluation has become a norm across the sector, with most universities monitoring student feedback each semester and addressing poor performing units.

In many institutions there has been a shift from university teachers monitoring student ratings for their personal reflection on teaching to a more public data collection from students and subsequent corporate use of that data. Those universities receiving federal teaching and learning funds have been active in pursuing a range of projects to maintain or further improve their ranking, thereby creating more energy around teaching activities.

The Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education has generated a stronger presence of teaching and learning in the higher education community. The status and valuing of good teaching has also been well promoted through the expansion of national teaching awards to encompass a two-tier approach. Hundreds of people associated with promoting teaching outcomes now receive citations from the Carrick Institute. The citations have become an important form of recognition which complements the prestigious national teaching awards. The introduction of national teaching fellowships and significant

funding for teaching and learning projects has also stimulated considerable activity across the sector.

The dilemma for academics is that teaching and learning, while assuming increasing recognition and importance, is also facing extreme competition from the research role that academics must also manage. At this stage, the government intends to institute a new Research Quality Framework based on the British and New Zealand models. Most universities have already started the review of their academics to identify those who are research active and those who are not. Even more challenging is the fact that the data collection is emphasizing research concentrations, thereby promoting a stronger focus on research collaboration. This has some very real consequences for those who research as individuals or whose collaborative efforts have been marginal.

An increasing concern for time and career management, relationship building and time to reflect is very apparent across the entire sector. Early career academics are even further challenged by the reduced access to tenure track positions and the need to perform to a very high level in order to gain continuing appointments. The need to rapidly acculturate into the workplace and build a strong academic profile across both teaching and research is a major challenge for those new to academe. Mentorship and academic induction are critical supports to enable the fast-tracking of a new academic into a high performance focus. This has implications for how we recognize academics who contribute to the ongoing shift of the university culture toward a more nurturing and constructive collegial work community.

**The need to rapidly acculturate into the workplace and build a strong academic profile across both teaching and research is a major challenge for those new to academe.**

In this context, the work of academic development has become even more important. There has been considerable concern for how these services can be more strategically focused to make a demonstrable difference. Areas of research concentration across Australia have related to the leadership of teaching and learning and research; the encouragement of academic mentorship as a supportive strategy for junior academics and the development of improved support for new and casual teachers. Another major national project has been a focus on research management to increase the skills of those responsible for people, resources and research outcomes. The challenge, of course, will be to draw the outcomes of these projects into ongoing university programmes and strategies.

Academics are clearly noting the increased pressure to perform in both teaching and research. HERDSA has experienced a big increase in article submissions for its journal and greatly expanded demand for its practical HERDSA Guides. The presentations and papers at its annual conference have also demonstrated a much greater focus on academic challenges, disciplinary concerns and holistic approaches to academic development. The 2008 Conference, which will be held in Rotorua, New Zealand, (July 1 to 4) will explore **Engaging Communities**, a very appropriate theme for the academic community as it grapples with the ongoing dilemmas and challenges of working in different and more accountable ways. The next few years will be challenging for many academics. It will be particularly important to ensure that faculty feel supported and encouraged by their colleagues and university agencies.

*This article is part of an ongoing international exchange among the presidents of the societies for teaching and learning from Canada, Australia and the United States. Shelda Debowski, of the University of Western Australia, is the president of The Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA), in Australia.*

# Learning By Design: Engineering Strategies and Practice

## The 2007 Alan Blizzard Award Winning Project

**John Thompson**

Coordinator, Alan Blizzard Award  
University of Saskatchewan

*"Overall I felt that the course was and is very well designed and an important tool for engineering. The skills I learned in the class were useful to the real world, and helpful to my personal growth as a student." Student*

*"This is a great course, and the time commitment that is required is a lot, but honestly worth it." Student*

These students are commenting on Engineering Strategies and Practice (ESP), the 2007 Alan Blizzard Award winning project of the seven-member team working in the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering at the University of Toronto.

The team that created this five-year collaboration in teaching to improve first year engineering education was honoured at the 27<sup>th</sup> annual STLHE Conference at University of Alberta in June. Those attending the Conference received the project monograph and witnessed the team demonstrate remarkable team scholarship in collaborative teaching and learning.

### Course Overview

Engineering Strategies and Practice is a two-course design sequence for first-year engineering students. As collaboration, ESP involves integration, coordination, and pedagogical planning, team formation and leadership, learning outcomes and assessment that are rare and difficult in higher education.

- More than 60 university personnel and members of the community.
- Successive pilots of 100 and 150 students, scaled up to 950 students in 2005 and more than a 1,000 in 2006.
- 117 teams in 2005 and over 150 in 2006 engaged in service learning projects with community clients.
- Countless hours of planning and providing formative feedback.

**In 2001, a decanal task force identified curricular shortcomings in six of seven competencies of successful engineers.**

### Origin and Outcomes

In 2001, a decanal task force identified curricular shortcomings in six of seven competencies of successful engineers. Although math/technical received explicit and sustained attention in courses, the other six competencies—design, communication skills, team skills, independent learning, system thinking and problem-solving—remained largely implicit and overlooked. ESP emerged as a collaborative effort, based on design, to ensure first-year engineering students would develop these six other competencies. Through oral and written communication, seminar discussions, building problem-solving teams, and working with community generated problems, ESP immerses first-year students immediately into the strategies and practices of what professional engineers do. A student put it this way: "The practical experience of ESP (i.e. the seminar, the group projects) was very important to my professional development, because people learn best by doing." Through encountering economic, human, environmental, social, and ethical issues in actual practice, beginning students confront their taken-for-granted, frequently inaccurate, notions of what engineers actually do.

### How the ESP Team Does It

As the magnitude of what the ESP team had accomplished became evident during the STLHE presentation, we were left wondering, in the title of a Discovery Channel program, "How do they do it?" First, for the course to work, the team has to work hard and persistently at "logistics." Second, team members establish trust in their working relationships based on shared values of their consensus about course goals and commitment to the quality of student learning.

After extensive team consultation, individual members charged with responsibility for specific areas, make decisions for the whole team. This "collaborative accountability" ensures things get done on time and together. Students see their teachers practice what they teach through ongoing collaboration in course design. By design, students are developing the competencies, attitudes, and relationships of professional engineers in society.

This is how an ESP student recalls the learning experience and the team's effort: "Looking back, this course was absolutely spectacular. I'm surprised the staff was able to coordinate so many people in such a smooth manner. I learned more during these two semesters than in all of high school."

**Visit the STLHE Alan Blizzard Award website** to read the 2007 award-winning paper and view the presentation slides. <http://www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/awards/alan.blizzard.award.html>

Previous monographs are available online. Though a well-kept secret, effective collaborations in teaching grace Canadian universities. This Award attempts to recognize, encourage, and make visible such collaborative innovations in teaching. Consider submitting an application to recognize a collaborative teaching project in which you are involved or encourage others at your university to do so.

Special thanks to Aline Germain-Rutherford (Ottawa) for generously and effectively coordinating the Alan Blizzard Award Selection Committee for the last three years, and to McGraw-Hill Ryerson for financially supporting this Award since 2000.

## Teaching Reflections from the 2007 3M National Teaching Fellows

**David DiBattista**  
Department of Psychology  
Brock University

Many years ago, I added to my email signature this quotation by the historian Henry Adams, "A teacher affects eternity; he never knows where his influence stops." Every single day, these words remind me that, as a teacher, I have the opportunity to profoundly affect the lives of my students. To make the most of this remarkable privilege, I do my best to support my students in their learning, to make learning an enjoyable and rewarding experience, and to serve as a role model as an academic and as a human being.

**Dennis Krebs**  
Department of Psychology  
Simon Fraser University

My aspiration is to contribute to knowledge and the personal growth of students in four related ways:

- a) by publishing high-impact articles and books
- b) by helping to restructure the undergraduate curriculum of my university
- c) by inspiring my colleagues to invest in teaching
- d) by inspiring the students in my classes to learn, and more importantly, to value learning and to take responsibility for fostering it in themselves and their classmates.

I am guided in these aspirations by the belief that change is best fostered gently and respectfully, through consultation among equals, but that people (including me) should be held accountable. In the relatively small courses I teach, I try to 'individuate' each student, and customize my inputs and expectations to their aspirations and abilities. In setting high standards and attending to their ideas carefully and expeditiously, I communicate respect for them and their work, while holding them accountable.

**Ernie Walker**  
Archaeology  
University of Saskatchewan

My entire teaching career has involved instruction across a wide array of subjects and disciplines. I consistently have used a holistic approach attempting to show interrelationships between the human experience and the natural world. Native American "ways of knowing" and indigenous knowledge are useful for demonstrating such critical connections. I firmly believe that a strong research agenda and high quality teaching go together and so the teacher/scholar model has served me well. At the end of the day, my teaching philosophy has been relatively simple—cultivate my interests and love what I am doing, be consistently relevant, up-to-date, and dynamic in my presentation, engage my students, hold high standards, and know my audience so no one gets left behind.

**Judy Brown**  
Department of English  
University of British Columbia

Teaching, like learning, is a work in progress. It's risky, I think, for any of us to become too fixed on arriving at a destination point where we start believing in our own mastery of the art, science, craft, and mystery of great teaching. The better path—even though it can be daunting and humbling at times—is to concentrate on the process of the journey and to keep on learning from more gifted and inspiring teaching colleagues and from one's students. By watching others teach, I have come to understand that there are a myriad of ways to teach happily and well, just as we have long known that there are a myriad of ways to learn happily and well. Seeking the definitive method or current fashion for effective teaching is something I used to believe in when I first stepped into the classroom or lecture hall. Now I know that such searching is quixotic at best.

Teaching at a time when the relevance of the humanities is as questioned by some as it never has been, I am not discouraged, nor do I feel irrelevant. My students still deserve to be challenged with thought-provoking texts about this and other lands and peoples; they teach me in their comments, questions, discussions, and debates how important it still is to read critically, books that mirror their own experiences and to study empathetically, stories that open windows onto the worlds and peoples beyond their own experiences. Equally important is my responsibility as a teacher of writing (at a time when effective communication has never been more necessary) to remember how challenging it is to capture one's thoughts in words and to offer them to others for a response. So, when I am reading and commenting on the writing and thinking of my students, my greatest responsibility is to respond to their efforts with genuine respect and engagement even when—and especially when—the writing and the thinking may merit criticism.

Looking back over my years of teaching, I can see how much I have learned from students and colleagues, how much I have yet to learn, and how fortunate it is to be part of the process, even on the most daunting and humbling of days.

## Teaching Reflections from the 2007 3M National Teaching Fellows (con't)

**Jon Houseman**  
Department of Biology  
University of Ottawa

I teach zoology, a course covering a vast expanse of knowledge. Students rarely encounter this level of complexity in their high school courses and are unaware of the relationships between these various groups. Richard Louv describes this as the “nature-deficit disorder”; in essence, young adults of the digital age are isolated from the natural world that surrounds them. My task is to help my students overcome their disability. Zoology is organized around the study of smaller elements, and the resulting complexity is more than the simple sum of the parts. I try to mimic this in my own teaching guiding students as they stitch it back together and see the interactions and relationships that result and how this

**Harry Hubball**  
Curriculum Studies  
University of British Columbia

A central component to my teaching is the relational aspect of the pedagogical process - that is, developing a positive learning environment, fostering a classroom community, and ensuring critical student-teacher and student-student interactions. To do this, I take into account students' prior learning, interests, and goals and provide 'hands-on' learning strategies (e.g., action research, questioning techniques, student presentations, field experiences, case-based activities and authentic assessment) that involve complex ethical considerations, theory-practice integration and reflective practices. I find that these sorts of inquiry-based learning strategies enable diverse groups of students to think critically, engage in self-directed learning, and achieve learning outcomes.

**Susan McCahan**  
Mechanical and Industrial Engineering  
University of Toronto

Teaching requires unmitigated optimism grounded in a holistic human approach. My work is shaped by a belief that teaching and learning are two sides of the same creative process, which is the process of creating meaning. In the imaginative design of a learning experience we are aspiring to craft an experience that compels the development of meaning for the participant. As a result, each student will develop a unique understanding and attach a unique meaning to that understanding. There must be space and appreciation for this creativity while still holding true to the learning objectives.

**Ivan Steiner**  
Family Medicine/Emergency Medicine  
University of Alberta

Descriptions of roles of good teachers have been handed down through generations. A quote illustrates this:

*A good master will insure that, in the end the disciple will far surpass him.*  
*Kung Fu-Tzu (Confucius)*  
*[circa 2,500 years ago]*

I had powerful role models in my life and they shaped my approach to teaching. Consequently, my focus is on the students. If I were them, I would like to be guided with encouragement so I can find my own path. Along this journey, the need to feel respected and cared for by my guide is essential. I would like to discover the hidden pleasures of “learning for its own sake” and marvel at the mastery I acquire. Also, my aspiration is to trust the person who helps me reprogram my own brain.

**Frank Robinson**  
Agricultural, Food & Nutritional  
Science, University of Alberta

I have been taught by the best, and I have had the opportunity to teach the best. I strongly believe that students can be encouraged to visualize their potential by empowering them to take responsibility for their own learning through inquiry, each and every day. Put another way, good teachers bring students to greater achievement through making every day a new beginning in a learning journey. For me, the power of positive leadership, housed in a constructive and safe learning environment has made students realize that content is not always as important as the learning process in a University class. This philosophy has served me well as I try to coax my students out of the classroom into the community in which they will live after they leave my class. This can mean into agri-business, or into public communication venues.

I try to make sure that my students appreciate the power of the collective group by the second week of class. Later in the term, they share their knowledge with the public as creatively as possible. In doing so, the learning circle encloses populations of other learners and brings them along on our journey. My most productive educational leadership takes this same philosophy to other educators to encourage them to step out of convention and embrace a “new day” as teachers.

I try to lead by example, through encouragement and by creating a positive and enjoyable learning climate. I continue to learn from my teaching experiences. As I learn, I take new steps and I become more creative. I still have many more learning opportunities I want to experience and that I want to have my students' experience.

## Experiences from a New STLHE Member

**Heather Ranson**  
University of Victoria

I just returned home from an amazing three days at STLHE. This was my first time at the Conference, so I did not know what to expect. I booked my ticket to Edmonton hoping to get at least one good idea out of the Conference. But joy of joys, I discovered at least one good idea at each of the sessions I attended. I heard Carl Wieman, a physics Nobel Prize winner, speak on using research on learning to reshape science teaching. I learned how to develop a mind map, how to use one-minute assessments in a number of ways, and how to implement more humour into my classes. After the formal sessions were over, I met the University of Alberta's Provost who was on leave, but could not resist attending the opening reception.

I chatted with some 3M National Teaching Fellows and connected with some colleagues from the University of Victoria whom I had never met before. The amount of learning and fun the organizers packed into this Conference was remarkable!

Social events such as the banquet at Fort Edmonton Park, and the wine and cheese reception at Campus St. Jean, provided an interesting opportunity to see more of Edmonton. For me, one of the most delightful aspects of the Conference was meeting some of the delegates. I came to the Conference not knowing anyone, but STLHE members were great about introducing themselves and their colleagues so that I felt included in every event. Many

people I met had been attending the annual conference for five years or more. They come with colleagues from their own institutions and know many other registrants from past conferences. This friendly approach creates an inclusive camaraderie and every person I spoke to welcomed me to the Conference.

Have I mentioned the research? From technology in the classroom, to implementing problem-based learning, this was an amazing forum to inspire teaching and for conducting research of my own. Now that I have returned home, I am going to apply these new ideas, techniques and skills to some of the unique initiatives we offer in the Faculty of Business at the University of Victoria.

## Book Review: Learning in Groups: A Handbook for Face-to-Face and Online Environments

**Erika Kustra**  
McMaster University

How can you help students learn effectively in groups? David Jaques and Gilly Salmon provide some insights and practical strategies in the new edition of *Learning in Groups: A Handbook for Face-to-Face and Online Environments*.

This newest edition involves content reorganization, the addition of useful insights into online groups, as well as some new group activities. At times, the flow of ideas seemed disjointed. As a result, my preference is to use this book as a resource containing useful activities and concepts, rather than as a book to be read from cover to cover.

In my own practice, I have used elements of the earlier editions in workshops for faculty and teaching assistants, and I have also adapted elements in teaching undergraduates. For example: providing the literature behind, "Why use groups?", or identifying a list of behaviours to help facilitators lead effective discussions.

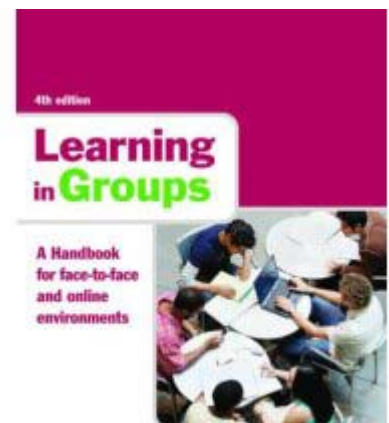
I believe the greatest strength of this book is the many practical group activities described throughout it. The greatest concentration appears in Chapter 6, where positive and negative aspects of each format are identified. There are a number of e-tivities specifically to use with online groups, and a clear indication which activities work well in both online and face-to-face environments. Chapter 9 addresses the difficult issue of group assessment, providing specific activities and relevant sample rubrics, and the Appendix includes many more activities.

Jaques and Salmon have gathered together an overview of the leading theorists in teaching and learning, particularly in the first two chapters. It would have been helpful to have had a more direct connection of the theories to group learning, but they do provide a summary of many of the most influential theories and models—wonderful for someone new to the literature.

A new addition I found particularly informative is a model for facilitators who

are supporting e-group development. I will keep coming back to this book as a useful resource for ideas and activities in groups, especially if I venture into online coursework.

Jaques, D. & Salmon, G. (2007). *Learning in Groups: a handbook for face-to-face and online environments*. (4th ed.). London: Routledge.



## President's Report: A Call to Action

### Joy Mighty

STLHE President  
Queen's University

I want to express my deepest gratitude to all of you for entrusting me with the stewardship and leadership of our Society. I will certainly benefit from the contributions of my predecessors, and I take this opportunity to express publicly my appreciation to Julia Christensen Hughes for her stellar term of office as STLHE President. I am delighted that our structure allows her to remain on the Board of Directors as Past President, responsible for the Advocacy portfolio.

I would also like to thank the University of Alberta team for being such excellent hosts of our 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference. The theme of "Evolving Scholarship" was clearly evidenced in the numerous presentations illustrating the many ways in which post-secondary education has been transformed by the scholarship of teaching and learning. The Conference was a true celebration and sharing of scholarship in a collegial atmosphere and a spirit of camaraderie.

Among the many reasons for celebration was the unanimous ratification at the Annual General Meeting of the new bylaws that were revised over the past two years in support of the Society's Incorporation. These bylaws define a new governance structure with a fully elected Board of Directors, including a student representative and a member-at-large. They also allow for several standing committees and the formation of Special Interest Groups. These structural changes provide opportunities for increased member participation in the Society's operations. The Society is enormously grateful to Margaret Wilson (Alberta) for patiently and expertly shepherding us through the mammoth task of revising the bylaws.

In the spirit of inclusivity and increased participation, the Board of Directors has approved the formation of a special interest group for the development of student writing, and established a new portfolio for the development of graduate students within the Membership Committee. Dieter Schönwetter (Manitoba) is the Board member responsible for this portfolio.

The Board has also approved a national student competition for designing a new STLHE logo. This exciting initiative is open to students in all post-secondary education institutions in Canada. In addition, we will be seeking to fill the vacancies on the Board by having elections in the fall for two regional representatives from Quebec, one from an Anglophone institution and the other from a Francophone institution.

In other exciting news, a working committee led by Lynn Taylor (Dalhousie) and Debra Dawson (Western Ontario) has the Board's approval to move forward with plans to launch an electronic Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Another fascinating initiative is the agreement with Permacharts Inc. to create an "Award-Winning Professor" series of laminated reference charts ("Permacharts") written for students by 3M National Teaching Fellows. Six Permacharts on various subjects have already been published and, based on the overwhelmingly positive feedback, we can look forward to more of these useful publications in the future.

Another significant initiative began in mid-July in Ottawa when Julia and I facilitated a think-tank of approximately 50 individuals representing a wide range of stakeholders in graduate education. The event was sponsored by the three major federal granting agencies (NSERC, SSHRC, and CIHR) and the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies, in collaboration with STLHE. The catalyst for the event was a growing concern that graduate students often lack an array of generic skills that would allow them to use their technical, discipline-specific research skills effectively in professional practice. The initiative seeks to identify the most important professional skills as learning outcomes for graduate programs, and to create a statement of principles that would guide the development of graduate curricula and enhance the quality of graduate education across Canada.

These various initiatives are a testament to the vital, influential role that STLHE is



Joy Mighty

playing in post-secondary education in Canada. To sustain these initiatives and maintain our position of national leadership, we need a strong, committed membership that is willing to get involved in the Society's activities. While much of our strength lies in our numbers, our real strength comes from the crucial role we play in advancing the quality of teaching and learning in higher education.

I am therefore thrilled that our co-editors, Corinne Beauquis (Toronto, Scarborough) and Sandra Bassendowski (Saskatchewan), chose as the theme for this issue "From Conference to Classroom: Successful Strategies in Action." It emphasizes that many of you enact in the classroom strategies discussed in the outstanding presentations we witness annually at our conference. My challenge is for you to take your action beyond the classroom and seize the many opportunities to get involved in our organization.

I know that Alan Wright and his team at the University of Windsor are hard at work organizing next year's conference which is shaping up to be an amazing international event. I therefore hope that you will act now and prepare to join us in Windsor for "A World of Learning." In the meantime, I wish you a very enjoyable, productive and rewarding year of action in and out of the classroom.

*En français à la page 13*

## Appel à l'action : rapport de la présidente

**Joy Mighty**

Présidente de la SAPES  
Université Queen's

Je tiens à vous exprimer ma plus vive gratitude pour m'avoir confié la direction de notre Société. Je vais sans aucun doute bénéficier de la contribution précieuse de ceux et celles qui m'ont précédée à cette fonction. Je saisis d'ailleurs cette occasion pour exprimer publiquement l'estime dans laquelle je tiens Julia Christensen Hughes, qui a rempli son mandat de présidente de la SAPES de manière remarquable. Je me réjouis que notre structure lui permette de poursuivre sa participation au conseil à titre de présidente sortante responsable du portefeuille de défense des intérêts.

J'aimerais en outre remercier toute l'équipe de l'Université de l'Alberta qui a si bien hébergé notre 27<sup>e</sup> conférence annuelle. Le thème de la conférence, «L'évolution des connaissances», a été exploré dans bon nombre de présentations qui mettaient en évidence les diverses transformations apportées par la recherche en pédagogie postsecondaire. La conférence fut une véritable célébration de cette mission qui s'est déroulée sous le signe de l'échange dans une atmosphère collégiale et dans un esprit de franche camaraderie.

Entre autres raisons de célébrer, il y a eu, lors de l'assemblée générale annuelle, la ratification unanime du nouveau règlement administratif qui a été remanié au cours des deux dernières années afin de constituer la Société en personne morale. Ce règlement prescrit une nouvelle structure de gouvernance avec un conseil d'administration entièrement élu et composé, notamment, d'un représentant étudiant et d'un membre à titre particulier. Le règlement prévoit en outre la constitution de plusieurs comités permanents et la création de groupes d'intérêt spécifique (GIS). Ces changements structurels favoriseront une participation accrue aux activités de la Société. Nous sommes infiniment reconnaissants à Margaret Wilson (Alberta) d'avoir chapeauté avec patience et compétence la tâche colossale que représentait la révision de notre règlement administratif.

Dans une optique de représentativité et de participation élargie, le conseil a approuvé la création d'un GIS chargé du perfectionnement de la rédaction pour les étudiants et a conçu un nouveau portefeuille pour le perfectionnement des étudiants des cycles supérieurs au sein du comité de recrutement. Dieter Schönwetter (Manitoba) est le membre du conseil responsable de ce portefeuille. Le conseil a également approuvé le lancement d'un concours étudiant à l'échelle nationale visant la conception d'un nouveau logo pour la SAPES. Ce projet passionnant est ouvert à tous les étudiants des établissements d'enseignement postsecondaire au Canada. Nous nous efforcerons en outre de combler les postes vacants au conseil en convoquant des élections cet automne. Nous cherchons deux représentants régionaux du Québec, un provenant d'un établissement anglophone et l'autre d'un établissement francophone.

Par ailleurs, un comité d'études dirigé par Lynn Taylor (Dalhousie) et Debra Dawson (Western Ontario) a reçu l'approbation du conseil pour lancer le projet d'un Journal canadien pour le savoir en enseignement et en apprentissage. Parmi les autres initiatives exaltantes, nous avons conclu une entente avec Permacharts Inc. en vue de créer une série de documents de référence laminés dont la rédaction serait confiée à des lauréats du Prix national 3M pour l'excellence de l'enseignement. Six documents de référence (*permacharts*) ont déjà été publiés en des sujets divers et si l'on se fie à l'extraordinaire intérêt que ce projet a suscité, nous pouvons sans conteste prévoir qu'il y aura d'autres publications de ce type.

À la mi-juillet, Julia et moi avons aussi amorcé à Ottawa un projet important, en constituant un groupe de réflexion composé d'environ 50 personnes représentant un vaste échantillon d'intervenants dans le domaine des études supérieures. Les trois principaux organismes fédéraux de subventions du Canada (le CRSNG, le CRSH et les IRSC), l'Association canadienne pour les études supérieures et la SAPES ont

parrainé l'événement. A l'origine de cette rencontre, notre souci croissant de voir les étudiants des cycles supérieurs dépourvus d'une panoplie d'aptitudes générales qui leur permettraient d'employer à meilleur escient leurs compétences techniques et spécialisées dans le milieu professionnel. Ce projet vise, d'une part, à cerner les aptitudes professionnelles les plus importantes pour en faire des objectifs d'apprentissage dans les programmes d'études supérieures et, d'autre part, à concevoir une déclaration de principes susceptibles d'aider à l'élaboration d'un programme d'études des cycles supérieurs et d'améliorer la qualité de l'enseignement supérieur dans l'ensemble du Canada.

Ces diverses initiatives témoignent du rôle vital et décisif que joue la SAPES en matière d'enseignement supérieur au Canada. Pour poursuivre sur la lancée de ces initiatives et pour conserver notre position de chef de file national dans ce domaine, nous avons besoin de membres déterminés et désireux de s'impliquer dans les activités de la Société. Certes, la force de notre organisation réside dans le nombre de ses membres, cependant sa puissance réelle provient du rôle capital qu'elle joue dans l'avancement de la qualité de la pédagogie au niveau postsecondaire.

C'est pourquoi je suis particulièrement ravie que nos deux rédactrices, Corinne Beauquis (Toronto, Scarborough) et Sandra Bassendowski (Saskatchewan), ont décidé d'intituler ce numéro «De la salle de conférence à la salle de cours : des stratégies efficaces à l'œuvre». Ce titre atteste que vous êtes nombreux à mettre en application dans vos cours les stratégies discutées lors des exposés percutants livrés chaque année dans le cadre de notre conférence. Je vous mets donc au défi d'étendre votre rayonnement au-delà de la salle de cours et de saisir toutes les occasions possibles pour vous impliquer dans notre organisation.

*suite page 14*

## Appel à l'action : rapport de la présidente

Joy Mighty

suite de la page 13

Je sais à quel point Alan Wright et son équipe de l'Université de Windsor travaillent d'arrache-pied pour organiser la conférence de l'année prochaine, laquelle promet d'être un événement international exceptionnel. Je vous invite donc toutes et tous à vous impliquer et à assister à la conférence qui aura lieu à Windsor sur le thème : «L'univers de l'apprentissage». D'ici-là, je vous souhaite une année très agréable, productive et gratifiante à l'intérieur comme à l'extérieur de votre salle de cours.

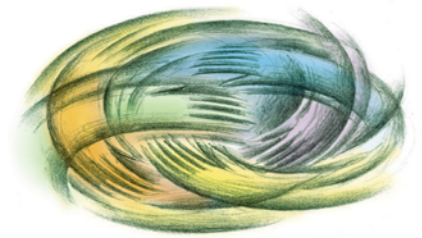


Margaret Wilson et Joy Mighty



Alan Wright

## Souvenirs de la SAPES 2007



## LE PRIX ALAN BLIZZARD

### Reconnaitre l'excellence de projets collaboratifs en pédagogie universitaire

Le Prix Alan Blizzard encourage, identifie et reconnait publiquement les projets collaboratifs qui permettent d'améliorer de façon significative l'apprentissage des étudiants. N'hésitez pas à proposer la candidature d'une équipe pédagogique de votre institution dont la collaboration et contribution exemplaires méritent une reconnaissance nationale.

Pour obtenir de plus amples informations sur le prix et les dossiers de candidature, visitez le site web de la SAPES à l'adresse suivante: [www.stlhe.ca](http://www.stlhe.ca)

**Date limite de dépôt des dossiers: le 11 janvier 2008**



Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

LE PRIX EST PARRAINÉ PAR LA SAPES ET MCGRAW-HILL RYERSON

## Le chronique du Réseau des formateurs en pédagogie postsecondaire

**Teresa Dawson**

Présidente du Réseau  
Université de Victoria

Au moment que vous lirez ces lignes, les préparatifs en vue de la Conférence du Réseau des formateurs en pédagogie postsecondaire de 2008 seront déjà bien enclenchés. Organisée conjointement par le Collège universitaire Kwantlen University et l'Université Simon Fraser (SFU), la conférence aura lieu le vendredi 22 février et le samedi 23 février 2008. Il y aura un atelier préconférence le jeudi 21 février, comprenant la combinaison habituelle de séances à l'intention de nouveaux collègues et de séances présentant les atouts locaux. Les lieux de rendez-vous seront le campus Richmond de Kwantlen et le campus de Vancouver de la SFU, tous deux commodément situés dans la région du Grand Vancouver. On peut trouver des renseignements supplémentaires à l'adresse <http://www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/edc.2008.html>

La conférence de 2008 aura pour thème «Embrasser la carrière de formateur en pédagogie postsecondaire», d'où l'image de la conférence. Dans l'ensemble du pays, les institutions sont de plus en plus conscientes de la valeur énorme que représente le fait d'avoir dans leur personnel des formateurs en pédagogie postsecondaire. En conséquence, nous voyons une vaste gamme de possibilités d'emploi s'afficher dans la liste de diffusion du Réseau. Autrement dit, on ne pourrait pas choisir un meilleur moment pour faire partie de la collectivité des formateurs en pédagogie postsecondaire au Canada. Cet intérêt accru signifie également que nous devons aider du mieux possible les nouveaux collègues qui veulent entrer dans la profession en leur fournissant toutes les ressources qui leur permettront d'acquérir les compétences dont ils ont besoin pour bien accomplir leur travail. Nous devons aussi prêter attention aux besoins permettant le perfectionnement professionnel de ceux qui exercent déjà la profession. Ces besoins correspondent précisément au thème de la conférence.

J'espère que vous pourrez vous joindre à nous pour participer à une activité qui promet d'être très enrichissante et satisfaisante.



## Educational Developers Caucus Corner

**Teresa Dawson**

EDC Chair  
University of Victoria

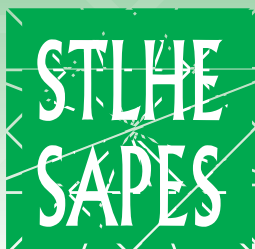
By the time you read this, preparations will be in full swing for the 2008 Educational Developers Conference. Co-hosted by Kwantlen University College and Simon Fraser University (SFU), the Conference will be held Friday, February 22 and Saturday, February 23. There will be a pre-conference workshop on Thursday, February 21 with the usual combination of sessions for new colleagues and sessions showcasing local strengths. Venues will be the Kwantlen Richmond campus and the SFU Vancouver campus, both conveniently located in the greater Vancouver area. <http://www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/edc.2008.html>

The theme of the 2008 Conference is "Spanning the Career of an Educational Developer" (hence the image for the conference). Nationally, institutions are increasingly realizing the enormous value of having experienced educational developers on staff and, as a result, we are seeing a wide range of job opportunities posted to the EDC listserv. This means that there has probably been no better time in Canada than now to be part of the educational development community. It also means that we need to give as much help, and provide as many resources as possible, to support new colleagues in entering the profession and acquiring the skills they need to be successful, as well as paying attention to the career development needs of those already practicing. These needs are exactly what our conference theme is designed to address. I hope you will be able to join us for what promises to be a very valuable and enjoyable event.

.....Au Revoir!



Society for  
Teaching and Learning  
in Higher Education



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

What's inside?

## CONTENTS

A Scientific Approach to Science	1
Recent Publications	2
The World Café	4
Evolving Scholarship	5
Le Campus Saint-Jean	6
Challenges and Dilemmas for Australian Academics	7
Learning by Design	8
Teaching Reflections	9
Experiences from a New STLHE Member	11
Book Review: Learning in Groups	11
President's Report	12
EDC Corner	15



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