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## Overview of our August 2016 Teaching Matters @KPU newsletter

I am pleased to welcome all of the KPU teaching and learning community to our August 2016 issue of *Teaching Matters @KPU* – and a special welcome to Dr. Stephanie Chu, our new Vice-Provost for Teaching and Learning. Stephanie comes to us from Simon Fraser University, where she has served since 2010 as Director of the former Learning & Instructional Development Centre (LIDC), now called the Teaching & Learning Centre (TLC). Stephanie officially starts her new position at KPU on July 25.

We are delighted to have Dr. Chu joining us, and it is a tribute to all of you that someone with such a strong background in educational development sees in KPU “the opportunity to help the KPU community build on a history of commitment and expertise for teaching and learning, looking toward a future of distinctive excellence as a polytechnic university” (to quote from her Q&A session with *Teaching Matters* on page 3). In future issues it will be Stephanie’s overview that greets you here on the front page.

Here are some other highlights in this issue of *Teaching Matters*:

- The Academic Plan working group on Institutional Learning Outcomes has visited all of our KPU Faculties and made a set of recommendations for moving on our key goals in this area. We will follow up with recommendations to the Senate Standing Committee on Academic Planning and Priorities and later yet to Senate for a fulsome discussion.
  - » The working group has been careful to emphasize that we don’t want a “top-down” approach: anything we do at the institutional level will be built on what is already happening in our Faculties, and each program will be adapting and contextualizing our university-wide Learning Outcomes in essential skills to fit their needs.
  - » As an example, in our August issue of *Teaching Matters* the lead article will look at the way Business and Nursing programs have crafted program learning outcomes aligned with their respective accrediting bodies, and how those reflect different contextualizations of institutional learning outcomes.
- Another of our key Academic Plan goals is to enhance KPU Open Studies and extend the use of open educational practices across our programs. Our Psychology department is recognized as a leader in this area – at KPU and beyond – and Farhad Dastur’s article outlines the process of scaling up use of open practices from the individual to the departmental level. (This article is excerpted from a chapter by Farhad in an upcoming book **Open: The philosophy and practices that are revolutionizing science and education**, co-edited by KPU’s Rajiv Jhangiani.)
- We’ve started a new section in *Teaching Matters* in this issue, where our faculty members share *Teaching Reflections* about recent insights from their teaching practice. David Sud tells us about his experience in offering a course on two campuses with synchronous and asynchronous use of learning technologies, and Lee Beavington tells us about finding “the courage to teach with uncertainty”.
- Also new in this issue is our first ever *Teaching Matters* contest! You could win a copy of the book *What the Best College Teachers Do* that looks at exemplary teachers across higher education. Just email us with your answers to our “skill-testing question” (hint: you’ll find the questions and the clues on the last two pages of this issue, which highlight the many members of our KPU community who contributed to June’s *Festival of Learning* for B.C. higher education).



There are many other good things happening in our teaching and learning environment. Here are a few that have come to my attention recently:

- Applications for the positions of **Teaching Fellows** will be announced shortly. The Senate Standing Committee on Academic Planning and Priorities has reviewed and approved the desired attributes for these first time positions. We look forward to reviewing applications and announcing the selection committee's successful candidates in the next couple of months.
- We had a lively discussion in our March **Learning Outcomes Workshop** for faculty seeking a research-informed, evidence-based approach to institutional learning outcomes of particular importance in their programs (building on last year's pilot study in the Wilson School of Design). Workshop attendees scheduled follow-up discussions in Science (April), Academic and Career Preparation (May) and Co-operative Education (June).
- Meanwhile the **School of Design** is scaling up the work from their pilot research study last year, by engaging other faculty members in contributing to the ongoing implementation of program-wide advances in developing students' Teamwork capability.
- Our "sold-out" April/May workshops on **e-Portfolios** follow up on the Academic Plan goal of offering exceptional learning environments. The focus is on helping KPU faculty and staff to develop their own ePortfolios and to identify ways to engage students in this method for learner-driven reflection and documentation of learning experiences and outcomes.
- The Academic Plan working group on **Experiential Learning** also has presented their findings and recommendations. As is the case with the Learning Outcomes update, I will be sharing the recommendations with SSCAPP and Senate this Fall.
- AVP **International** Stuart McIlmoyle and his team recently presented a compelling workshop in the Spring and Summer of 2016 on Post Baccalaureate Programs at KPU. The workshop outlined important sectoral research on market demand, diversity of programming and effective approaches to the establishment of PB programs at KPU. A second workshop is being planned to continue the work and to give impetus to KPU's initiatives in this area.
- I would also like to note a new role for "honorary KPUer" Dr. Tom Carey. Tom has been supporting our Teaching and Learning initiatives in the Office of the Provost over the past two years, including serving as "connector, coach and catalyst" for a number of the KPU teams advancing the teaching and learning goals in our Academic Plan. Tom has also been serving as interim editor for *Teaching Matters*. I'm happy to report that you'll still be seeing a lot of Tom on our KPU campuses in his new role with our B.C. Association of Institutes and Universities. He will continue working with academic leaders on institutional strategy for distinctive excellence in teaching and learning and with faculty teams on collaborations within and across universities to enhance learning outcomes. Tom's new title with BCAIU is *Executive-in-Residence for Teaching and Learning Innovation*.

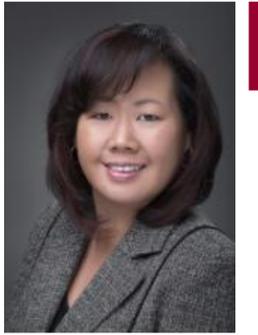
As always, we look forward to your contributions to Teaching Matters: write a *Teaching Reflection*, tell us about recognition or impacts of your teaching beyond KPU, or contact us – [learningmatters@kpu.ca](mailto:learningmatters@kpu.ca) – about writing an article in our ongoing series about progress toward our key Academic Plan goals for teaching and learning. Our next issue of *Teaching Matters @KPU* is planned for October.

### August 2016 Teaching Matters @KPU Highlights

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## Welcome to Dr. Stephanie Chu as KPU's Vice Provost for Teaching & Learning!

*I'm delighted to join KPU's community and collaborate with others who are so passionate about teaching and learning. I'm excited by this opportunity to add my knowledge and skills to the extensive teaching and learning expertise, experiences and aspirations already present in the KPU educational community. I look forward to exploring with all of you how we can further advance student learning success and KPU's signature excellence as a polytechnic university.*



**Teaching Matters:** Stephanie, we're welcoming you to KPU but you're already well-established in our region and in B.C. higher education!

**SC:** Yes, originally from Montreal, I completed high school and both my undergrad and graduate degrees here (in educational psychology). As a graduate student, I was also employed full-time. We - my husband, two boys, three cats and fish - have lived in Coquitlam for the last seven years. I've been a resident of the Tri-Cities for close to thirty years and attended Douglas College and SFU.

**TM:** And you've had a number of roles in B.C. working with faculty and other educators to advance teaching and learning.

**SC:** More recently, I've worked at Simon Fraser since 2002 and for the last six years as Director of SFU's teaching and learning centre. My previous leadership roles at SFU have included manager of a university-wide Task Force on Teaching and Learning (as Special Projects Advisor to the AVP Academic) and directing the development and implementation of numerous initiatives to enhance teaching expertise and student success (as Program Director in the Learning and Instructional Development Centre, the predecessor to the current Centre). Prior to those roles at SFU, others focused on educational technology, curriculum development, faculty development, distance education and educational research and as an Educational Analyst at the Technical University of BC.

**TM:** Beyond your institutional roles...

**SC:** I've been active in both provincial and national organizations to advance teaching and learning for two decades. Within the province, I co-chair the BC Teaching and Learning Council, and before it was established (in 2015) I was very involved with the University, College & Institute Professional Development (UCIPD) group and Educational Technology Users Group (ETUG). One of the major activities this year has been the Festival of Learning coming up next month – I'll be trying to attend as many KPU sessions as possible (although you can see from the extensive list of KPU contributors on p. 10 – 11 of this newsletter that this may be a challenge!)

I've also conducted workshops and advised on planning for educational development units across B.C. and beyond (e.g., for Douglas College, Justice Institute of BC, Yukon College and the Manitoba Association for Distributed Learning & Training).

**TM:** You've also been very engaged in teaching at SFU.

**SC:** I've taught at regular intervals in the Faculty of Education since 2002, mostly in areas such as Teaching and Learning with Technology and Implementation and Evaluation of Educational Programs. I've been an Adjunct Professor in the Faculty of Ed since 2009 and also participate on thesis and examination committees.

**TM:** Out of that experience you must have developed your own personal perspective for teaching?

**SC:** The Search Advisory Committee for the Vice Provost position was very keen to hear about that from me, to ensure a good fit with how KPU teachers approach their role! In my own teaching, these are the principles I try to follow:

- Design and facilitate experiences that engage learners and prepare them for the future
- Build in scaffolding, feedback and reflection towards self-regulated and self-directed learning
- Share my own experiences as well as my knowledge
- Ensure connections between content, objectives, activities, and assessments
- Be a reflective practitioner and be open to learning with and from my students.

**TM:** You're coming from a larger university, with a well-established teaching and learning centre, to a smaller institution that is still in the process of defining a teaching and learning strategy as a polytechnic university (as well as the necessary support infrastructure and resources). A bit of a change for you?

**SC:** I'm enthusiastic about this opportunity, to collaborate with the KPU Community to build on a history of commitment and expertise for teaching and learning -- looking toward a future of distinctive excellence as a polytechnic university that continues to be aligned with the needs of our students, our faculty and our region. The process isn't entirely new to me: the Task Force on Teaching and Learning for which I was project manager at SFU resulted in some major rethinking about how the university supports faculty and other educators. Our Task Force had 18 members and numerous opportunities for community input to ensure we were listening to and incorporating perspectives from across the institution's Faculties and campuses.

Then, as Director, it was my responsibility to put that new vision into action as our Centre's team restructured the unit, redesigned our activities and approaches and realigned our resource base. A key to our success in making this happen was to look beyond an administrative restructuring: rather, it was an opportunity to foster and strengthen relationships with the University's educators and other community members.



**TM:** Have you identified particular strengths and opportunities at KPU where insights from your past roles can best contribute? Are there areas of emphasis at KPU which for you will be new explorations?

**SC:** I firmly believe that collaboration and partnerships are integral to identify and advance a teaching and learning strategy; so upon my arrival, I intend to meet with as many KPU community members as possible, including a "listening tour" at Faculty Days in August.



I also invite interested individuals to contact me. In past roles, my approach has emphasized building networks and fostering community. I saw my expertise as complementary to the insights of our faculty, educational development and learning technology specialists, and other colleagues associated with teaching and learning support. As a team - including students - we worked together to advance teaching practice and student success.

I'm very much looking forward to learning from KPU community members and to working in a teaching-intensive polytechnic university. In addition to some new disciplinary areas for me, such as Trades, there are many innovative and unique opportunities for students that I'm eager to explore with you at KPU.

## How to Open a Psychology Department

[excerpts adapted from Farhad's chapter in a new book]

Open education is a plea to the creators and illuminators of knowledge that it be shared; that it be open to co-creation, distribution, replication, modification, and integration; that collaboration and transparency be standard operating procedures; and that the barriers to knowledge access be dissolved. Inspired by this vision, several faculty members of KPU's psychology department began encouraging the opening of our department's culture, curriculum, and commitments. This was the story of the extraordinary opening of one ordinary psychology department. It is a story offered to you in the spirit of giving, perhaps the deepest act of openness imaginable...

In the spring of 2014, my colleague Rajiv Jhangiani, one of open education's most passionate advocates, challenged our department to embrace open education. In response, our departmental Teaching Excellence committee decided to discuss what all the fuss was about. My home was volunteered for the meeting. Over cups of French-pressed coffee and slices of freshly baked cake, we held our first open education *kaffeeklatsch* [from *Kaffee* coffee + *Klatsch* gossip]. In retrospect, I consider this gathering the founding event in the project and process of opening our department...

### Recommendation 1: Focus on Quality in Open Educational Resources

One of the biggest barriers to the adoption of open educational resources, and open textbook adoption in particular, is the perception of inferior quality (Arcos, Farrow, Pitt, Perryman, & Weller, 2015; Jhangiani, Pitt, Hendricks, Key, & Lalonde, 2016). We overcame this false by making faculty aware that high quality open educational resources already exist, that they had been written and reviewed by recognized faculty and that they are easy to access. Over the period 2013 - 2015, the percentage of our faculty teaching Introductory Psychology with an open textbook increased from 0% to 20%.

The NOBA project has developed an Introduction to Psychology OER text with content modules written by widely respected scholars like Elizabeth Loftus (Eyewitness Testimony and Memory Biases), Ed Diener (Happiness), Peter Salovey (Emotional Intelligence), Roy Baumeister (Self-Regulation and Consciousness), Henry L. Roediger III (Memory – Encoding, Storage, Retrieval), and David Buss (Evolutionary Theories in Psychology). What if I told you that the online version of this OER was free and would save your students thousands of dollars? But wait, that's not all. If you adopt this OER right now, you will also receive a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike license that permits the copying and redistribution of the content in any medium or format, and permits content adaptation, modification, and remixing for educational purposes (<https://creativecommons.org>). Your only obligations are to give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, indicate if you made any changes, and promise not to make a profit from the material...

### Recommendation 2: Encourage Departmental Control over Open Educational Resources

...In the autumn of 2014, an interesting thing happened during a departmental meeting: I sought the department's blessings to use an open textbook for my Introduction to Psychology course. This request was without precedent as the department had an "understanding" with a publisher to use only their Intro to Psychology textbook for at least three years. This exclusivity arrangement lowered the cost of the textbook and provided us with some scholarship money for students. Of course, using an open online textbook would cost our students nothing or, at most, the expense of a printed version (about 70% cheaper than the traditional textbook). The department's response was cautious and conditional: blessings would be given but evidence of the open textbook's relative efficacy should be collected...



Farhad Dastur,  
Psychology

**NOBA**

**NOBA has three goals**

- To reduce financial burden on students by providing access to free educational content
- To provide instructors with a platform to customize educational content to better suit their curriculum
- To present free, high-quality material written by a collection of experts and authorities in the field of psychology

**nobaproject.com**

Several of our OER committee faculty developed a quasi-experimental research study to compare the efficacy of an Intro Psychology open textbook (<https://openstaxcollege.org/textbooks/psychology>) vs. our traditional textbook (Myers, 2013). The results of that study showed that, in terms of exam scores and qualitative student comments, the open textbook was at least as good as or better than the traditional textbook (Dastur, Le Grand, Jhangiani, & Penner, 2015).

Other made-in-psychology resources have further strengthened the open project including a Moodle-based OER of psychology learning objects and a PsycWiki. PsycWiki is a collaborative effort to create an open access textbook environment perpetually edited by students and faculty. This OER is modeled on wildly successful ChemWiki (2 million monthly visitors) developed by UC Davis' Delmar Larsen (<http://chemwiki.ucdavis.edu>). Important as these resources are, it is equally important that they are the product of faculty-driven initiative and collaboration...

### Recommendation 3: Encourage a Departmental Culture of Openness

Many formal and informal practices go into creating a transparent, collegial, collaborative, and healthy workplace. Here are some that characterize our department. On the whole, our department meetings are well run, often ending with faculty sharing a pint at a local pub. Faculty accomplishments are acknowledged in emails, at meetings, and in the departmental newsletter. An annual family-friendly retreat helps to build bonds of trust and future collaboration. Faculty members provide input into the educational plan. Collegiality is a consideration in hiring decisions. One faculty member organizes the Vancouver International Teaching of Psychology Conference while another takes a lead organizing the Connecting Minds Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference. Faculty and students volunteer at both events.

Mentorship is available for new faculty members to help them navigate the complexities of their budding academic careers. Pitched battles pitting faculty against students have played out on the badminton court, baseball field, and bowling alley. Intriguingly, recent research also suggests that the personality trait called openness to experience is positively correlated with faculty members' propensity to both create and adapt OER (Jhangiani, Pitt, Hendricks, Key, & Lalonde, 2016; Peters & Britez, 2008)...

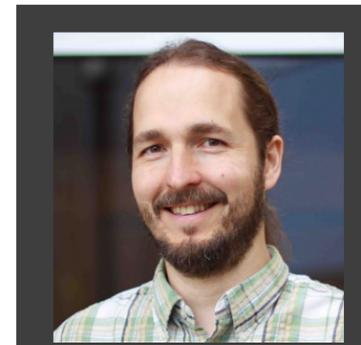
Our department's open project unfolded - and is still unfolding - along multiple themes including advocacy, strategic committee formation, policy proposals, in-house research, course development, and OER co-creation and sharing.

Two factors assisted Psychology's journey into openness. The first was a group of innovators and early adopters who found themselves in an already collegial departmental culture. The second was an institutional environment where key players were supportive of Psychology's initiatives including the Office of the President, the Vice President Academic, the Dean of Arts, the University Librarian (and librarians), other like-minded academic departments, and the psychology student society. Of course, change never happens in a vacuum, and it is also important to acknowledge that a network of stakeholders outside of our institution provided moral support, inspiration, financial aid, advice, and expertise. These groups include BCcampus (<https://bccampus.ca>), the OERu (<http://oeru.org>), the NOBA Project (<http://nobaproject.com>), and OpenStax (<https://openstaxcollege.org>).

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#### References

- Arcos, B. de los, Farrow, R., Pitt, R., Perryman, L., & Weller, M. (2015). *OER Research Hub Data 2013-2015: Educators*. OER Research Hub. [https://oerresearchhub.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/educators\\_final\\_oerrhdata.pdf](https://oerresearchhub.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/educators_final_oerrhdata.pdf)
- Dastur, F., Le Grand, R., Jhangiani, R., & Penner, K. (2015, November). Introductory psychology textbooks: The roles of online vs. print and open vs. traditional textbooks. OpenEd 2015 Conference. Vancouver, BC.
- Jhangiani, R., Pitt, R., Hendricks, C., Key, J., & Lalonde, C. (2016). Exploring faculty use of open educational resources at British Columbia post-secondary institutions. BCcampus Research Report. Victoria, BC: BCcampus. [http://bccampus.ca/files/2016/01/BCFacultyUseOfOER\\_final.pdf](http://bccampus.ca/files/2016/01/BCFacultyUseOfOER_final.pdf)



**Lee Beavington**  
(Biology) reflects on his experience in letting students have a bigger say in creatively determining their own learning experiences creatively

## Teaching Reflections by KPU Educators

### Letting the Student Lead: The Courage to Teach with Uncertainty

When I first started teaching at KPU fourteen years ago, my approach was certain, specific, and well-scripted. I taught the same lesson the same way and expected a rote response from students. Several years passed before I garnered the courage to shift from this safe and predictable approach toward more active and student-centered learning. I needed to get over my assumptions of what teaching and learning *should* look like.

My wife is a facilitator and community builder, and brings people together for a common purpose. Regardless of the expected outcome, she has a three step process in any such convening:

- facilitate a conversation that matters to the participants;
- build capacity with participants and help them discover their own resources; and then — perhaps most importantly —
- she gets out of their way.

This finely tuned technique has inspired people she has worked with to start a community garden, diversity dialogues and other collaborative groups of all kinds. I realized that this is how I need to teach:

- to be part of my students' learning, not above it;
- to give them a voice that is incorporated into the curriculum;
- to provide them with the proper tools by recognizing that each class of students is unique.

In other words, I needed to embrace uncertainty, put aside the rehearsed approach, and become a facilitator of learning. Here are three examples, taken from teaching practice, that illustrate my shift from presenting static content to students toward co-creating the learning environment with them.

**Forest Field Trip:** We used to take our first-year biology students to Derby Reach, where students followed an instructor and wrote answers into their handout. Students were largely passive observers, seldom asked questions, and rarely engaged with the actual site of learning—the forest. A few years ago, my colleague Roger Abrahamsen and I reworked this field trip to cultivate a student-led experience. Students now engage directly with the environment and their questions become part of the lesson. Note-taking is no longer mandatory; rather, they gather items from the forest for discussion, scoop up critters from the stream, and embody the carbon cycle. Students often cite the field trip as a highlight of their semester.

**Amazon Field School:** During a pre-departure class, I facilitated a discussion on courage and vulnerability. Such topics, atypical in a university classroom, were vital for this small group of students about to be immersed in a foreign culture, language, and climate. I had students work first with partners and then in small groups where they shared a story about being challenged. Next I asked them to anticipate how they might be stretched—physically, emotionally, academically—by going to the Amazon. They then pulled out key words and ideas from these discussions and wrote them on the board. A discussion ensued, co-created by students, on how vulnerability is the birthplace of innovation and creativity. Had I simply lectured on these topics, the experience would have left students voiceless, detached from their peers and without a real-world connection to their own lives.

**Cell Biology Presentations:** Previously, I used textbooks, posters and PowerPoint™ presentations to teach students about electron microscopes. I noted students' inability to assess electron micrograph images on the lab exam. I switched to a learning experience centred on student presentations, where each partnership presents a micrograph of their choice – with a few brief guidelines from me – and the encouragement to be creative. In response, students have engaged their classmates with micrographs in more innovative ways, for example by having them play Pictionary with the content or dressing up as parts of the cell. This noticeably improved student marks on the micrograph portion of the lab exam.

What are the common themes in these approaches?

- Give students a voice. The first thing I do, with any student group, is a round of introductions.
- Provide a safe and interactive space for learning. Trust takes time to build, and starts on day one. A student who feels safe will take more creative risks.
- Encourage collaboration and creativity. Students are inherently resourceful and creative; as a teacher I want to tap into individual talents by giving unstructured space for them to explore.
- Co-create the learning experience with students, and facilitate rather than lecture. This can cultivate student involvement and engagement.

Whether your learning objective is personal growth or photosynthesis, facilitation is a powerful method that puts the student at the center of their learning. This doesn't mean teachers should never lecture, or have students take notes, or even use (the admittedly overused) PowerPoint. These have their time and place. Yet regardless of the setting—forest, classroom, or lab—consider integrating activities where students can show more of who they are, and thus take ownership over their education. This instructor-to-facilitator shift was not easy: it took time, frustration, and the ability to embrace uncertainty. But the results continue to surprise and inspire me: students who enjoy coming to class, build long-term friendships with classmates, and reveal their authentic selves.

Want to learn more to follow up on what Lee or David have done? Contact us at [learningmatters@kpu.ca](mailto:learningmatters@kpu.ca) - we can help you locate Guides, Case Studies and Research Evidence on these topics and on other issues in learning and teaching.

**Letting the Student Lead:**

**Guides:** *Students as Partners in Learning and Teaching* (U.K. Higher Education Academy). <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/students-partners-framework-action>

**Case Studies:** *Students as Partners in the Curriculum* (U.K. Higher Education Academy). <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/downloads/sap-compendium.pdf>

**Research:** Cook-Sather, A., Bovill, C., & Felten, P. (2014). *Engaging students as partners in learning and teaching: A guide for faculty*. John Wiley & Sons.

**Teaching with multi-campus sections using a video-link:**

**Handbooks and Guides:** Younie, S., & Leask, M. (2013). *Teaching With Technologies: The Essential Guide: The Essential Guide*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

**Case Studies:** *Teaching About Climate Change Using Video-Conferencing, JISC Showcase* (U.K.) <http://www.rsc-scotland.org/?p=4528>

**Research:** Oishi, T., et al (2013, January). An Empirical Study on Remote Lectures Using Video Conferencing Systems. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Frontiers in Education: Computer Science and Computer Engineering*.



**David Sud**  
(Chemistry) reflects on his experience with integrating course sections on two KPU campuses via video link.

## Reflecting on multi-campus teaching via online learning

During the Fall 2015 semester, I was asked to deliver an Environmental Chemistry course simultaneously on two campuses, Langley and Richmond, with the help of video-conferencing. While there was an initial steep learning curve in figuring out how to setup an online classroom, the end result was a fairly smooth course delivery.

In this Q&A with Teaching Matters, I reflect on the rewards and challenges of this teaching experience.

**Teaching Matters:** *What motivated you to initiate this change in the delivery format?*

**DS:** This approach allows us to offer lower enrollment sections which are more conveniently located for students. One of the sections has been cancelled year after year due to low campus-specific enrollment. This year one lab section was available on each of the Richmond and Langley campuses, while the face-to-face lecture was on Langley campus with simultaneous video-conferencing available online.

**TM:** *You mentioned a learning curve for the instructor?*

**DS:** While figuring out how to get started with the BlueJeans platform for online video can seem like a daunting task at first, I was provided with ample assistance from our IT and Learning Technology teams. Teaching this way has been a rewarding experience for me.

**TM:** *How did this change in delivery format benefit students?*

**DS:** The students appreciated both the convenience and the flexibility. Some chose to stay home on sick days and could still follow the lectures. Recordings were also posted online, so students could watch at a different time or set up small study groups to go over the material at their own pace.

I had the opportunity to also teach the second part of Environmental Chemistry this Spring 2016 semester. The majority of the students in the course had taken the first part with me during the Fall semester and this time there was only one on-campus section scheduled. Apparently using BlueJeans and the associated lecture recordings in Fall were successful, as the students asked for me to provide these once again to supplement the live class session. Having a semester's worth of technical insight, I was more than happy to oblige with providing my students with the additional flexibility.

**TM:** *Were there some other challenges where the instructional design needed to be rethought?*

**DS:** The classroom participation and human interaction needed some rethinking. Creating a new multimedia learning environment is certainly challenging and then somehow encouraging students to interact was difficult. The "local" students in Langley certainly had a chance to interact with their peers, whereas the "distance" students in Richmond were more isolated since they usually connected from their home. I did get a chance to have some face-to-face time with the Richmond students during their lab section.

The online video software expands the image when a student speaks so that you are not just watching a static screen. But when you give a quiz and everyone is working silently, the images of off-site students aren't big enough for proper invigilation. Making sure that there is an additional invigilator present during all in-class evaluations needs to be planned ahead and having a room booked for this on the other campus is essential. I needed to have some pretty reliable volunteer invigilators.

# KPU at the Festival of Learning



## Enter to Win!

Did you notice that we scrambled the names of KPU Festival Speakers & our clips of their “best features”? The first reader to send us a correct list of speakers & photo numbers wins a copy of Ken Bains’ great book!



Email your names + images list to [learningmatters@kpu.ca](mailto:learningmatters@kpu.ca)

### Candy Ho

*Turning Backpacks to Briefcases: Career Experiential Learning in the Classroom*

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### Caroline Daniels, Farhad Dastur, Sal Ferreras, Meg Goodine, Rajiv Jhangiani, Todd Mundle, Diane Purvey

*Caroline Daniels, Farhad Dastur, Sal Ferreras, Meg Goodine, Rajiv Jhangiani, Todd Mundle, Diane Purvey*

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### Andrea Eiding

*Walking in the Past: Active Learning in Canadian History Classes*

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### Stephanie Chu & Sal Ferreras

*(and colleagues from BCcampus, UBC, VCC and BCIT)*

*BC Digital Learning Resources Network (DLRN): An Opportunity for Sector-Wide Collaboration*

### Farhad Dastur, David Froc, Richard Le Grand, Rajiv Jhangiani, Kurt Penner

*How to Open a Psychology Department: What We Have Learned Two Years In*

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### Nicholas Naresh & Charles Quist-Adade

*The Canada-Ghana Global Community-Service Learning Project: Teaching and Learning Through Sharing and Praxis*

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### Caroline Daniels (and colleagues from TRU and UBC)

*Help. I Want to be Open.*

2



### Rajiv Jhangiani (and colleagues from TRU and UBC)

*Experiences, Perceptions of Outcomes of Using Open Textbooks: Research from the B.C. OER Research Fellows*

8



### Michelle Nakano

*Critical, Creative and Collaborative Inquiry: Observations on Educational Engagement*

9



### Greg Chan

*Social Media Profiles: Best Practices for Mastering Your Digital Footprint*

7



### Khaled Hamden

*The Effect of Using a Mobile Classroom Response System on Students' Engagement and Performance and Using Smart Devices as Mobile Classroom Response Systems*

(This list of KPU presentations at the June Festival of Learning came from the published program. Other KPUers were also involved in informal sessions or additional activities – our congrats to you all!)



Candy Ho,  
Leanne MacKenzie,  
& Lindsay Wood  
are Co-op Education  
Instructors

## Beyond job placements: Co-operative Education as a catalyst for developing students' learning capabilities

Recently, there has been an increased focus from government, workplace and academic leaders on the benefits and value of Co-operative Education (Co-op) experiences in post-secondary institutions, not just in helping students secure gainful employment upon graduation but also in facilitating the development of lifelong skills and attributes that are beyond the vocational domain (Business/Higher Education Roundtable, 2016; McKay, 2016; Universities Canada, 2016). What exactly is the Co-op experience and who is co-operating? What does the program look like at KPU?

### Co-operative Education Defined

According to the Canadian Association for Cooperative Education (CAFCE), Co-operative Education is "an academic program that promotes continuous learning and formally integrates a student's academic studies with work experience with participating employers in appropriate fields of business, industry, government". This approach to education relies upon a three-way partnership: the student, the institution and the employer (CAFCE, 2005 - full reference list online at <http://bit.ly/2b1JHPT>).

A high-quality Co-op experience is thus an educational model rather than a job placement mechanism. There is a growing research base in designing post-secondary Co-op programs that emphasizes student learning outcomes over work placement statistics (Cates & Jones, 2000; Coll et al 2009; Eames & Bell, 2005; Jaekel et al 2011; Parks et al 2008). These scholars conclude that the program should be considered an integral component of the student experience – a notion that resonates with key themes in student development research (Chickering & Reisser, 1993).

High quality Co-op experiences must also reflect the institution's current academic priorities as well as its strategic position in the larger post-secondary education sector. Within this bigger picture, the goals of Co-op programs must "also reflect the broader educational goals of the institution within which the program operates" (Johnston 2007). In a later section, we will explore this alignment between KPU's Academic Plan and our Co-op program philosophy, goals and learning outcomes.

### Co-operative Education at KPU

As a CAFCE-accredited program, the KPU Co-op experience is designed to support students in developing the "capability to engage effectively with new learning opportunities" (rather than viewing the added-value of Co-op as simply gaining work experience). Students in the program begin by taking Job Search Techniques, a one-credit course that provides them with the opportunity to engage in self-assessment of their skills set and competencies, identify their strengths and areas for improvement, and create developmental goals and action plans. The course also addresses more short-term impacts for students: how to prepare high-quality employment applications and how to recognize the ways they present themselves through in-person and online social interactions (e.g., interviews and on social media such as LinkedIn).

These course objectives, combined with highly experiential learning activities, are designed to instill in students the skills and confidence to conduct work searches and to seek careers that align with their values, purpose, and goals – both during and beyond their undergraduate degree.

Upon completion of Job Search Techniques course and securing their Co-op work term, students enroll in a nine-credit online course in parallel with work within their organization, so that workplace learning can be deepened through guided reflective activities with the Co-op instructor and other work term students. For example, students construct personal learning goals they work on throughout the term with the support of their employers and Co-op instructors. Self-assessments with instructor and peer feedback are conducted at the beginning, midway, and at the end of the work term.

Other learning components in the online course curriculum include forum discussions, informational interviews, and a variety of other activities designed to enable peer learning and networking, as well as individual reflections on the integration of work and learning. As a final project, students create a work term report that requires them to reflect critically on the organizational culture in which they have been immersed, their performance on the job and their transformative learning experiences at work – all while making links back to their academic learning.

In addition to the online course, the Co-op course instructor also conducts a workplace site visit during the term to connect in person with the students and their employers. Whenever possible, other KPU faculty members teaching in the students discipline are invited to participate in these meetings. Site visits are a valuable way to obtain relevant feedback on KPU's academic programs and ensure alignment between what is being taught in the classroom and the industry's skills requirements. Co-op employers and workplace mentors are also key partners in creating an exceptional learning environment for students, as they provide mentorship and coaching to support the students' growth and development.

The most important partners in the Co-op experience, of course, are the students themselves. Supported by their Co-op instructors, they are active agents of their work experience and co-creators of their curriculum and learning outcomes:



*"Over the past six months while working as an HR Co-op Student at Impark, I have learned and grown more than I could have imagined, both personally and professionally. I started off this experience shy and unsure about my choice of career, but it is safe to say I am more confident in myself and my abilities. I have had the chance to be pushed beyond my comfort zone and become more confident interacting with people, from interns to executives. While working on high priority projects, I learned how to organize my time and adapt to a constantly changing workload. Not only has co-op reaffirmed my goal of becoming an HR professional, but I have become more aware of my own strengths and weaknesses, with a better sense of what it takes to succeed in the world of HR."*

- Neera Dhingra, 3rd Year Student on her second Co-op work term with Impark

### Co-operative Education and the KPU Academic Plan

In the spirit of self-reflection, we as Co-op instructors have been considering how our work can further support and advance KPU's Academic Plan. We present in this section some of our reflections on the current alignment and where our efforts should be focused in this Academic Plan cycle (and beyond).

#### Goal 1: To offer exceptional learning environments attuned to learners.

As mentioned above, Co-op is intentional with engaging employer partners who understand the importance in providing training and mentorship to students; we see these partners as educators in the workplace who are responsible for orienting students to the work environment, helping them bridge between academic and workplace learning, and providing ongoing coaching and feedback to support their development as aspiring professionals.

#### Goal 2: To increase experiential learning opportunities.

Through co-op placements, students have the opportunity to put theory into practice; the "stories from the trenches (industry/profession)" often cited by their instructors come alive as they witness these scenarios in their co-op organizations. To further mobilize knowledge application, whenever possible, co-op instructors invite department chairs and faculty to attend site visits to help students make sense of their workplace experience. During these visits, the KPU educators can also learn from their conversations with the co-op student and employers, and later integrate what they learn into teaching activities, course design and curriculum planning.

#### Goal 3: To define learning outcomes and methods of demonstrating student capability.

This is an area we are currently working on. Since 2012, the Centre for Co-operative Education and Career Services has been developing its competency model – the current version is shown on the last page. One of our upcoming projects will be to align these competences with the institutional and program learning outcomes arising from the Academic Plan working group. We are also working on how these outcomes can be more effectively be embedded and evaluated in our courses and the overall Co-op experience.



"Co-operative education has created an environment and support system that encourages me to learn and grow significantly more by improving on my ability to recognize critical learning outcomes from different situations and events that happen throughout my work term...I try to dedicate an hour a week to reflecting back on the experiences I had through the week. I assess and critically analyze the actions I took. Moreover, I assess my attitude and my thought process during these situations."

- Nancy Chea, 4th Year Student on her 3rd Co-op work term with Sierra Wireless

#### Goal 4: To ensure student success and well-being.

Career success is an important dimension of student success and well-being; this notion has been widely referenced in student development and retention literature (Astin 1993; Chickering & Reisser 1993; Kuh et al 2010; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Upcraft et al 2005). Through opportunities for exploration of career exploration and workplace learning, the Co-op experience allows students to conduct a "test drive" of their career possibilities prior to graduation, empowering them with more information for career decisions.

In addition, the stress of job search is minimized when they have been given tools and resources to strategically find satisfying work; in this way, the Co-op experience can play an integral role in ensuring successful transition beyond students' KPU educational experience so that they are productive, engaged citizens representing our university as proud alumni (and ideally, giving back by hiring KPU co-op students!) In a recent survey of Co-op alumni in the Accounting and Human Resources Management programs, 70% of the respondents were employed prior to their graduation and 91% of the respondents were working in roles related to their studies.

Ultimately, high-quality Co-op experiences must go beyond the idea of job placements to "promote continuous learning through the integration of classroom and applied work-based learning" (Angerilli et al 2005). As Co-op instructors, we observe our students growing self-confidence, maturity, and engagement in their studies and becoming active ambassadors for our institution in their workplaces. Through their work experiences, students develop and refine employability skills, become exposed to the career opportunities in their field, and gain an understanding of the realities in the workplace. We very much look forward to continuing this meaningful work and this important dialogue, scholarship, and practice in facilitating high-quality, transformative learning experiences for KPU students.

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## Core Competencies and Detailed Descriptions (excerpts)

### 1. FLEXIBILITY AND ADAPTABILITY: *Willingly adapts to constantly changing circumstances.*

- Sees new ideas and information as valuable and attempts to utilize
- Takes the best from others' opinions and uses this new information
- Adjusts to a variety of continuous changes and manages work accordingly...
- Looks at new or difficult situations openly and uses new knowledge and skills for resolution
- Adapts way of thinking when new challenges are presented...

### 2. CRITICAL THINKING AND LEARNING: *Analyzes, evaluates and constructs reasoning towards*

- problems and tasks, thus learning new ways and approaches.
- Researches and analyzes information needed to complete tasks effectively
- Applies creative, innovative thinking to tasks and in resolving issues
- Constructs carefully derived strategies resulting from research and analysis
- Generates ideas critical to maintaining a high quality of work; Takes risks when required

### 3. DECISION MAKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING: *Makes decisions based on research, analysis and critical thinking.*

- Manages ambiguity recognizing there is no one single answer and that multitasking is essential
- Designs and carries out projects with clear objectives and outcomes
- Gathers sufficient information to make an informed decision
- Proactively anticipates reactions to, and impact of, a decision...

### 4. COMMUNICATION: *Uses effective interpretation, composition and presentation of information, ideas and values to a specific audience. Openly explores a variety of perspective adjusting style and content to each unique individual, audience and circumstance.*

- Uses appropriate language to share and collect information and to exchange ideas
- Listens actively and checks for comprehension by audience
- Responds appropriately to verbal and nonverbal cues
- Writes clearly and correctly in a variety of contexts and formats
- Recognizes cultural differences in communicating
- Reads efficiently; gathering appropriate information to apply to each situation
- Communicates issues in a timely manner...

### 5. INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE: *Develops inner standards of excellence that are high yet attainable.*

- Acts with honesty, integrity and personal ethics
- Asks for help from a mentor to enhance capabilities
- Manages the ambiguity of a changing world to bring clarity to each working activity
- Acts appropriately and professionally with composure in key situations
- Develops and extends a sense of integrity and trustworthiness
- Takes time for reflection on self and on "the big picture"...

### 6. TEAMWORK AND LEADERSHIP: *Recognizes the value of working in teams and seeks to understand and build on differing perspectives to enhance team efficiency and quality outcomes.*

- Works collaboratively and harmoniously with others to achieve goals
- Solicits input by genuinely valuing others' ideas and expertise; willing to learn from others
- Places team agenda before personal agenda readily sharing information, knowledge and personal strengths
- Shares credit for team accomplishments and accepts joint responsibility for team shortcomings...

### 7. BUILDING AND SUSTAINING COMMUNITY: *Seeks others to work with collaboratively. Develops, nurtures and sustains communities to achieve common good through working with a variety of groups to address issues.*

- Demonstrates an attitude and willingness to learn about self and others
- Manages relationships with clear input and congeniality
- Works to understand and identify individual and group level dynamics
- Builds and maintains connections between people online and in person...

### 8. GLOBAL AWARENESS: *Recognizes how beliefs and actions fit within the context of a greater community.*

- Accepts responsibility for own actions; Builds equitable relationships
- Demonstrates respect for a diversity of ideas and utilizes the information gained from that diversity
- Evaluates ethical aspects of tasks and work and applies ethical courses of action
- Participates in activities that contribute to building community...

**Teaching Matters @ KPU**

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