



EDUCATION EXCHANGE

NEWSLETTER

It Takes a Community: Faculty Support Each Other in the Transition to Online Teaching

Last spring, with the declaration of a global pandemic, the Faculty of Education immediately pivoted to online models of teaching and learning. And, as it soon became clear that the Fall 2020 term would also be delivered online, the work of revamping entire courses, and indeed programs, began in earnest.

Instructors found themselves facing a multitude of challenges: logistical, technical, pedagogical, and emotional. For many, this new reality of online teaching meant there was a lot of learn. Fortunately, there was also a lot of support—with much of it coming from colleagues right within the Faculty.

Dr. Wayne Melville, the Dean of Education, notes that Education instructors are particularly fortunate given the wealth of online instructional experience, technical expertise, and collaborative support available. “Making the transition to synchronous and asynchronous teaching models, using new technologies and platforms, and coping with the uncertainties of the pandemic, brought its share of challenges and stress. The enormity of sudden change was unprecedented for everyone—but so was the response, as faculty and staff sprang into action to help each other. And ten months later, that sense of collaboration and collegiality has only strengthened.”

To navigate the transition to online instruction and course design, various supports—including options to join a Community of Practice, receive one-on-one individualized support on course design, participate in collaborative meetings with other instructors, and receive technical assistance—became available. These supports, offered in addition to the workshops and seminars from Lakehead University’s Teaching Commons, helped make the transition a lot less daunting.

Many people across the faculty have actively contributed to the changes that have occurred over the past ten months. In this article, we highlight Faculty individuals and their work which continues to forge a new path to effective models of online teaching and learning. These models will also inform future planning across the faculty.



Developing a Community of Practice: Dr. Angela van Barneveld- McCarragher

Spearheaded by Dr. Angela van Barneveld-McCarragher (Assistant Professor, Thunder Bay campus), the Faculty’s Community of Practice for Online Teaching and Learning is a knowledge-sharing, problem-solving group of instructors who hold monthly virtual meetings to address a range of topics related to the pivot to remote online teaching and learning. Over the past months, discussions have focused on topics including: using Zoom to deliver classes and engage learners, establishing presence and community in an online class, the influence of COVID-19 on our thinking about teaching and learning, and the sharing of course and activity design ideas.

Angela—who has been designing and facilitating online learning for many years—explains that the Community of Practice was inspired by interest in a Brown Bag session she gave in September 2019, entitled “Best Practices for Online Learner Engagement.” This was the first Brown Bag session to take place outside of a traditional classroom environment: it was entirely online, via Zoom.

“We had 28 people participate—a larger group than we tended to see with Brown Bags held in a classroom. Zoom was relatively new to the Faculty at the time, and the reaction was very positive. Based on this interest, we arranged follow-up opportunities to experiment with the technology.”

“Around this same time, Dr. Wayne Melville was inviting us to form more of a community as a faculty. My idea of a Community of Practice was born. Our first meeting took place in February 2020, right before the pandemic was declared and everything hit the fan. While *interest* was the motivator before, *need* now became a factor.”

For participants, the benefits of participating in the Community of Practice include getting help with challenges, accessing experience and expertise of colleagues, and personal and professional development. For the Faculty as a whole, benefits include knowledge sharing, synergies across units, and the development of new strategies and innovation.

Another important benefit is the creation of community, and the holding of space and place for people to share and care for each other. Angela highlights the feedback of one participant, who noted: “*The community part of the Community of Practice means so much these days (and always, but especially these days).*”

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Individualized Support through L.E.A.D. (Learning Educational Applications and Design): Helen DeWaard and Steven Secord

Offering individualized, one-on-one support was the idea behind the L.E.A.D. (Learning Educational Applications and Design) project coordinated by Helen DeWaard and Steven Secord (Contract Lecturers, Orillia campus). “Our intention was to support faculty in making strategic decisions as they designed their online and digitally enabled teaching spaces,” Helen explains. “This was coordinated through one-on-one meetings offered in July and August, leading up to the Fall semester, as instructors planned for their asynchronous and synchronous teaching practices. We offered a dedicated block of time to focus on course design using learning management technologies to realize effective and engaging learning.”

Thirty-three faculty members met with Helen and Steven over the summer to discuss specific facets of their online courses and teaching, including course design, assessment strategies, the integration of technologies like Flipgrid, Jamboard, or Google tools into their online courses, and concerns about instructor and student privacy and security.

Steven says that many instructors told them that the targeted conversations and one-on-one support helped to alleviate stress.

“The meetings served to reduce anxiety and allowed for focused attention on particular concerns or questions, like how to approach Zoom classes. For those who had never taught online before, we were able to share some of our experiences and resources.”

Helen and Steven bring a wealth of expertise to their roles. Helen, who is also a PhD candidate, has a Master of Education and Masters of Educational Technology degree, and specializes in digital and media literacies and professional practice with effective technology use. Steven, who has been working with Helen for the past four years, recently completed his Master of Education degree with a focus on the technologies of online learning.

The Faculty would like to thank the Teaching Commons for their financial support for this initiative.



Collaborative Planning Among Instructors in the BEd Program: Dr. Joan Chambers

Last summer, Dr. Joan Chambers (Associate Professor and Assistant Dean, Thunder Bay campus) took on the role of Assistant Dean and began facilitating a process of collaborative planning among Education instructors in the BEd program.

“Given the current situation we find ourselves in with the pandemic, working together and forming relationships is more important than ever,” she explains. “We can’t rely on bumping into each other in the hallways and bouncing ideas off of each

other—we need to make a planned effort to have conversations and engage in collaborative work.”

The idea behind the collaborative meetings is to deepen relationships among the BEd program’s many instructors across both campuses, with an ultimate goal of improving the educational experience for students. As part of this work, instructors have had opportunities to collaborate with others teaching in their program

division (Primary/Junior or Intermediate/Senior), and students have also been invited to join meetings to provide input.

Joan notes that the move to online program delivery has presented specific challenges to faculty and students alike, and the collaborative groups offer a space for concerns to be heard.

“In the Fall term, students were expressing feelings of being overwhelmed in keeping up with a multitude of Zoom-based classes, online work, and simply adapting to a shifted model of education. Faculty, as well, are experiencing the challenges of this shift. Teaching online courses takes more time and the technical learning curve has been steep. There are exciting features in the new technologies but also limitations we need to get used to.”

The collaborative groups share a common goal of working together to identify areas to improve teaching and learning in the BEd program. Joan notes that conversations have taken place about implementing changes to next year’s program, including the possibility of developing assignments across subject areas and grouping Thunder Bay students in cohorts. The working groups have already developed online spaces where instructors can share syllabi and course calendars, including assignment due dates, to help streamline scheduling.

This work of the collaborative groups is guided by the Vision Statement that forms part of the Faculty’s Strategic Plan: “Inspire, and be, active and critical learners who are recognized for their leadership and commitment to research, teaching, and service in Education.”

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Technical Support and Guidance: Lucas Johnson

Since 2003, Lucas Johnson (Educational Technologies Facilitator) has been the go-to person for technical support within the faculty, whether that is computer support, network connectivity assistance, troubleshooting technology challenges, or more recently, pedagogical technology support.

“My workload and the requests for help certainly went up with the shift to remote teaching and working, as staff and faculty were no longer connected to the campus network and were attempting to work in new ways,” he notes. “I have also been involved in discussions about good pedagogy in an online environment, and how we can best leverage the tools we have to achieve it.”

Lucas is also a PhD student, studying the decision-making and implementation cycles of educational technology and how these processes affect learners and ultimately, society.

His technological expertise and academic research have dovetailed in his work as he has developed and delivered numerous technical support sessions, live demos, Q&A-style workshops, and Brown Bag presentations since the pandemic began. He has helped various working groups design online competency tests, delivered professional development sessions on the collaborative logistics of using Zoom and Google Tools, offered students a teaching seminar titled “When Technology Fails,” and much more. Alongside this work he has been transitioning staff to a remotely accessible phone system and developed a [website of FAQs](#) pertaining to online teaching and working remotely.

He notes that one of the biggest hurdles of the online shift has been coming to terms with the fact that “we have less autonomy over how things happen as they relate to teaching and learning, as well as less control over other areas of our lives, including how we socialize. Nonetheless, I believe we are all highly adaptable and have done an amazing job as a group to continue our work and support our students through these unprecedented times.”

Faculty of Education Alumni Profiles *What Are They Doing Now?*



Bobby Henry PhD student, Trent University

Graduate of the Master of Education Program, specialization in Indigenous Education, 2020 (Thunder Bay campus)

“Sgeç:no/Greetings!

My name is Stanley “Bobby” Henry. I completed the Master of Education program in 2020, specializing

in Indigenous Education. While I was a graduate student, I conducted a self-study to uncover the longitudinal impacts of a Hodinohsyó:ni language immersion program in my home community of Six Nations of the Grand River Territory. My research interests in this field/discipline stems from my personal lived experiences for I am an alumnus of an Indigenous language reclamation program in my community. Since graduation in May 2020, I started my doctoral research at Trent University in the PhD Program in Indigenous Studies. Here I will continue building on my research started at Lakehead. In addition, I accepted an appointment as a lecturer in the Department of Educational Studies at Brock University,

which began in July 2020. This academic year, I am an instructor for an introductory course to Cayuga language and a course on the pedagogy of Indigenous arts.

Given that my life has drastically changed and the pace of my life accelerated, I will forever cherish my educational experiences at Lakehead University. My supervisor, Dr. Lisa Korteweg, and committee member, Dr. Paul Berger, were incredible mentors. Their attention to detail and knowledge regarding Indigenous education was exceptional. I gained an invaluable education and I owe both Lisa and Paul gratitude as they were inspirational to my professional aspirations of becoming a researcher and figuring out ways to “give back” to my community. Their knowledge about research is nothing short of spectacular—thank you Paul and Lisa. In addition, I also cherish the course work I completed prior to writing my research portfolio. I wanted to note that Lakehead offers thought-provoking courses that engaged me in deep and critical thinking. I was constantly encouraged to reflect on how Hodinohsyó:ni Knowledge Systems can inform/challenge/decolonize mainstream education, which I executed when opportunities emerged throughout all my courses. Nya:wêh (Thank you) Dr. Alexa Scully and other course instructors!

In closing, I hope you find resonance in my educational experience at Lakehead. I found Lakehead University creates opportunities for Indigenous students to critically self-reflect, remember our belief systems and (re)learn our Knowledge Systems via higher education. This critical self-reflective practice, remembering, and (re)learning is key in working towards solidarity and towards reconciliation and decolonization.”

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Magno Goncalo

Grade 2 Teacher, Canadian International School of Vietnam

Graduate of the Bachelor of Education program, 2020 (Orillia campus)

“I had been working in a support staff role for five years at Humber College in Toronto, when I began feeling an urge to travel and see the world. After much research, I became intrigued with the possibility of teaching ESL in South Korea. I didn't have a teaching certificate at the time, but I did have an undergraduate degree, which was the only requirement for the position. My plan was to teach and travel for a few years, then make my way back to Canada. However, I quickly fell in love with both teaching and living abroad, and after four years in South Korea I decided it was time to obtain a teaching certificate. This led me to Lakehead's (Orillia) Bachelor of Education program.

Even before I had graduated from the program in spring 2020, I had accepted a two-year contract to teach at the Canadian International School in Vietnam. I'm now teaching a Grade 2 class of 14 students, all of whom are English Language Learners (ELLs). Teaching a class of ELL students is a world in itself—you really learn the power of effective differentiation strategies and techniques to reach students who have limited understanding of the language. A big focus at the beginning of the year was creating anchor charts with visuals to support my students in their learning.



Living in Ho Chi Minh City is phenomenal. There are over eight million motorbikes on the city's roads and a lack of traffic signs, so it is common to see motorbikes driving in the opposite direction of traffic. Pho, Vietnam's national noodle soup dish, can be enjoyed on street corners and makeshift restaurants. Vietnamese people are kind and welcoming. They love to start conversations with expats and offer recommendations for things to do.

Teaching internationally has been a profound experience. I encourage new teachers to experience teaching abroad. Many of the teachers in my current school cohort are in their early 20s and have also just recently graduated from one of Ontario's BE programs. For many of them, this is their first career and their first teaching experience.

For me, the most significant challenge presently is accepting that almost nothing goes according to plan. You must be flexible, patient, and understanding—and learn to adapt. Mistakes are guaranteed, especially for new teachers. With all of that said, I am grateful to work in a profession that helps students reach their full potential, thus empowering them to help build a better tomorrow.



Dr. Jody-Lynn Rebek

Assistant Professor, School of Business and Economics, Algoma University

Graduate of the Joint PhD in Education Program (2019)

“I'm an Assistant Professor, researcher, consultant, artist, social entrepreneur, and mother. As a mindfulness practitioner, I enjoy teaching and facilitating knowledge in collaborative, practical,

and challenging but humanistic ways. Mindfulness is a human capacity and contemplative contemporary practice of being still, fully present, accepting, and aware of life with a non-judgmental, compassionate perspective. I am inspired by people and our potential to innovate, learn, and grow together—to be better people and to build better futures.

At Algoma University I am currently conducting research on Meditative Inquiry in higher education. This research builds on my dissertation, entitled *Mindful Leader Development of Undergraduate Students* (2019), which examined undergraduate and faculty experiences in a course that integrated the use of the Headspace app for guided meditation. Seventy-five percent of the research participants reported greater self-awareness, and also expressed themes of deep honesty, self-understanding, focus, open-mindedness, relaxation, problem-solving, confidence, creativity, and more. Some participants perceived that mindfulness and leadership were integral and intertwined, and that mindfulness motivated them to be better leaders.

I recently facilitated a session at the university called *Healthy Professor: Incorporating Practices of Well-Being to Teach Fully and Engage Students Meaningfully*. In this session, I explained, promoted, and demonstrated aspects of holistic health practices (such as intention setting, gratitude, and mindfulness) in the context of teaching and learning. I discussed ways to nurture authentic leadership through these practices that promoted greater self-awareness.

Other facets of my work at Algoma University include helping to develop the new Project Management Certificate program, Innovation and Entrepreneurship program, and the University Access Program, and being part of an interdisciplinary committee working on Freshwater and Food Research.

I am also the Principal Consultant of ViVe Strategy Consulting, through which I offer strategic planning, leadership development, and training to businesses and organizations to enhance productivity, purpose and success. This involves designing personalized solutions, such as projects or programs, through individual or executive coaching. I also sit on the *Community Development Roundtable* for Sault Ste. Marie.

Appreciative Inquiry and Participative Action Research are methodologies I enjoy employing in my work to help individuals, organizations, social enterprises, and communities improve capacities, clarify focus, and renew meaningful visions/growth. During my time at Lakehead University, I enjoyed learning about innovative methodologies, including arts-integrated research (as presented by Dr. Pauline Sameshima) and narrative styles of academic writing that were introduced throughout the curriculum.”



In Our Digital Lives, Is Media Literacy Still Relevant?

An editorial by Dr. Michael Hoechsmann
(Chair of Education Programs in Orillia)



“You have invented an elixir not of memory, but of reminding. . . your pupils . . . will read many things without instruction and will therefore seem to know many things, when they are for the most part ignorant and hard to get along with . . .”

– Plato, *Phaedrus* (370 BCE)

“What Huxley [author of *Brave New World*] feared was that there would be no reason to ban a book, for there would be no one who wanted to read one. Huxley feared those who would give us so much [information] that we would be reduced to passivity and egoism. Huxley feared we would become a trivial culture... that what we love will ruin us.”

– Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death*.

The stern warnings of Plato and Postman fit right into current debates about the impact of social media: the apparent lack of wisdom of crowds; narcissism and hostility bred in socially divided echo chambers; people everywhere hunched over small screens; and educators’ concerns about information overload and the apparent gullibility of learners with access to a vast online library of humanity who often won’t stray past the first ten suggestions of a Google search.

Plato’s assertions remind us too of the power of our tools and how they shape our worlds. The *Phaedrus* bore witness to a moment of rupture in communication technology, a pivot from a primarily oral culture which put high value on memory, performativity, and dialogue to the bedrock of literacy which became the foundation of the archive, the library, and the modern schoolhouse.

“We live in a digital environment which offers suprahuman support for the sharing of the collective intelligence of humankind, but which also absorbs us into a spider’s web of obsession, distraction, distortion and trivialization.”

A genealogy of literacy is beyond the scope of this short piece, but it bears repeating that print literacy is not value neutral; it can empower and it can also oppress. We in Education line up on the empowerment side of the coin, but literacy’s Other casts a long shadow on our practice.

Digital communication settles like a layer on a cake upon three other modalities active today: 20th century mass media, print literacy, and the substratum of oral communication. Some of the contradictions embedded in newer forms have histories that include continuities across, and ruptures from, previous communication modalities.

One generation after another tells itself that they are living in the future, that the changes they are living through are transformational. The uptake of television in the 1950s as the new electronic story teller was dramatic. Educators saw its potential, but the battle over the public or private control of the airwaves had been conceded several decades earlier when private radio broadcasters fought and won the battle in the U.S. over this precious resource. Nonetheless, given their power and reach, modern media have long been mobilized in, and for, education, culminating in formal recognition such as the 1989 launch in Ontario of a formal, provincial media literacy curriculum.

A highlights reel of some media literacy moments in Canada that led to this outcome would include:

- the role of the National Film Board since the 1940s in instructing us to produce and interpret media;
- the 1950s/60s impact of the Toronto School of Communication (Harold Innis, Eric Havelock and Marshall McLuhan) on the idea that communication modalities can transform how ideas are shared and understood, as embodied in “the medium is the message”;
- the influence of our loud neighbours, from Disneyfied cultural imperialism to the pedagogical potential of Sesame Street;
- the critique of second wave feminism on the objectification of the female body, especially documentaries such as Jean Kilbourne’s *Killing Us Softly*;
- the influence of Paulo Freire and critical pedagogy which put an onus on the learner as a knowing subject;
- the insights into semiotics and visual literacies of authors such as Roland Barthes and Umberto Eco;
- the founding in 1978 of Ontario’s Association for Media Literacy;

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KERI-LYN DURANT,
2019-20 award recipient Coughlin-
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- international coalitions led by organizations such as UNESCO (i.e., the 1982 UNESCO Grunwald Declaration that declared school systems can no longer ignore modern media);
- the impact of cultural studies which insisted on the interplay between media practices and self and group identity, including gendered, racialized, and social class experiences;
- the launch of the home VHS/VCR player and the massive uptake of that technology in the 1980s which allowed us to stop and examine moving media;
- the spark brought by the publication in 1985 of Len Masterman's *Teaching the Media*; and
- the 1989 launch of the Ontario *Media Literacy* curriculum, the first such official curriculum in the world, and one which embedded media literacy in Language Arts.

The Ontario media literacy mandate was a broad one: to examine media texts as rhetorical, ideological and aesthetic forms; to acknowledge the way audiences/students interacted with media, sometimes critically; and to recognize the powerful role of media industries in setting the agenda.

Media literacy's apotheosis in Education was short lived, elbowed aside by Ed Tech and digital literacy. If we fast forward from the media moment of 1989 to the present day, we see a new set of layers: the “launch” of the static World Wide Web in 1993; the emergence of a participatory Web 2.0 in about 2003; and the consolidation of an algorithmic, data-driven Web 3.0 by 2013. We see also the dramatic growth of home and mobile computing and the launch of the smart phone.

The corporate sector continues to control most of what is created in contemporary media “markets:” print media, radio, television, computing, video gaming, telephony, social media, and educational publishing. Every decision taken by the developers of the tools we rely on has a monetary dimension. Educational provision is a business, and the business model impacts the entirety of our digitized lives: learning, leisure, entertainment, commerce, governmental service, telephony, etc.

Like any tools, the new ones have many positive affordances and potentials. Many previously existing communication tools have converged into our mobile devices. This has provoked a profound transformation in teaching and learning that we are still struggling to reconcile. And Web 2.0 enabled the outpouring of stories, perspectives, and accounts from historically marginalized voices.

We live in a digital environment which offers suprahuman support for the sharing of the collective intelligence of humankind, but which also absorbs us into a spider's web of obsession, distraction, distortion and trivialization. The role of media and digital literacy in this context is to provide us with the ethical and critical frames and communicational competencies for full and active participation in contemporary life.

Michael Hoechsmann is an executive committee member of Media Smarts: Canada's Centre for Digital and Media Literacy and the Chair of the North American sub-chapter of UNESCO's Media and Information Literacy Alliance.

Getting Practical: Digital Literacy Framework for Canadian Schools



Faculty News



Dr. Tanya Kaefer and Co-Investigators Receive Grant for Research Addressing Achievement Gap in Reading Comprehension

Dr. Tanya Kaefer (Associate Professor, Thunder Bay) is a co-investigator on a research project that has been awarded a grant by the Inter-University Research Network.

The research project—entitled *Vocabulary and Knowledge: Powerful Allies in Redressing the Achievement Gap in Reading Comprehension*—focuses on increasing intentional vocabulary instruction as a means of closing academic achievement gaps for children in Nova Scotia who are from lower socio-economic status and/or minority linguistic backgrounds.

“Vocabulary knowledge predicts reading comprehension skills throughout schooling, as well as broader critical thinking skills, and high school achievement. Unfortunately, these are also areas in which there are striking differences between children from impoverished backgrounds and those from more economically advantaged homes. As knowledge growth is exponential, early development of knowledge is key to ensuring academic success for all children. These factors have made developing children’s vocabulary a crucial issue in education research,” Tanya explains.

In the study, Tanya and her co-investigators will examine the effectiveness of intentionally targeting students’ vocabulary learning in schools identified as serving a higher proportion of students from lower socio-economic status backgrounds. The outcomes of this study are expected to contribute to our knowledge of teacher-friendly approaches to vocabulary instruction, to help close the achievement gap in reading comprehension.



Dr. Pauline Sameshima Elected to College of Scholars of the Royal Society of Canada

Congratulations to Dr. Pauline Sameshima (Professor and Canada Research Chair in Arts Integrated Studies) for being elected to the College of Scholars of the Royal Society of Canada. This is a tremendous achievement—recognition by the Royal Society of Canada is the highest honour an individual can achieve in the Arts, Social Sciences and Sciences. Pauline was recognized on the basis of her innovative work in curriculum theory, poetic inquiry, teaching, research dissemination, and civic engagement development.

Founded in 1882, the Royal Society of Canada advises the government and the larger society, recognizes excellence, and promotes a culture of knowledge and innovation in Canada and with other national academies around the world.



Drs. Wayne Melville and Don Kerr Co-Editors of New Book: *Virtues as Integral to Science Education*

Dr. Wayne Melville (Dean of Education) and Dr. Don Kerr (Chair, Undergraduate Studies in Education) have a new co-edited book out: *Virtues as Integral to Science Education: Understanding the Intellectual, Moral and Civic Value of Science and Scientific Inquiry*.

The publisher, Routledge (*International Studies in the Philosophy of Education Series*), notes that the book “challenges the increasing professionalization of science; questions the view of scientific knowledge as objective; and highlights the relationship between democracy and science. Exploring how virtues relate to citizenship, technology, and politics, the chapters in this work illustrate the ways in which virtues are integral to understanding the values and limitations of science, and its role in informing democratic engagement. The text also demonstrates how the guiding virtues of scientific inquiry can be communicated in the classroom to the benefit of both individuals and wider societies.”

Written by a range of international experts in science, the history of science, education and philosophy—including a chapter by Dr. Melville and Dr. Kerr—the newly published book will be of particular interest to scholars broadly interested in the terrain of ethics in science and teaching science, and in Philosophy of Education.



Dr. Gary Plum Wins Research Award from the Commonwealth of Learning

Dr. Gary Plum (Assistant Professor, Orillia) has received an award from the Commonwealth of Learning for educational programming targeted toward global issues relating to youth. His work involves pedagogies that promote youth rights, political engagement, mental health, and action toward the climate crisis. This project builds on a SSHRC-funded research initiative titled “Educational Transfer Between Small States of the Commonwealth: A Vertical Case Study Analysis of the Professionalization of the field of Youth Work.” The study won a Partnership Engagement Grant in November 2019 and is scheduled to continue through 2021.

Gary describes the research as “a case study designed to capture the conditions that both permit and prevent educational transfer between small states”—countries with a population of approximately 1.5 million or less. The study follows the transfer of youth work curriculum between Commonwealth countries in the Caribbean and the South Pacific. He explains that youth work has emerged as a national priority in many countries, particularly in small states, many of which are located in regions where youth populations are proportionately higher than in those with larger populations.

Transferring promising educational practices between countries has been shown to be an effective means to address societal issues, as well as a way to attain educational goals and amass new knowledge about curriculum and pedagogy. Gary notes that recent advancements in online and distance learning during the pandemic have enabled increased access and accelerated opportunities for educational transfer.

This award was granted by the Commonwealth of Learning, an intergovernmental organization that promotes the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources, and technologies.

New Instructors - Welcome

Welcome to the new instructors in our Bachelor of Education program:

Thunder Bay campus

- Charleen Mackett – supporting International Students: Conversation Café
- Lesley Masters – Classroom Management
- Taylor Murie – Mathematics
- Melissa Oskineegish – Introduction to Teaching

Orillia campus

- Jeff Adams – Visual Arts
- Shannon Stevens – Visual Arts
- Darren Todd – Science and Math
- Kaitlyn Watson – Social Studies
- Fay Williams – Democracy and Education

Faculty of Education Alumnus Greg Chomut Honoured with Prime Minister Certificate of Achievement

Congratulations to alumnus Greg Chomut (BEd, 2008), who has received national recognition for his work as a “compassionate educator who builds bridges between his Indigenous students and the wider community, and helps those students find their voices,” as noted on the government website announcing his status as a winner of a 2020 Prime Minister Certificate of Achievement.

Greg, who teaches Grade 9-12 art, history and media at Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School in Thunder Bay, is described as a teacher who “focuses on giving his students confidence and helping them find their voices, whether they’re making a painting, learning from Elders how to bead moccasins, recording a song with a Juno-winning act, or writing letters to politicians.”

One of his notable achievements is his work in co-founding the Wake The Giant Music Festival, a public festival in which students perform alongside Indigenous and non-Indigenous acts with an overarching goal of promoting cross-cultural understanding in the city. Over 300 local businesses and organizations are now displaying Wake the Giant decals in their windows, which represents that they are inclusive and welcoming spaces for Indigenous youth.

Greg also organizes diverse classroom and extra-curricular activities for his students, including an after-school art club (student artwork is displayed in airports and many students



have sold their artwork); an “Amazing-Race” style orientation for new students to help them navigate the city; and an annual full-school re-enactment of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, including an hour-long lesson on Ojibway sniper Francis Pegahmagabow, with the grandson of this First World War soldier speaking to students. Further, he invites members of Parliament to speak to students and has led student trips to Ottawa, where students meet politicians.

He also regularly invites at-risk students to live with his family as they finish their high school education. All the students who have lived with him have graduated.

Each year, up to 25 Prime Minister Certificates of Achievement are awarded to recipients with exemplary teaching practices.

Congratulations, Greg, on this notable achievement!

Dr. Gerald Walton Discusses Rape Culture, Politics, and Bullying in Online Interview

In an [interview](#) with the Centre for Education, Law and Society at Simon Fraser University, Dr. Gerald Walton (Professor, Faculty of Education) discussed the relationship between bullying, culture, and social politics—and how social policy and curriculum shape what happens in the classroom.

He noted that marginalized groups, including LGBTQ and racialized students, face a heightened risk of being targeted for bullying.

“A lot of my work is about who gets marginalized, when and how, and the political contexts in which it happens,” he explained. “What interests me is not the micro-interactions but the larger political social attitudes, processes and contexts that guide these moments in the first place.”

Political social attitudes, which in turn authorize and normalize behaviours, are shaped by ideologies of colonialism and misogyny, he noted. This supports a culture in which sexual violence and coercion are normalized and validated through



legal jargon, laws, and everyday jokes and imagery.

In discussing the need to interrogate practices and ideologies that support bullying and sexual violence, Gerald stressed the role of policy and legislation, such as the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the importance of incorporating discussions of them in teacher education programs. Equipping students with a conceptual framework to understand how marginalization plays out will help to challenge it in school cultures.



Faculty Completes Institutional Quality Assurance Review Process for Undergraduate and Graduate Programs

As part of our commitment to offering high quality undergraduate and graduate programs, the Faculty of Education has adopted the Quality Assurance Framework of the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. Over the past two years, Cyclical Program reviews have been completed for the undergraduate, Masters, and PhD in Educational Studies programs.

The review findings highlighted various strengths of the programs. For example, undergraduate programs are well supported by “committed faculty members, both full-time and contract; engaged support staff providing support in areas such as libraries and technology; quality programs and high academic standards; academically and professionally engaged students; and a long history of programming for Indigenous learners.” The MEd program was found to be laudable in its “committed and energetic faculty; increased focus and offerings in Indigenous studies; and the maintenance of a community of scholars through ongoing

workshops and an annual Graduate Student Conference.” The Joint PhD in Education program was noted to be “clearly a high-quality program ... [with the] ... diversity of the curriculum and the flexibility of the mode of delivery as key program strengths.” Further key strengths, alongside program recommendations, are outlined in the reviewers’ reports.

Pivot Report Submitted to Ontario College of Teachers

In October, the Dean submitted a Pivot Report to the Ontario College of Teachers, outlining the steps that the Faculty has taken in response to the pandemic. The report included the alternatives to placements that have been developed, the supports put in place to aid the transition to online instruction, and the temporary regulation changes that allowed students who had met graduation requirements to graduate on schedule. The report was fully accepted by the College, an indication of the trust they have in the quality of the teacher education program.



BEd Student Melena Hope Awarded Ontario College of Teachers Primary/Junior Scholarship

Congratulations to Melena Hope (PhD, BEd Primary/Junior teacher candidate,

Orillia), who has been awarded the Ontario College of Teacher’s Scholarship award for the Primary/Junior division!

This OCT award is granted to individuals who “demonstrate a high level of preparedness for teacher education through examples of community involvement, background and life experiences.”

Melena, who has spent her whole life in education, received a BFA Honours degree at York University and then travelled abroad to obtain a MA and PhD in art history at the University of London, at

the Courtauld Institute of Art in England. This was followed by a two-year post-doctoral fellowship.

As a mature student, Melena’s first career was teaching as a sessional and visiting lecturer at colleges within the University of London, and then as head of art history at Morley College in London, England. Her decision to embark on a new career came after she took time off to raise her children and was encouraged to work as an unqualified supply teacher within a local elementary school board. It was during this time that she realized her calling in life. She feels that teaching the youngest of students and fostering a love for knowledge at an early age is a profound responsibility that she finds greatly rewarding. For this reason, she decided to return to school as a mature student and pursue her vocation as an elementary school teacher within the Primary/Junior division in the Faculty of Education, maintaining Dean’s List status throughout her studies.

In addition to her strong background in education, Melena has also volunteered and worked with children in various capacities, including teaching art lessons and contributing her time to her local parent council by painting a mural at a local school and co-ordinating fundraising initiatives, among other activities.

“I am humbled and honoured to have received this award from the Ontario College of Teachers. To be acknowledged by the professional body in my field has inspired me even more,” she says.

Remembered

Tom Beardy, Indigenous Language Instructor

Tom Beardy was born on his family's traditional land near Bearskin Lake, Ontario in 1943. At a tender age of twelve, his mother died, leaving behind seven children, five of whom ended up in Residential Schools. At age seventeen, Tom left home and began working at various places, including Pickle Lake Mines, Windigo's Fish Plant, and the Madson Mine in Red Lake. It was not easy for him to leave his homeland, where he had skillfully learned how to hunt, fish and trap with his older brothers and his father's help.

Tom began the next phase of his life when he moved to Thunder Bay, acquired his high school diploma, and began university courses. For nearly 30 years, his ultimate passion was teaching his Indigenous Language—Ojibwe (Severn dialect). An integral part of the Department of Aboriginal Education and Indigenous Language Teaching Diploma program, Tom taught numerous courses and completed many translation projects for local and regional First Nations organizations in Northern Ontario and Northern Manitoba.

Tom's students remember his kind, friendly, humble, and gentle spirit. Many viewed him as their mentor. His relatives have fond memories of him displaying humour on many occasions. He valued his family and was known for being there for them, despite the distance, when they were going through hardships. His love, support, and generous spirit spread to helping his friends, family, community and students. He was also known to be an immense support for his community hockey teams. Lastly,



in his quiet demeanour, he made peace with God and attended St. Thomas Anglican Church intermittently throughout his life.

We will miss Tom's presence in the Faculty, and the care he had for our students.



Dr. John Holmes Kelleher, Professor Emeritus

Born in 1931 in Brandon, Manitoba, Dr. John Kelleher's life was heavily influenced by his mother, who espoused education's value, often telling her children that education was no load to carry.

Graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree from Brandon University, John went on to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Toronto. Upon graduation, he accepted a teaching position at a private Catholic high school in Ottawa, where he honed his science teaching skills, focusing on Chemistry and Biology.

Looking to move closer to his family, John accepted a position teaching Chemistry and Biology at Westgate High School. He taught there for several years before again feeling the pull of higher education. The early 1960s was

a time that abounded with opportunities for people with Science backgrounds to expand their education in the United States. He enrolled in the Master of Science Teaching program at the University of North Dakota at Grand Forks. After graduation, he continued with his studies at Grand Forks and graduated with his Doctorate in 1970.

He was then offered faculty positions at several universities in Western Canada and one in Northwestern Ontario: Lakehead University. Again, he made his career decision based on the geographic location of his family in Brandon. His tenure of teaching Science and later computer technology at the Faculty of Education at Lakehead University spanned the years 1971 to 1994 when he retired with the title of Professor Emeritus.

John took his mother's words and transformed them into a beautiful career in education, spanning 40 years. He was a brilliant, natural, and passionate learner who passed his love of learning and curiosity onto his family.

Spotlight on Lis Boileau, Library Technician

Lis Boileau joined the Education Library (Thunder Bay) in May 2019. Here, she shares a bit about her journey to becoming a Library Technician, her diverse job description, her favourite part of the work, and the ongoing shifts in Library culture.

A History of Library Experience

“Growing up I didn’t plan to be a library technician, but life kept pushing me in that direction. As a high school student, I worked at a public library and loved it. After high school I pursued post-secondary education and, after finishing a Honours Bachelor’s degree and Master’s degree in English at Lakehead, I was faced with a decision of what I wanted to do. My thoughts returned to libraries and I decided to pursue a Library Technician Diploma program.

While completing my diploma I began working nights at Chancellor Paterson Library on campus, and I had also worked previously as a part-time staff member in the Education Library. I remember a conversation with (now retired) Library Technicians Liz Arthurs and Julie Wright. They were talking about how many years off they were from retirement, and I jokingly said to them, ‘yeah, well, when you retire, I’ll gladly come in and take over for you ...’ And that’s exactly what happened. In May 2019 I started the position of Library Technician in the Education Library. A few months later I took parental leave, and have now been back in the position since August 2020, working (mostly virtually) alongside Gisella Scalese. Honestly, I consider this my dream job!”

A Diverse Job Description

“My work is diverse. From frontline help to behind-the-scenes revenue balancing and everything in between, I work to make materials accessible in the Library and to our students, staff, and faculty. I assist instructors and students in accessing materials and digitizing resources, which involves making scans or photocopies (within fair dealing guidelines) of chapters, journal articles, and sections of books. I also upload digitized resources to the Desire2Learn platform and link purchased ebooks to D2L. The Library also coordinates reserves, borrowing and curbside pickup, and we’ve been developing our Makerspace materials as well. Helping to maintain our numerous Library guides, which span all sorts of subjects and are constantly growing, is another part of my work—making sure links are up to date and information is accurate.

Recently, I started working on the “Ask/Chat with a Librarian” interactive help tool, which is proving to be very popular during the pandemic. This is an Ontario-wide tool in which anyone can log in and ask a question of any of the participating library workers. I really enjoy it, and it helps to provide some direct contact with users.

I genuinely love helping our patrons find the materials, resources, and answers they are looking for. Interacting with students, staff, and faculty is the best part of my work. One of our goals at the Library is to give people the tools and resources they need to have the confidence to do some of their research independently,



Lis, with partner Karl and daughter Emily

but I also want people to know I am genuinely happy to help, anytime. Virtually all of the experiences I have with users of the library are kind, open, and honest dialogues.”

Shifts in Library Culture

“Library cultures have shifted tremendously in recent years to a patron-led model, which I’m really keen on. Libraries are not just repositories of books; they are places where people want to go and hang out, places where they want to eat, and places where they want to talk with their friends. They should be vibrant, comfortable community spaces, and the Education Library led by Gisella has embraced this philosophy.

Of course, with COVID-19 there have been other shifts. We’re seeing a huge shift toward virtual teaching and learning, so within the Library we’re working to ensure people are still accessing all of the wonderful physical resources we have, and working to transfer these into the virtual world as much as possible. There are some challenges with digitization and copyright restriction, and ebooks are not always available, so there are new steps involved as we can’t just physically hand someone a book anymore. But our goal remains the same: to connect our patrons to resources and information, and ensure they are finding what they are looking for at the Library.”

Lis Boileau can be reached via email at eboileau@lakeheadu.ca