



GRADUATE STUDENTS IN TEACHING MINI CONFERENCE 2018

Day 1

Tuesday, May 1, 2018

All sessions take place in I. K. Barber Building, Lillooet Room 301

9:30 – 10 a.m. Conference registration

10 – 11 a.m. **60-minute participatory session**

Drafting a graduate student roadmap for education research

Facilitators: Miranda Meents and Laura Melissa Guzman, UBC

Part of good teaching is reflecting on your teaching practices and working to keep them current with the best standards in the field. One way graduate students can do this is to learn about, or get involved in, research about student learning in higher education, often called the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). However, getting involved in even a small research project can be daunting and overwhelming. In this session we want to provide graduate students with a roadmap to help novices explore the SoTL process and help the more experienced navigate their own SoTL research. Using worksheets and discussions, we will walk participants through the steps of doing SoTL research from conception to dissemination, focusing on the rewards and challenges from a graduate student perspective. Small group discussions will focus on (i) what goes into the different stages of a SoTL project — finding a project and support, planning the study, carrying out the study, and disseminating the results; (ii) identifying and anticipating difficulties in each of these steps; (iii) proposing solutions and suggestions for handling difficulties. Our goal is to use these discussions and our expertise to assemble a document providing the tools and resources participants need to engage in education research in a way that works for them. The facilitators are PhD candidates bringing expertise in developing and conducting multi-year SoTL research projects while balancing their non-SoTL thesis research. They have extensive professional development training in teaching and have presented their SoTL research on multiple occasions.

11 – 11:15 a.m. Break

11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. **60-minute participatory session**

Authentically connecting course content to students' daily lives

Facilitator: Laura Super, UBC

School is not always seen as a meaningful place for students (Reber, 2018). How do we make the first year classroom more meaningful by authentically connecting course content to students' daily lives? Engaging students by asking big questions relevant to current local, national, and global issues (Abendschein et al. 2018), for example, is one approach. During this session, we will cover concepts and strategies relevant for making learning more meaningful for first year students across disciplines at UBC. Participants interested in facilitating connections for undergraduates of higher year levels are welcome to join; the key is to be open to discussing how to make introductory and basic survey courses more meaningful for students. The audience will be engaged by discussion, brainstorming sessions, and development of goals and strategies to implement in the classroom. The session objectives are: i) to share concepts and strategies relevant for authentic connections and ii) to, as a group, focus in and develop 3-4 ideas that we can implement in first year classrooms at UBC.

12:15 – 1 p.m. Lunch break

**1 - 1:30 p.m. 30-minute campfire storytelling**

Departmental culture shifted through a TA consultant program

Facilitators: Gerry Gourlay and Cynthia Korpan, University of Victoria

This session will showcase the Teaching Assistant Consultant (TAC) peer mentorship program in one department at a university. The program was piloted campus-wide in 2009, but it was not until 2015, when a dedicated graduate student successfully convinced the current administration of the department that the program had to be a necessary component to support TAs. In three years, the TAC program has not only impacted TAs but also Senior Lab Instructors (SLIs), the department chair, and even faculty members. The TAC will tell the story of the TAC program and how one department went from a disinterested teaching culture to one that is collaborative and interested in how teaching and student learning can be improved.

Since this session is proposed to be done in a storytelling format, participants will be encouraged to sit in a circle and interact with contributions and questions about how or why something was done or provide insight into similar programs at their respective universities.

This session is intended for anyone who is interested in teaching or improving graduate TA support. By the end of this session, participants will:

1. Be inspired by hearing about and discussing how a TA program can transform a department's culture about teaching and learning.
2. Recognize the impact that teaching observations have on TAs' reflective inquiry and overall professional development.
3. Realize the important components necessary for a successful TA peer mentor program.

1:30 - 1:45 p.m. Break**1:45 - 2:45 p.m. Round tables (20 min x3)****1. Teaching and learning as social justice practice**

Facilitator: Colin Dring, UBC

Drawing inspiration from movement pedagogy, I'm interested in having an ideastorm about how we can use pedagogy as a method to advance social justice in contexts of complexity, uncertainty, and/or inequities. Keywords that I'm mulling over are: systems thinking, complexity theory, and social justice. What is the role of pedagogy in movements of social change (with an emphasis on being unable to know — e.g. the problem, the solution, the processes/relations). This session is more of an idea that I'd like to tease out and I'm curious if others are trying to bring these conceptual ideas forward in their pedagogy.

2. Spicing up a student's learning with project-based learning

Facilitator: Stephanie Cheung, UBC

Project-based learning (PBL) is a pedagogical approach that involves students pursuing a specific goal or addressing a central question in form of activities, which commonly result in an end product, e.g. an architecture model, a thesis report. Multiple studies suggested that compared to rote learning, students do better in applying content knowledge in solving problems through learning with PBL, which are some more complexed and higher level skills according to the Bloom's taxonomy. Moreover, PBL helps enhance skills like communication and critical thinking, as students are required to work collaboratively throughout the process.

PBL comes in various scale, and there are many examples of PBL that could be found in different courses at UBC. Some have the entire course curriculum being PBL, like the directed studies program that provides students an opportunity to conduct research for their thesis; while some courses use PBL as a tool for enhancing students' learning. For examples, creating a Wiki page for a specific subject area, or presenting research results in form of a multi-media product. Nonetheless, proper curriculum design and appropriate guidance are needed in order to bring positive impact to students' learning. In this round table session, we will look at some essentials for PBL that help bring positive learning experience to students. We will also brainstorm together ideas of PBL that would fit your subject area. Join this round table session to exchange ideas on how to "spice up" students' learning experience using PBL!

3. Instruction adaptation: teaching multiple years of study

Facilitator: Shawn Hetherington, UBC

In the early years of my teaching career, I have experienced a major lesson in teaching: the ability to effectively teach across multiple years of study. Easily summed up by the fact that first year students will often have highly different educational needs than those in later years of study. Furthermore, it is not only student needs that change, also their preferences, ideal learning methods and attitudes towards education. I know it may seem obvious, but when putting this into practice there are many intangibles that cannot be planned for. This topic also relates to the ability of adjusting instruction to each new group of learners present in classes each term, even within the same year of study. Essentially I want to discuss adaptability and how this could be considered a premier skill for instructors in higher education.



4. Effectiveness of group exams in teaching and learning

Facilitator: Irwin Chan, UBC

In this session focuses on the following three questions: How to implement discussion/group exams in teaching? How to investigate the effectiveness of discussion/group exams? And how to avoid/solve the problems encountered in the pilot study. This proposed roundtable discussion aims to present and discuss a pilot study on group exams that I am currently conducting. In particular, it aims to: (i) present a way to (a) investigate the effectiveness of group exams and (b) utilize group exams in teaching and learning; (ii) discuss some general findings of this pilot study and problems that I may encounter during the study; (iii) hold a discussion period on how to investigate and utilize group exams.

The intended audience for this session are Graduate students, TAs, instructors, and anyone interested in incorporating discussion/group exams in teaching.

1:45 – 2:45 p.m.

Poster session

1. FHIS/CENES TA Training Program, UBC

Presenter: Dr. Brianne Orr Alvarez

2. Linguistics TA Training Program, UBC

Presenters: Alexis Black & Avery Ozburn

3. BioTAP, Building a teaching community through TA training and professional development in the biology program at UBC

Presenters: Evelyn Sun and Kathy Nomme with contributions from Angie O'Neill, Robin Young and Carol Pollock

4. Physics and Astronomy TA Training Program, UBC

Presenters: Jeff Bale and Deborah Good

5. Psychology TA Training Program, UBC

Presenter: Dr. Grace Truong

6. Sociology TA Training program, UBC

Presenter: Dr. Silvia Bartolic

2:45 – 3 p.m.

Break

3 – 4:30 p.m.

90-minute participatory session

Facilitating effective peer-to-peer learning and teaching

Facilitators: Najah Adreak, Jeff Bale, Roquela Fernandez and Mabel Ho, UBC

“Education is not an affair of ‘telling’ and being told, but an active and constructive process.” (Dewey, 1916).

Peer-to-Peer Learning and Teaching (P2PLT) is an educational framework that encourages having students at the center of their own construction of understandings. P2PLT actively engages learners in content delivery, uses the concepts of collaborative learning, and involves learners in the process of peer feedback/assessment (Assinder, 1991; Boud et. al, 1991; Topping, 2005). In addition, the constructive process of P2PLT promotes learner agency and motivation (Stigmar, 2016). In this interactive and interdisciplinary workshop, we have facilitators from Cardiac Surgery, Creative Writing, Physics, and Sociology working collaboratively together to help you explore different ways to integrate P2PLT into your discipline.

By the end of this workshop, you will be able to:

1. Define peer-to-peer learning and teaching (P2PLT) and evaluate its purpose for both learners and instructors.
2. Anticipate and mediate challenges associated with P2PLT by developing strategies to address these concerns.
3. Adapt P2PLT strategies used in the workshop to your own discipline.
4. Identify topics in your discipline that would benefit from P2PLT and design a draft lesson plan that takes advantage of P2PLT.



GRADUATE STUDENTS IN TEACHING MINI CONFERENCE 2018

Day 2

Wednesday, May 2, 2018

All sessions take place in I. K. Barber Building, Lillooet Room 301

9:30 - 10:30 a.m. **60-minute participatory session**

Debunking myths, preconceptions and misconceptions in learners

Facilitators: Arnab Ray and Rhy McMillan, UBC

This session invites graduate students interested in teaching to join us for an interactive exercise where we will explore the difference between expert versus novice learners. In particular, the focus will be on identifying where disciplinary misconceptions/preconceptions originate and our role as instructors in shifting learner attitudes to facilitate overcoming them. We will be engaging session participants in a myth debunking exercise, which will provide a framework for their own teaching in the future. By the end of the session the participants will be able to:

- Differentiate between an expert versus novice learner.
- Define and discuss contextual framework as well as preconceptions/misconceptions within experts and novices.
- Generate a debunking plan.
- Appreciate the role of instructors in supporting the identification and debunking of preconception/misconceptions.

10:30 - 10:45 a.m. Break

10:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. **Panel: Graduate students in teaching (career in teaching)**

Panelists:

- Dr. Warren Code, Associate Director, Science Centre for Learning and Teaching Science Faculty, UBC
- Dr. Brianne Orr Alvarez, Lecturer of Spanish; Instructor in Arts One (Authority and Resistance); Director of FHIS Learning Centre
- Dr. Katharina Rothe, Postdoctoral Fellow, Medical Genetics, UBC
- Dr. Lacey Samuels, Professor, Botany Department, UBC

We bring together panelists with a diverse set of experiences teaching as or with graduate students to discuss the role of graduate students in teaching, and teaching in the professional lives of graduate students. In what ways are graduate student already contributing to the teaching mission of the university? How might they? How does teaching make contributions to their overall role as disciplinary practitioners and scholars? What has been helpful for them to think about in placing teaching, and developing as teachers into the large and demanding list of tasks and responsibilities that graduate students face during their degree? How has teaching fit within their larger career goals? Join us for what promises to be a lively and interesting discussion.

12:15 - 1 p.m. Lunch break

**1 – 1:30 p.m. 30-minute session**

Teaching as research: teaching professional development as a tool for career success

Facilitator: Rowshan Rahmanian, UBC

Most doctoral students have teaching responsibilities as part of their program and, in fact, many of them consider faculty positions as their career goal. Participation in teaching professional development (TPD) programs throughout graduate studies has shown to increase graduate students' teaching competence, bolster their belief about their ability as instructors, and increase their sense of community among their peers. Higher levels of engagement in TPD is associated with increased chances of getting tenure-track faculty positions. Research also shows that the impact of TPD programs on graduate students' self-efficacy and career success is not limited to those who choose to pursue academic careers. There is also evidence that contrary to common belief, participation in TPD has no effect on graduate degree completion time.

In this session, we will share a brief summary of existing literature regarding the effects of TPD in graduate students' career development and success. In the second part of the session, we will discuss Teaching as Research (TAR) projects supported by UBC's Centre for Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning (CIRTL). The participants will be able to share their personal experiences of specific areas for improvement of student learning that they have encountered in their teaching, and discuss how it can be formulated as a potential TAR project.

1:30 – 1:40 p.m. Break**1:40 – 2:10 p.m. 30-minute presentation**

Interdisciplinary lesson planning

Facilitators: Analise Hofmann, Idaliya Grigoryeva, Nicolas Romualdi, UBC

Is there a new subject that you wish to introduce or reintroduce to your students that is outside of your area of expertise? UBC is full of experts across many disciplines, and very notably a group of graduate students committed to improving teaching practices in their disciplines. Sometimes unorthodox methods of collaboration and sharing of expertise can lead to unique learning opportunities for students. This session will present an example of an inter-disciplinary graduate student team that worked together to produce statistics materials for a biology class as part of a SoTL project, some realizations about their disciplinary identities, and types of resources that are available. Participants will engage in a brainstorming session to explore ways that new materials they wish to present to their students (that other disciplines may already excel at or not) can be brought to their classrooms. Together we will explore how to deliver materials that require pedagogical content knowledge (knowledge about how to deliver specific content) outside our areas of expertise and ways that we as graduate students may be able to lead the way in improving our disciplines, and introducing new skills that would be useful to students working towards being practitioners in our fields of study.

2:10 – 2:20 p.m. Break**2:20 – 3:20 p.m. 60-minute participatory sessions**

Social and emotional development in undergraduate education

Facilitators: Colin Dring and Magdalena Wojda, UBC

Social and emotional development in undergraduate education — in professional, activist, voluntary, and daily-living, working in teams, building strategies for self-care, reflexivity, communication skills, and other social/emotional skills are elements that are becoming more common. However, many learners are not encouraged to develop this part of themselves or their skill sets, particularly in an undergraduate setting. This 60-minute session provides participants with a brief rationale for incorporating social and emotional development activities into their learning activities. We will collectively explore and play with a range of active learning approaches and different activities designed with an eye towards social and emotional development. Application of session learning outcomes will be valuable for personal and professional development.

3:20 – 3:30 p.m. Break



3:30 – 4:30 p.m. **60-minute participatory session**

Datamining Canvas: how students use it; what works

Facilitator: Patrick Dubois, UBC

To support instructors in providing online resources for their students, UBC recently adopted the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS). One of the benefits of Canvas is that it records aspects of student usage; this data can be valuable in assessing effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies.

This session will be a case study in how:

1. Course material was prepared to leverage some Canvas features in support of student learning and testing of pedagogical theory,
2. Student behavioral data was conveniently gathered using a free Firefox add-on to get past some of the Canvas interface limitations, and
3. How that data was wrangled and analyzed to find support for pedagogical theories driving instructional design.

Participants will learn how to get a per-student / per-page summary of Canvas interactions for a whole course, with an appreciation of some advantages and disadvantages of how the data is formatted. We will discuss and brainstorm ideas on how best to design a course for Canvas that leverages the information that can be gathered. The analysis case-study will highlight some techniques for overcoming limitations and for testing validity assumptions. This session will be useful to any instructor using (or interested in using) Canvas to facilitate more effective learning in students, and especially useful for anyone wishing to use Canvas as a research tool, either for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) or simply for comparing student behaviour against instructional objectives.