

INSTITUTE FOR SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

ANNUAL REPORT

2012-13



*Gaining new insights into
university teaching and learning
by integrating knowledge and
collaborating across academic
disciplines and contexts*

Institute for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISoTL)

Mount Royal University

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Engaging in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning authentically means to be motivated by a duty and commitment to serve the important interests of students
- Kreber, 2013

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

The Institute for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning seeks to encourage, facilitate and support the engagement of Mount Royal University faculty in teaching-learning related scholarship, and to advance the existing body of research in this area.

The Institute supports rigorous, systematic, evidence-based study of teaching and learning which is focused on student learning, grounded in context, and methodologically sound. It is inclusive and unified by potential to have impact in the classroom, and to

The Institute for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning operates as a

* ***nexus for communication and collaboration***, providing resources and coordinating initiatives locally, regionally, nationally, and beyond,

* ***community of scholars*** advancing the existing body of knowledge about teaching and learning, while building a culture of inquiry,

* ***research centre*** encouraging, facilitating, and supporting investigation leading to deeper understanding of and sustained improvement in student learning.

... DIVERSE ... APPLIED ... PRACTICE-BASED ...

RESEARCH ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

Our goals are to build a culture of scholarship related to teaching and learning, cultivate communities of practice, and encourage interdisciplinary collaboration in this area, and to assume a leadership role in building the profile of the scholarship of teaching and learning provincially and nationally.

contribute to the study of teaching and learning and the production of knowledge. It is diverse in discipline, theory, methodology, and method.

STAFF AND ASSOCIATES



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Director (effective July 2013)
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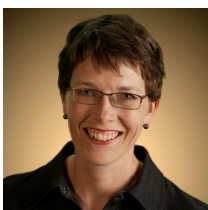
Deb Bennett, Dept of General Education
2012-13 Nexen Scholars Program Co-ordinator and Facilitator



Miriam Carey, Academic Development Centre
2013 Nexen Scholars Program Facilitator



Ron MacDonald, Dept of Journalism
2013 Nexen Scholars Program Facilitator



Karen Manarin, Depts of English and General Education
2012-13 Writing Workshop Facilitator and Consultant

2013 Scholars and their projects

Investigating the connections between technology, student perceptions, and student learning,

Brett McCollum, Chemistry

Theory and Practice: Placing Field Experience at the Center of the Teacher Education Program, *Kevin O'Connor, Education and Schooling*

Communities of Practice: Students' experiences within an introductory education course, *Gladys Sterenberg, Education and Schooling*



NEXEN SCHOLARS PROGRAM

“This whole experience has been really productive for me. The group is really supportive — when we found things that challenged our assumptions about education, we could talk through different issues.”
Karen Manarin, 2009 Nexen Scholar

2012 Writing Residency Participants

How Term Projects Help Students to Connect Theory with Practice, *Israel Dunmade, 2010 Nexen Scholar*

Students' Experience of Learning Disciplinary Thinking in a First Year Physics Course, *Qasim Syed, 2010 Nexen Scholar*

Student Evidence of Change in Themselves as Learners When They Take a Course That is Intended to Enhance Their Learning Effectiveness, *Lee Wertzler, 2010 Nexen Scholar*

A generous donation from Nexen Inc. supports the Nexen Scholars Program, an annual research development program designed to encourage and support faculty committed to systematic scholarly inquiry into student learning.

Since 2009, the Nexen Scholars Program has brought together faculty from a range of academic disciplines committed to investigating and documenting significant issues and challenges in teaching and learning. Over 40 Mount Royal faculty have participated in the Nexen Scholars program, representing all of 6 Mount Royal's academic faculties, and 23 of its academic departments.

The central work of the Nexen Scholars is to develop course-based

inquiry projects, conduct research that sheds new light on a significant aspect of student learning, share evidence and findings publicly in an effort to influence practice in the field, and help build a culture of teaching and learning scholarship at Mount Royal University. Nexen Scholars are selected for a one-year term, participate in three multi-day off-site residencies, and engage in monthly collaborative activities during the time that they develop and conduct their inquiry.

The Nexen donation also supports Going Public Awards for scholars to present their work at conferences, and an annual writing residency to assist them in preparing an article for publication.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE TO TEACHING AND LEARNING

How do new technologies affect student learning?

In a previous study, Associate Professor and Apple Distinguished Educator Brett McCollum discovered that iPads greatly increase students' ability to visualize molecules — an essential skill for chemists, and one that poses significant challenges for many students. As a result of his findings, the Department of Chemistry has been able to acquire a set of iPads to use in the classroom.

Brett already uses this technology in various ways in his teaching. In his Nexen-sponsored project, Brett will be investigating the connections between technology, student perceptions, and student learning using a think-aloud protocol where chemistry students will describe their thought processes as they try to match physical or visual chemical representations to the correct symbolic representation of various molecules.

“What we’re really doing here is taking a traditional teaching model and modernizing it for technology available today that students are well-adapted to use.”

–Brett McCollum, 2013 Nexen Scholar



How do one-on-one interactions with instructors impact student performance?

Assistant Professor April McGrath knew that even though many of her students struggled with statistics, they did not come to her for help — so she decided to explore the effects of mandatory office hours on student performance.

For one semester, April met with every student one-on-one for a “learning check up”. Beyond helping students with specific course content, she guided them in developing strategies to improve their study habits. Not only did students’ test scores improve, but April also found she gained a deeper understanding of the difficulties and anxieties her students experience — enabling her to modify her teaching to address those issues.

“I have a much better understanding of my students now. I know what concepts they struggle with, and how their attitude is affecting their study habits. And I can help them work through those challenges.”

–April McGrath, 2012 Nexen Scholar



How can we help students apply what they are learning in the classroom to the workplace and to their everyday lives?

Faculty Development Consultant Miriam Carey, PhD, wanted to know how instructors could help students understand the connections between their studies and the world around them.

“Students tend to treat their courses as though they’re separate from each other and don’t apply to anything else. I want to show them how what they’re learning in one class can be applied to other classes, the workforce and their own lives.”

Miriam used non-traditional teaching methods, such as journaling, small group work and reflective papers to inspire integrative learning, analyzing the students’ journals to determine the efficacy of her methods. While her study confirmed her assumption that these non-traditional methods inspire deeper learning, she was surprised by the strength and self-awareness students displayed in their writing.

“I used to ask myself, ‘How can I teach what’s in the textbook?’ Now I ask, ‘What do students really need to learn? And how can I help them learn it?’”

–Miriam Carey, 2009 Nexen Scholar



NEXEN 2012-13

GOING PUBLIC AWARDS

Spatial Cognition, a Threshold Concept Everywhere!, 4th Biennial Threshold Concepts Conference & 6th NAIRTL Annual Conference/June 2012/Cork, Ireland/*Katherine Boggis, Earth Sciences, 2009 Nexen Scholar*

Millennial Generation Perceptions of Web Source Credibility: Adventures in Objectivity, Improving Student Learning Through Research and Scholarship: 20 Years of ISL/August 2012/Lund, Sweden/*Patrick Carmichael, General Education, 2011 Nexen Scholar*

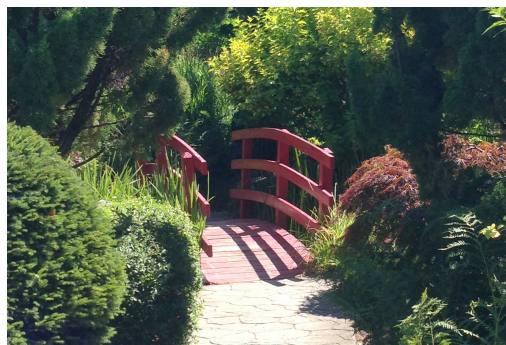
Does Term Project Format Affect its Effectiveness in Helping Students' to Connect Theory with Practice or Not? 2012 ISSOTL Conference/October 2012/Hamilton, Ontario/*Israel Dunmade, Earth Sciences, 2010 Nexen Scholar*

Re-engineering Resilience: Assessing Student Responses to Race and Class in Courtney Hunt's Frozen River, London Film and Media Conference 2012: The End of Representation/June 2012/London, England/*Kelly Hewson, English, 2011 Nexen Scholar*

Science and Math Anxiety and Its Influence on Student Learning, 2012 Symposium on Scholarship of Teaching and Learning/November 2012/Banff, Alberta/*Melanie Rathburn, General Education & Biology, 2010 Nexen Scholar*

Mentoring: A Study in Studio Pedagogy, as it Relates to Voice Training for Classical Singers at the Undergraduate Level, 2012 ISSOTL Conference/October 2012/Hamilton, Ontario/*Reid Spencer, Theatre, Speech and Music Performance, 2011 Nexen Scholar*

A qualitative analysis of journalism students' reflections of value making in social research methods, World Journalism Education Congress /July 2013/ Mechelen, Belgium/*Maria Victoria Guglietti, Journalism, 2012 Nexen Scholar*



Investigating How Digital Technologies Can Support a Triad-Approach for Student Assessment in Higher Education, E-LEARN 2012 - World Conference on E-Learning in Corporate, Government, Healthcare & Higher Education/October 2012/ Montreal, Quebec/*Norm Vaughan, Education and Schooling, 2009 Nexen Scholar*

Data in Dialogue: Students' Evidence of Student Learning, 2012 ISSOTL Conference/October 2012/Hamilton, Ontario/*Lee Wertzler, Psychology and Undergraduate Studies, 2010 Nexen Scholar*

Designing Curriculum to Foster Creativity: Adapting Class Design to Student Demographic, OBTC Teaching Conference for Management Educators/June 2013/Asheville, USA/*Amy Zidulka, School of Business, Royal Roads University, 2011 Nexen Scholar*

My participation in the 3rd World Journalism Congress was rewarding at many levels. First, it allowed me to discuss my project with scholars engaged in my discipline, many facing similar challenges. Second, I had the chance to network with scholars engaged in similar projects. Third, I was exposed to new concerns and challenges in journalism education that are related to my own interest in value making, such as the rapid change in journalism professional identity. If students value knowledge by making connections to, among other things, a learned view of their profession, how is value making affected by contrasting definitions of journalism skills and knowledge? This is a question that I am looking forward to address in a follow-up research project in the near future. — Maria Victoria Guglietti

GONE PUBLIC:

MORE NEXEN PROJECT DISSEMINATION

MRU SOTL-in-PROGRESS Series

What Connections Can Students Make With Scholarly Articles When Explicitly Encouraged To Do

So/February 2013/*Margy MacMillan*,
2012 Nexen Scholar

Just Checking In: The Effect of an Office Hour Meeting and Learning Reflection in an Introductory Statistics Course

February 2013/*April McGrath*, *Psychology*, 2012 Nexen Scholar

The Impacts of Student-Authored Learning Plans in a Senior Journalism Production Course

March 2013/*Sally Haney*,
Journalism, 2012 Nexen Scholar

Exploring the Student Voice in the Use of Case Studies

April 2013/*Joanne Bouma*, 2011 Nexen Scholar

Are Research Methods Worth Studying: A Description of Journalism Students' Value Making of Social Research Methods

Skills/May 2013/*Maria Victoria Guglietti*,
Journalism, 2012 Nexen Scholar

This past year, Nexen Scholars presented their research at national and international conferences in Canada, the United States and Europe. A selection is presented here. Of note, at the 2012 conference of the International Society for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning – the largest annual gathering of SoTL Scholars in the world – Mount Royal faculty delivered 16 presentations, the largest number of presentations by any university in Canada other than the host university McMaster.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

The use of guided reflection as a SoTL methodology to explore fluid processes: An exploration of value making and professional identity development as manifested in reflection activities

MRU SoTL Symposium/November 2012/Banff, Alberta/*Maria Victoria Guglietti*, *Journalism*, 2012 Nexen Scholar

Are social research literacy skills worth knowing? A qualitative analysis of journalism students' value making in a social research methods class

Canadian Communication Association Conference/June 2013/Victoria, BC/*Maria Victoria Guglietti*, *Journalism*, 2012 Nexen Scholar

Invigorate Your Accounting Classroom: Using Group Activities to Enhance Learning

Wiley Faculty Network Accounting Workshop/February 2013/Toronto, ON/*Valerie Kinnear*, *Accounting*, 2011 Nexen Scholar

Students' Experiences Learning Statistics

Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education/June 2013/Sydney NS/*April McGrath*, *Psychology*, 2013 Nexen Scholar

The Role of Student-authored Learning Plans in a Senior Journalism Production Course

International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning/Oct 2012/Hamilton, ON/*Sally Haney*,
Journalism, 2013 Nexen Scholar

What would you do for a double-wide?: Rendering the invisible visible in a

introductory film studies class, Canada, Culture and the US Border Conference/June 2013/Sault Ste. Marie, ON/*Kelly Hewson*, *English*, 2011 Nexen Scholar

Developing professional identity in journalism education: A qualitative exploration of third year students' learning about research literacy skills

Canadian Association of Communications Annual Meeting/June 2013/Victoria, BC/*Andrea Williams*, *Journalism*, 2013 Nexen Scholar

PUBLICATIONS

Calculations and Expectations: How engineering students describe three-dimensional forces

Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 4(1)/*Janice Miller-Young*, *Math, Physics & Engineering*, 2009 Nexen Scholar

Formative Assessment and Syntheses in Reflection Journals

Transformative Dialogues 6(3)/*Jodi Nickel*, *Education & Schooling*, 2010 Nexen Scholar

Have you, my little serpents, a new skin? Collected Essays in Teaching and Learning

5/*Kelly Hewson*, *English*, 2011 Nexen Scholar

SOTL SYMPOSIUM

<http://isotlsymposium.mtroyal.ca/2012Symposium/index.html>

The Institute for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning hosted our third annual Symposium on Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, November 8 – 10, 2012 in Banff, Alberta with pre-symposium workshops offered on the first afternoon. This gathering of teacher/scholars was a “practitioners conference” dedicated to developing individual and collaborative teaching and learning scholarship, sharing nascent data and findings, going public with compelling results of completed

research projects, and building an extended scholarly community. The goals of this event included understanding and improving student learning through systematic scholarly inquiry and building collective knowledge for the future. There were more than 100 participants at the Symposium, (approximately 34 from Mount Royal University) from more than 30 institutions. The Symposium offered over fifty concurrent sessions and also featured four keynote presentations.



KEYNOTES

We were pleased and honored to have four distinguished keynote speakers for the 2012 Symposium on Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

Carol Geary Schneider, President of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), spoke at our Opening Banquet on Thursday night, November 8.

Jennifer Murphy, Manager of the Irish National Academy for Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning (NAIRTL) spoke on Friday afternoon, November 9.

Carmen Werder, Director of the Teaching-Learning Academy at Western Washington University, joined Erik Skogsberg on the role of student voice in scholarship of teaching and learning on Saturday afternoon, November 10.

Erik Skogsberg, a doctoral student in the College of Education at Michigan State University, joined Carmen Werder to speak about his experience as an undergraduate and graduate student scholar of teaching and learning on Saturday afternoon, November 10.

WORKSHOPS

Prior to the Symposium Opening Reception and Banquet on Thursday, November 8 2012, the Institute for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning sponsored a series of Pre-Symposium Workshops. These workshops were designed to be hands-on, collaborative, and practical, focusing on three areas of import for those engaged in and supportive of the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning & Faculty Development: A Collaborative Conversation. *Facilitators: Marg Wilson (Norquest College) and Richard A. Gale (MRU)*

Casting a Wider Net, Fishing in New (Data) Streams: Finding the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Wherever it Might be Hiding. *Facilitator: Margy MacMillan, MRU Library, 2012 Nexen Scholar*

Qualitative Methods of Data Collection & Analysis in Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. *Facilitator: Deb Bennett, MRU General Education, 2009 Nexen Scholar*

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

REVENUE	NEXEN DONATION	166,645
	SYMPOSIUM REGISTRATIONS	63,309
	TOTAL REVENUE	229,954
LABOUR COSTS (INCLUDING BENEFITS)	DIRECTOR'S HONORARIUM	7,733
	ADMINISTRATION	63,981
	STUDENTS	600
	FACULTY FACILITATORS AND COLLABORATORS	8,016
	OFFICE OF RESEARCH SERVICES SUPPORT	10,000
	TOTAL LABOUR	90,330
NON-SALARY EXPENSES	GENERAL OPERATING	10,766
	SCHOLARS PROGRAM INCLUDING WRITER'S RESIDENCY	59,189
	SYMPOSIUM	69,669
	TOTAL DIRECT EXPENDITURES	139,624



LOOKING FORWARD

As incoming Director, I'd like to thank the previous Directors of this Institute, Drs. Richard Gale and Jim Zimmer, under whose stewardship we developed interest and momentum in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at Mount Royal University, and also received our two major donations to date.

I have been involved with the Institute since its inception in 2008. I was one of the original scholars in the Nexen Scholars Program, where I developed a project entitled "Calculations and Expectations: How Engineering Students Describe Three-dimensional Forces." This project was a pivotal experience for me: I found a community of scholars who are interested in engaging in scholarship about teaching and learning as a valuable and intellectual activity, it changed my perspective about what makes good teaching, and it strengthened my assertion that the scholarship of teaching and learning is an effective way for instructors to question their assumptions about what is happening in their classroom, gain new insights about student learning, and assess the effectiveness of the innovative pedagogies they are developing.

In order to make the transition from engineering to teaching and learning-related research, I have sought out opportunities to learn and practice a wide range of research and teaching methodologies, such as facilitating subsequent cohorts of Nexen Scholars, sitting on the Human Research Ethics Board, and working for the Academic Development Centre. These roles have exposed me to many of the innovative teaching and learning activities and scholarship already happening at Mount Royal University. From this strong foundation, the Institute will continue to work to build capacity for this type of scholarship, begin to support collaborations across academic disciplines and contexts, and further involve students — with the ultimate goal of developing a deeper understanding of and sustained improvement in student learning.

Janice Miller-Young, PhD



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