

Centre for Learning and Teaching

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on university teaching and learning



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Note From the Director

Issues of diversity and inclusiveness continue to present us with significant challenges in teaching and learning, and in our professional and personal lives. Each article in this issue of *Focus* addresses diversity from different perspectives, but all the authors present their ideas with hope and enthusiasm. They give us courage to believe that as educators we can find ways to make a difference, engendering not only a recognition of the value in our diversity but also the possibility of creating an inclusive society.



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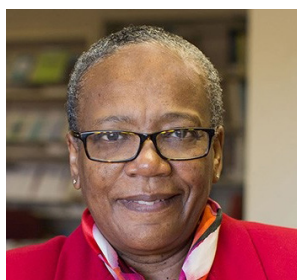


**DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY**

Creating brave spaces for diversity and inclusion in the context of teaching and learning: An individual and institutional responsibility

“...[E]ducation for social change is... praxis, or theory in action.”

(Arnold et al., 1991, p. 3)



Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard
School of Social Work

Diversity and inclusion in teaching and learning are central to the work of Dalhousie's School of Social Work (SSW). We see this work as both an individual and institutional responsibility.

For more than twenty-five years there have been efforts to have North American universities integrate diversity into their curriculum. However, in Canadian universities, faculty members have traveled difficult pathways as they introduce this content into their courses (Bernard and Butler 2014; Campbell, 2003; Carniol, 2010; Garcia and Van Soest; 2000; Hill, 2009; MacDonald and Bernard 2014). The field of social work education has been addressing these issues in a myriad of ways over the years, including a focus on structural and policy change, and Dalhousie's SSW has been on the leading edge of this work. The social work education accrediting body mandates the inclusion of “ethnic, cultural, and racial diversity” (CASWE, 2008) within the curriculum and school composition.

As is stated on the School's website, the Dalhousie SSW's commitment to issues of diversity and inclusion are firmly imbedded in its vision, mission and guiding principles. For example, our vision states:

The School of Social Work at Dalhousie is committed to building a socially just society, defined as one that upholds and validates the values of equality, diversity, inclusiveness, democracy, and concern for human welfare. We manifest and advance curricula, scholarship, and school culture that are congruent with these values.

This vision is upheld through such goals as building a diverse and inclusive environment that recognizes and welcomes cultures, belief systems, and historically marginalized groups, and engaging students

in collaborative exchanges with others to promote social justice and change within the profession of social work, social institutions, and broader community contexts.

In a critical reflection on the Dalhousie SSW journey, MacDonald Bernard, Campbell, Fay, MacDonald, and Richard (2003) assert that to promote and strengthen diversity, institutions must move beyond token changes to address power relations and institutional change. MacDonald et al. (2003, p. 468) "... identified nine components of institutional practice that must be changed in order to promote and strengthen diversity." These are: Program Design and Objectives; Town and Gown; Governance; Student Recruitment, Admission and Retention; Faculty Recruitment and Retention; Curriculum Changes: Beyond Tokenism; Pedagogy; Field Program; and Institutional Privilege. Looking specifically at curriculum changes and pedagogy, MacDonald et al. (2003) suggest that diversity content be included in all courses, in addition to having specific content on equity seeking groups. Furthermore, they call for reform of pedagogical processes, to enhance capacity to challenge forces that mitigate against congruency.

Since diversity in many forms --racial, cultural, gender, sexual orientation, sexual identity, (dis)Ability, age, and the intersectionality of these various social identities are integral to the courses we teach and to the curriculum as a whole, our faculty tries to embed these realities into all aspects of school life. Whether it is helping a student plan for practicum at the newly created Social Work Learning Clinic, or engaging students in community based learning projects, SSW faculty are leading the change they want to see in making diversity and inclusion work in their programs. The following School statement is included in all undergraduate social work courses:

Critically Reflective Awareness, Analysis and Action

"[T]he program goals of the Bachelors of Social Work at Dalhousie School of Social Work state that we facilitate the graduation of students who 'Have learned and internalized principles and processes of critical reflection and analysis.'

Becoming proficient in critically reflective analysis involves learning both from academic

knowledge and through personal and professional experience to develop the skills of:

- standing back from one's own taken-for-granted assumptions, biases, beliefs and values in order to problematize practice situations;
- expanding one's understanding and options by framing practice situations from multiple perspectives;
- critiquing and reframing problems within broader socio-political and ethical perspectives; and
- considering and taking action that is informed by this reframing."

A statement such as the above provides faculty with a solid foundation from which to not only integrate diversity and inclusion issues into the curricula, but it also mitigates against some of the institutional barriers that often block authentic change. As one of few African Canadian faculty at Dalhousie, and indeed in Canada, this has been a welcomed change that I have experienced over the past twenty-five years. My teaching philosophy is centered in critical education for social work and social change. I believe learning to practice social work in ways which promote social justice is essential. I agree with the assertion made by Phan et al. (2009) that translating diversity and oppression content into "meaningful learning is complicated" (p. 325). However, as social work educators we have an obligation to prepare students for effective and appropriate practice in diverse societies (MacDonald and Bernard, 2014, p. 231). Despite the difficulties, I strive to ensure that sufficient attention is paid not only to what we teach, but also how we teach. Although the context and institutional practices that we operate within has changed over the years, such as increasingly larger class sizes, and greater number of sessional faculty who teach in our programs, we remained committed to the vision and mission of the SSW.

As an educator who sees diversity and inclusion as essential, not an option, I consistently try to foster learning opportunities that can motivate students to engage in critical practice which can lead to change. Teaching this content must and does challenge students to move beyond their comfort zones, and having creative assignments, helping with this is a strategy built on solid theoretical principles and emphasizing to students that learning is as much a life long journey, as it is a process of change. Like Bernard and Mo-

riah (2007) suggest, social workers need to be active agents on this journey if they are to provide culturally relevant services to the families and communities they work with.

As a professor of social work, it is my responsibility to create what I consider brave spaces that foster deep learning about diversity and inclusion. There are a range of course materials that reflect and respect diversity in an integrative manner that could be used in a variety of courses and programs. For example, the use of critical incidents in the classroom can be the most memorable teachable moments and can be used in the classroom as teaching tools. As one student recently shared with me at the end of a very interactive course "... thanks again for a great course ... It is life changing information..."

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Understanding public space design needs for wheelchairs through experiential learning



Dr. Mikiko Terashima
School of Planning

At the Dalhousie University School of Planning we emphasize instilling the skills and competencies future planners require in order to understand the various needs in urban spaces for diverse members of our communities. The concept of Universal Design (1, 2) teaches us that we must create our cities and towns so that people of different ages, genders, types and levels of physical mobility, and cultural backgrounds can use the spaces we share without barriers. Students learn aspects of building environments—functions, forms and

designs of public spaces, connectivity of roads and public transports and relationships between nature and urbanity—that cater to different groups of people throughout their program. It is not difficult to discuss in the classroom what such a space can look like and how it can function. But it is not easy to truly realize and understand what it is like to use a space as a person of characteristics different than one's own without having that experience.

Last winter we started incorporating a community design exercise in one of our courses through an experience of maneuvering the streets of downtown Halifax in a wheelchair. Second-year undergraduate students in the Community Design Method course

were required to observe and analyze how built environments support or impede movements, and were given wheelchairs to experience the use of using urban environments while having a disability. Dr. Lee Kirby at the School of Health and Human Performance and the Director of the Wheelchair Skills Program at the Rehabilitation Centre provided two hours of wheelchair training before the students took their wheelchairs to the street to test drive and experiment.

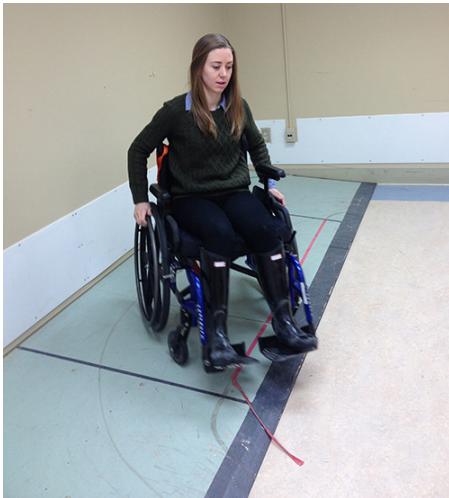


Figure 1: A student navigates learning how to use a wheelchair for the first time.

Although many assignments in the school involve site observation, they often only allow students to see the problems and solutions from their own perspectives and experiences as young, physically able, educated and largely middle class persons. This experience, however, made students enter into a new territory—not only were they new to using wheelchairs, but most had never thought of the possibility of having such disabilities at this point in their life.

The insights they gained were profound. Many found slight hills difficult to climb, the smallest of ditches and digs in the grass areas of sidewalks challenging. They experienced cracks on the streets and sidewalks that caused them to stumble or fall, many crosswalk signal buttons were out of their reach when they were in their wheelchair, and many buildings were difficult to access. Some students claimed that the fact they were made to go around to the side of buildings to enter made them feel degraded and like second-class citizens. Students reported encountering many people trying to help them out, and expressed mixed emotions saying that while they were touched by the kindness, they felt apprehensive about being treated like they needed help. The brief encounter made

them realize that this is what wheelchair users feel on a day-to-day basis, and as planners, they can design the space so that the wheelchair users experience their environments differently.

What the wheelchair experience gave students was not only a physical setting to discover the elements in built environments—holes, ditches, gaps and unreachable buttons—to consider, but the opportunity to *emotionally* connect to the issues experienced by wheelchair users in the cities that one day they could be designing (3). This is extremely valuable when students graduate and become professional planners. The emotional connection will turn a mere abstract, altruistic and moral obligation for planning for diversity to a mission, or commitment entrenched in their emotional motivation and individual experiences (4).

Statistics shows that about 1 in 10 people in Canada have some form of disability (5). In 20 years, the population aged 65 years and older will double in Nova Scotia. Physically frail, individuals in need of wheelchairs will likely increase rapidly. Future planners need to find strategies to change our city to prepare for this demographic shift. Last winter, we also experienced a record high of snow that disrupted our daily activities. The winter highlighted the importance of understanding how built environments that do not function well with such an extreme weather condition affect the lives of community members with physical disabilities by urban planners, public works, engineers, public transit services and social services alike.

We saw a great success with the first-time wheelchair experience module for planning students. But we need to expand such learning experiences related to many other groups—for example, vulnerable groups such as older people, people from different cultures, people suffering from mental illnesses and people going through economic hardships. Providing an educational program that enables students to experience perspectives of people who are different from them—not just reading about them or listening to them, but experiencing what they go through even for one day—will be key to enriching our students' learning, and produce future professionals (not just in planning) who will make our cities more livable, accessible and healthy.



Figure 2: Students experience the snowy streets of Halifax from a new perspective.

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Change One Thing Challenge

Attention Dalhousie Faculty and Instructors!

**The Centre for Learning and Teaching challenges you to
*share your student engagement activities!***

Two Conference Travel Grants for up to \$1000 each will be awarded!

To Apply:

- Share an engagement activity that you developed within the last 12 months and that is still part of your current teaching practice.
- Describe a student engagement activity that has a positive impact on student learning in one of your courses. You may also provide evidence through student testimonies.

Deadline to Apply is Tuesday, February 16, 2016

For more information please contact:

Dr. Deborah Kiceniuk, Centre for Learning and Teaching

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University-Wide Teaching Award 2015 Recipients

Dalhousie Alumni Association Award for Excellence in Teaching

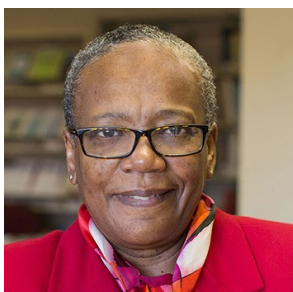
Dr. Carolyn Campbell (School of Social Work)



This year, the university's top award for teaching has been awarded to the School of Social Work's Carolyn Campbell. Dr. Campbell has been with Dalhousie since 1994 and has been instrumental in the redesign of the university's undergraduate programs in social work. Dr. Campbell utilizes a range of teaching methods, including blended, distance learning, interactive and engaging formats including workshops and experiential learning. Her leadership in the field has been recognized nationally by the Canadian Association of Social Work Education, where she has served as president, chair of the women's caucus and co-chair of the educational policy committee.

Award for Excellence in Education for Diversity

Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard (School of Social Work)



The inaugural recipient for this award, Wanda Thomas Bernard has been with the School of Social Work for over 25 years. Dr. Bernard advocates great teaching and learning within the Dalhousie community and beyond. Her willingness to develop innovative curricula reforms that take diversity seriously is demonstrated over and over again in her engagement in her own courses and within her department. She has authored numerous pieces that share her practices with a wider audience, and has been a role model, mentor, and friend for many students and colleagues at Dalhousie and in the region more generally. Last year Dr. Bernard was awarded the Order of Nova Scotia and this April received the national Harry Jerome Award for community service.

Contract and Sessional Instructor Award of Excellence for Teaching

Gregory Adolphe Nazaire (Rowe School of Business)



Gregory Adolphe Nazaire has been teaching at Dalhousie on a part-time basis since 2005. Students and colleagues spoke glowingly of the value Mr. Nazaire brings to the classroom from his real world experience and community engagement. He was noted for his meticulous approach to teaching and respect for his students, as well as the long-term mentoring and contact he maintains with past pupils.

Dr. Matthew Numer (School of Health and Human Performance)



Matthew Numer has been with Dalhousie since 2007, beginning as an Interdisciplinary PhD student and then as a contract instructor. Students describe Dr. Numer's classes as inspirational, eye opening and thought-provoking. He has also demonstrated notable initiative and leadership in instructional technology and course design to promote interaction and participation in pedagogically effective ways.

Early Career Faculty Award of Excellence for Teaching; Academic Innovation Award

Dr. Matthew Schnurr (Department of International Development Studies)



Matthew Schnurr is the recipient of two new awards this year: the Academic Innovation Award and the Early Career Faculty Award of Excellence for Teaching. A faculty member since 2008, Dr. Schnurr was recognized for the tremendous impact his teaching has had on students and colleagues in his department and Faculty and his commitment to innovation in teaching. Dr. Schnurr experiments with new and innovative approaches to university teaching that have proved enormously popular, including role-playing simulations and online technologies that enhance student learning. Through the support of the CLTs Teaching with Technology grants, he has been able to implement a mixed methods research project evaluating the impact of these simulations on learning outcomes.

Award for Excellence in Graduate Supervision

Dr. Sara Kirk (School of Health and Human Performance)



Sara Kirk has been a faculty member at Dalhousie since 2007 and is the inaugural recipient for this award, which recognizes the important role of graduate supervision as part of the graduate student learning environment. Having directly supervised over 16 masters students (in addition to serving as committee member for an additional three students), three doctoral students and three postdoctoral fellows, Dr. Kirk provides an enriching, supportive, and productive learning environment for her students.

Citations were originally published in DalNews by Ryan McNutt and Michelle Soucy - June 25, 2015

Teaching Scholarship Grants

Award Categories

1. Design and/or Development

Two grants with amounts of up to \$5000

These grants will support design and development of the following:

- Development of a new course, teaching method, or program;
- Re-design of a course or program;
- Development of new teaching and learning resources; and
- Development and/or implementation of technology that enhances student learning.

2. Assessment of Impact on Student Learning

Four grants with amounts up to \$2500

These grants will be awarded to investigate the impact of a new course or teaching method on student learning.

Deadline to apply is January 11, 2016

For more information please contact:

Dr. Deborah Kiceniuk, Centre for Learning and Teaching

902-494-3808 | Deborah.Kiceniuk@dal.ca | www.LearningandTeaching.dal.ca

University-Wide Teaching Awards

Dalhousie Alumni Association Award of Excellence for Teaching

One award will be presented annually. Nominees for this award will normally have ten or more years of teaching experience. Candidates must be full-time faculty or instructors at Dalhousie University.

Award Includes: \$2000 towards the professional development of the recipient's teaching

Early Career Faculty Award of Excellence for Teaching

Nominees for this award will be full-time faculty or instructors at Dalhousie with a minimum of three years teaching and fewer than ten years teaching experience in their current role.

Award Includes: \$1000 towards the professional development of the recipient

Contract and Sessional Instructor Award of Excellence for Teaching

Candidates may be either full-time contract/term or part-time members of the Dalhousie University teaching staff.

Up to two awards will be presented annually.

Award Includes: \$500 per recipient

Award for Excellence in Graduate Supervision

Excellence in graduate supervision is recognized as the successful mentorship of graduate students through an enriching, supportive and productive learning environment.

Award Includes: \$1000 towards the professional development of the recipient

Award for Excellence in Education for Diversity

This award will be presented to a instructor who has enhanced the Dalhousie teaching and learning environment through excellence in education for diversity.

Award Includes: \$1000 towards the professional development of the recipient

**Annual deadline to apply
January 31**

2016 Call for Nomination

Academic Innovation Award

This award is for an individual who has developed an innovation that has resulted in a sustained impact on student learning at Dalhousie.

Award Includes: \$2000 towards either a future innovation project related to teaching and learning, or the ongoing evaluation of their current innovation

Educational Leadership Award for Collaborative Teaching

This award recognizes the collaborative work of a team of colleagues whose leadership has made a significant contribution to student learning at the department, faculty, or institutional level.

Award Includes: \$3000 to the department or Faculty leading the initiative to continue to assess the impact of their innovation, or to support future innovation related to teaching and learning

President's Graduate Student Teaching Award

This award is open to all qualified graduate student instructors (currently registered Master's and Ph.D. candidates).

Up to three awards will be presented annually.

Award Includes: \$500 per recipient



For additional information please contact

Centre for Learning and Teaching

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www.learningandteaching.dal.ca

Diversity and Inclusion from the Classroom to the Boardroom



Dr. Eddy Ng
Rowe School of Business

This past year, we have seen and heard a lot about issues concerning diversity and inclusion... from sexist and misogynistic Facebook posts by Dal dentistry students, to strong negative reactions to wearing the niqab when new Canadians take the citizenship oath.

This begs the question, have we -- as academics -- failed to cultivate a generation that is more inclusive, respectful, and accepting of others who are different?

I begin this column by stating the obvious. Diversity and multiculturalism is a demographic reality stemming from globalization, worker immigration, family reunification, and forced migration as a result of political instability, environmental disaster, and collapsing economies (cf. Ng & Bloemraad, 2015). Although Canada espouses an official multiculturalism policy and has a long history of immigration, a recent poll suggests that 46 percent of Canadians felt that there are too many immigrants coming to Canada, an increase of 18 percent since 2005 (Winnipeg Free Press, 2015). Among those with a university degree, fully 31 percent felt there were too many visible minorities in the country.

Reinforcing Stereotypes in the Classroom

Efforts to integrate inclusion education may generate unintended negative consequences for students and professors. What we know about “the other” (i.e., those who are different from us) is often learned from personal experiences, formal education, and popular media, which in turn reinforce our biases and prejudice. Discussions on gender, race or other dimensions of diversity or inequality, intended to decrease prejudice, might instead contribute to increased biases, ostracism, decreased self-esteem, and reinforced stereotypes. While some discussions can dispel myths and reduce prejudice, others may have the unintended opposite effect. For example, exposure to knowledge about group differences (e.g., status or hierarchies among groups) in diversity education reinforce those hierarchies in the classroom (Amoroso, Loyd, & Hoo-

bler, 2010). Thus, we need to be mindful that discussions about differences can perpetuate stereotypes.

Discourse on diversity in the classroom reaffirms stereotypes and status differentials in multiple ways. First, the materials and readings in the syllabus may perpetuate bias or stereotypes. For example, materials that present gender, race, and other dimensions of inequality are likely to reinforce marginalized groups (e.g., Blacks, LGBT individuals, single-parent families) as problematic and that such groups should be blamed for their own lack of success (Flick, 1999; Higginbotham, 1996). Second, the actions and words that are communicated in the classroom, such as asking students to brainstorm about stereotypes, or using “we” and “they” to refer to groups, may lead to “us vs. them” attitudes and social group divisions (Jacobs & Simpson, 1999). Such distinctions may also render a “forever foreigner” identity among racial minorities who were born in Canada (Cui & Kelly, 2013). Third, when discussing diversity topics, our own pedagogical techniques can also affect the communication dynamics and reproduce inequality from the larger society in the classroom. For example, members of privileged groups (e.g., white male students) are more likely to speak up, and to have their ideas validated, which serve to reinforce this dominant view in society (Weber, 1990). Young, white men may not recognize that it is easier for them to find employment on account of their privileged position than it is for women or minority group members. Female and minority students may also resent the presence of privileged students because they have lost another avenue to fight for their issues and discourse of inequalities in diversity courses (Higginbotham, 1996).

Therefore, it should come as no surprise when Paris and Decker (2012) reported that efforts to reduce managerial gender-role stereotypes, in fact, resulted in a greater degree of stereotyping by management students. This example demonstrates how diversity in education serves to reinforce stereotypes and status differences.

Faultlines in Workgroups

As the student body becomes increasingly diverse, it is important to ensure that workgroups reflect the de-

mographic diversity of the student population. Social contact hypothesis suggests that exposure to dissimilar others can reduce stereotype, prejudice, and discrimination against those who are different from ourselves (Allport, 1954). However, it is important to avoid creating faultlines within diverse groups, when assigning students to workgroups. Faultlines are “hypothetical dividing lines that may split a group into subgroups based on one or more [demographic] attributes” (Lau & Murnighan, 1998: 328). As an example, a team faultline is strong when the team is comprised of two white male students, and two minority female students. Strong faultlines increase the potential for dissensus with demographically dissimilar others, which could lead to ‘behavioural disintegration’ (Li & Hambrick, 2005: 800). A strong faultline also indicates that one subgroup may have more power than the other subgroup, and members from the weaker subgroup may receive less support and experience more opinion suppression, leading to reduced confidence and effectiveness. The faultline, however, may be diminished when no clear subgroups exist, or weakened when members are required to interact with each other more extensively prior to the task.

Three is the Critical Mass

Another solution to mitigate a strong faultline is to ensure a critical mass among members of the weak subgroup. In this regard, Konrad, Kramer and Erkut (2008), in a study of women on corporate boards, found that three is the “magic number” for women’s or minority members’ voice to be mainstreamed. When there is only one woman or racial minority in the workgroup, that individual is often invisible, ignored, or excluded. That person also risks being seen as a token and is often stereotyped and seen as representing all women or minority group members. When there are two women or racial minorities in the workgroup, they still risk being stereotyped although tokenism may be reduced. Adding to this, when women sit next to each other or go to the washroom together, the dominant group (i.e., white male) would wonder what they [the women] are up to. However, when there are three or more women in a workgroup, it becomes normal to have women on the team, and “those questions” go away (cf. Konrad et al., 2008).

Benefits of Diversity in Workgroups

It is important to point out that diversity among students can be a source of competitive advantage

for diverse workgroups. For example, Watson, Kumar, and Michaelsen (1993) reported that diverse workgroups outperformed homogeneous workgroups by generating a broader range of perspectives and coming up with more alternatives to solving a business problem, when diverse and homogeneous workgroups were asked to analyze a business case study over 16 weeks. Indeed, the literature suggests that diversity promotes creativity and innovation, enhances problem solving abilities, and enables greater flexibility when confronted with uncertainty (see Cox & Blake, 1991). However, diversity can also lead to greater withdrawal behaviours such as turnover and absenteeism, and distract from workgroup performance when it is poorly managed (Ng & Tung, 1998). Based on this knowledge, it is important to socialize students from different backgrounds (i.e., enhance social contact with dissimilar others) to leverage the benefits arising from workgroup diversity. It should be noted that the contact has to be sufficiently long and interactions meaningful in order to generate positive outcomes (White & Abu-Rayya, 2014). Indeed, individual group members who believe that diversity is good (i.e., those holding pro-diversity beliefs) are more likely to identify as a group, share information with each other, and intend to stay as a group (Van Dick, Van Knippenberg, Hägele, Guillaume, & Brodbeck, 2008). As a consequence, diverse workgroups holding pro-diversity beliefs reported better group performance than those who do not.

Likewise, countries that embrace diversity and inclusion report more positive outcomes in the form of better incorporation of women and minorities into society and a greater tolerance of minority group members (Ng & Bloemraad, 2015). Indeed, countries and organizations that demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusion are able to attract the best and the brightest talents regardless of gender, race or ethnicity (Ng & Burke, 2005; Ng & Metz, 2014).

Author Biography

Eddy Ng is a Professor of Organizational Behaviour and the F.C. Manning Chair in Economics and Business at the Rowe School of Business. This article is based in part on a Professional Development Workshop on “Let’s Talk About Gender and Diversity, Let’s Talk About You and Me,” at the 2014 Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management in Philadelphia by Professors Eddy Ng and Isabel Metz (University of Melbourne).

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Shakira Weatherdon, has joined the Office of Human Rights, Equity and Harassment Prevention as the new Education Advisor. The Education Advisor will help increase engagement in diversity events on campus including Pink Day, which has expanded into "Respect Week". She has also implemented the Bystander program for sexualized violence prevention, and will lead the design of a speak up program on issues of discrimination using a peer-to-peer model. Shakira is available to assist faculty in facilitating conversation in their classes about issues of diversity, inclusion, sexualized violence and building inclusive classrooms. She can be reached at shakira.weatherdon@dal.ca.

Office of Human Rights, Equity and Harassment Prevention

Services

Human Rights & Equity | Harassment Prevention | Conflict Management | Get Consent

Henry Hicks Building, Room 2 | (902) 494-6672 | dalrespect@dal.ca | www.dal.ca/dalrespect

Allies at Dalhousie - Creating Safe Spaces

The Allies at Dalhousie exist to support students, staff, and faculty of the Rainbow community by encouraging the University to welcome and respect its diversity. The term “Rainbow” is used as an inclusive term for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, two-spirited, and intersexed persons.

Allies does work with students, staff, and faculty to provide programs, services, training, support, referral, and resources on Rainbow issues. We are registered with the Youth Project.

General info: dalally@dal.ca | Peer Allies: peerally@dal.ca | www.dal.ca/dalally

Black Student Advising Centre

The Black Student Advising Centre supports all black students of African descent in pursuit of post-secondary education at Dalhousie and the University of King's College. Drop by for information on employment, scholarships and bursaries, and events, both on campus and in the Halifax community.

Services

Confidential Advising for individuals or groups | Mediation services | Resource room | Computer lab

1321 Edward Street, 2nd Floor | (902) 494-6648 | bsac2@dal.ca | www.dal.ca/bsac

International Centre

The International Centre at Dal hosts fun and informative orientation programs, sessions and cultural events, provides a welcoming lounge to students, as well as advising services related to immigration, health care, finances, travel, and personal matters.

Studley Campus

1246 LeMarchant St., Suite 1200
(902) 494-1566
international.centre@dal.ca

Agricultural Campus

Student Services Centre
Dairy Building
157 College Road

Sexton Campus

1360 Barrington Street
Building B, room A109
Office numbers A108a and A108b

Native Post Secondary Education Counselling Unit

The Native Post Secondary Education Counselling Unit assists Native students. A division of the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq Education Department, it's open to all Native students in the greater Metro area.

They can help form support networks in studies relating to arts, sciences, law and health. They also host social activities, including potlucks, cultural events and information sessions.

Student Union Building, Room 401 | (902) 494-8863 | nativeed@dal.ca

20th Dalhousie Conference on University Teaching and Learning

Exploring Change and Resilience in University Teaching and Learning

*April 27th and 28th, 2016
Rowe Management Building*

This year's conference theme is "Exploring Change and Resilience in University Teaching and Learning". Despite large-scale innovations in teaching and learning and a significant increase in research about improving teaching and learning in higher education over the past decades, there have been repeated calls for action due to the lack of systemic change and innovation. Zundel and Deane (2010) note that "to create the [teaching and learning] environment in which large-scale innovation takes place, ... constraints need to be removed, reformed or at least appropriately mitigated to facilitate change and flexibility."

The 20th Anniversary of the Dalhousie Conference on University Teaching and Learning, will encourage dialogue about the purposes, enablers and constraints of change, the needs of students in contemporary society, and the resilience of students, teachers and administrators in the challenging contexts of change. Our hope is to spark conversation and to facilitate the sharing of lessons learned, via evidence-based practices that embrace change and resilience.

We invite proposals for papers, workshops, panels, and interactive sessions. Individual or group submissions are welcome, and joint submissions with students are highly encouraged.

The Conference theme supports many subthemes including (but not limited to):

- **Academic Innovation:** How are we supporting innovation in teaching and learning? What are the constraints and enablers of change and innovation? What innovations are having an impact on improving student outcomes in higher education? Why are we pursuing innovation and change?
- **21st Century Graduate Attributes:** What are the attributes needed for student success in the 21st Century (e.g. data literacy, creativity, entrepreneurship)? How are our programs and teaching practices evolving to develop these attributes?
- **Student and Faculty Resilience:** The impetus for change is all around us, but change can be challenging for students and faculty. How are we supporting student and faculty resilience within the context of change?
- **Institutional Change:** Given the changing societal expectations across all university sectors, how are universities/colleges using institutional data to inform change and innovation to ensure institutional resilience?

For more information contact

Centre for Learning and Teaching
clt@dal.ca | 902-494-6641
www.learningandteaching.dal.ca

Deadline to submit proposal: Monday, February 1, 2016

Cultivating Inclusivity with Caring Science in the area of LGBTQ Education: The Self-Reflexive Educator

The relational spiritual aspect of caring-healing calls for the practitioner to connect with his or her higher/deeper self, for reflective/contemplative practices within a moral context; to open to a new science of unitary consciousness (Watson, 2010, p. 180).



Lisa Goldberg, RN, PhD,
Caritas Coach, Associate Professor,
School of Nursing, Faculty of Health
Professions

With a continued focus on diversity initiatives by educational institutions, particularly those related to LGBTQ communities, university educators are searching for strategies to assist in their efforts to cultivate and sustain more inclusive

classrooms. Despite the pervasive challenges of heteronormative systems, reflective of societal norms that permeate educational institutions (Goldberg, Ryan, & Sawchyn, 2009), educators have an obligation to recognize and challenge these norms, if they are to cultivate optimal spaces for learning, not only for LGBTQ students; but rather, for all students in their classroom(s).

While most educators have a commitment to provide non-discriminatory education and develop a pedagogy of inclusivity and respect, the challenges of our current system, including gender binaries, language barriers, and heterosexual stereotyping entail significant diversity education, dialogue, and consideration—including self-reflexive practice—are needed on the part of educators to understand how and why the status quo is exclusionary, and at times, hostile to members of LGBTQ communities. With a commitment to change, despite the ongoing challenges of a deeply rooted heteronormative system, educators have the capacity to transform their classrooms, and in the process, potentially transform themselves.

The Relevance of Self-Reflexive Practice

With over a decade of working across *difference* in the area of LGBTQ health, I continue to recognize the importance of maintaining a self-reflexive practice: a living, breathing practice that demands an authentic examination of one's being-in-the world, specifically

as a scholarly educator with a commitment to inclusive education. As Bolton (2010) reminds us,

[r]eflection involves reliving and rerendering: who said and did what, how, when, where and why. Reflection might lead to insight about something not noticed in time... Reflexivity is finding strategies to question our own attitudes, thought processes, values, assumptions, prejudices, and habitual actions to strive to understand our complex roles in relations to others (p. 13).

While self-reflexive practice takes many forms, common to all is a commitment to cultivate time to develop a keen awareness of one's own biases and judgments; this further extends to the recognition of one's emotional reactions to ideas, experiences, and people themselves, particularly within a socio-cultural-political context of self and others. Human beings are not value-free; but rather, highly complex individuals navigating multiple environments and relationships, embodying identities across race, sexual orientation(s), gender identities, class, ethnicity, spirituality, age, ability, etc. This further illuminates the challenges of intersecting oppressions experienced within LGBTQ communities. Self-reflexive practice is therefore a necessary process in beginning to understand how to cultivate inclusivity in the classroom. For if educators are not first aware of the power, privilege, and positionality they garner within systems plagued with heteronormativity, it remains impossible to engage further learning necessary to cultivate an authentic ability to work across difference, particularly with LGBTQ students.

Caring Science: A Form of Reflexive Practice

Developed by world-renowned nurse theorist Dr. Jean Watson, Caring Science offers a framework for reflexive practice grounded in the Ten Caritas Processes (Watson, 2008). Collectively, they engage the educator in a creative dialogue and conversation, thus providing a new way of being-in-the-world with self, others, and the broader community. Beginning with the place of

the self, the Ten Caritas Processes (Watson, 2008) can assist the educator in understanding how to embody authentic and trusting relationships, create innovative healing environments, and further develop a deeply moral sense of self—beyond the ego self (Watson, 2008). Through an intensive 6-month program (WCSI, Boulder, CO), I cultivated an understanding of the philosophical/pragmatic/ethical tenets of Caring Science, resulting in the certification as a Caritas Coach. In the process, a transformation occurred: the course entailed a mindful commitment to self-care practices, including a compassionate self-examination to more deeply understand my own positionality in the world and its continual influence on others: socially, politically, culturally, ethically, and spiritually. In so doing, my pedagogical approach to teaching opened to new possibilities, including a more generous recognition of how to create a classroom environment that relationally understood how to foster learning more deeply across difference; such openness had not been previously available to me in this depth, despite my ongoing commitment to advance the area of LGBTQ health.

The LGBTQ Placement in Community Health Nursing: Caring Science in Action

While taking up a self-reflexive practice, like Caring Science, is one of the initial tools needed to engage educators in a process of working successfully across difference, it also illuminates significant benefits for students. In what follows, I draw upon my clinical teaching based on a pilot project in community nursing in the area of LGBTQ health. In so doing, I illustrate the ways in which a self-reflexive practice framed in Caring Science provided an inclusive environment for learning. This invited students on a journey of self-discovery and politicization to carry forward into their future nursing practice.

In 2014/15, a pilot LGBTQ clinical placement was established in the area of community health nursing, building on my educational and research expertise. The practicum shared many commonalities with other community health placements, including collaborative partnerships with community agencies and preceptors, in addition to engaging diverse communities with a focus on social justice, advocacy and health equity within a social determinants of health framework. The significant difference, however, was the LGBTQ communities upon which the clinical was based: commu-

nities rarely introduced to nursing students, despite it being the final year of their program.

Although the clinical proved to be a significant success, both from the perspective of transformative changes in the students and the results of the Student Ratings of Instruction (SRI), it was not without the recognition of discomfort experienced by many related to their lack of knowledge in the area. However, discomfort has the potential to disrupt institutional norms (Harbin, Beagan & Goldberg, 2012), and provide space for new possibilities—those that engage a re-visioning of one's previously held beliefs and assumptions. In the case of the LGBTQ clinical, new possibilities were made available, in part, because our focus always returned to an aspect of self-reflexive practice underpinned by the principles of Caring Science. In doing so, the clinical space became a place of safety, trust, authenticity, and an environment available for both the expression of affirming and challenging experiences (Watson, 2008).

As time went on, I witnessed transformation: students recognized how integral the learning was for their future practice in working with LGBTQ communities, but more importantly, understood the ways in which an understanding of self could profoundly enhance and/or diminish care provision with members of LGBTQ communities. Thus understanding one's own biases and how they are taken up, often unknowingly in institutional settings through systems of discriminatory practices, was a vital outcome of the clinical. This encouraged students to continue the journey of self-discovery in relation to the politicization of their practice: professionally and personally. Perhaps most importantly, was the understanding, particularly as LGBTQ identities have historically been an invisible narrative in nursing curricula (Shatell & Chin, 2014), was the recognition that such identities were not only out there, but rather, right here living amongst us. For what is too often forgotten: nurses are also members of LGBTQ communities.

Acknowledgements

The author wishes to acknowledge the generous support of Drs. A. Chircop & A. Vukic, School of Nursing; D. Enslow, Program Manager, Health Promotion, and the LGBTQ Community Agencies involved throughout the duration of the Community Health Clinical, including the ongoing collaboration of Ms. S. Pringle.

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Applying Applied Ethics- A Suggestion for How to Move Toward a More Just University



Dr. Letitia Meynell, Gender and Women's Studies



Timothy Krahn, Faculty of Medicine

Almost all of us recognize that we need to do a better job of creating and supporting a more diverse university, both in the student body and the professoriate. We know that we need to be more inclusive, not only in our pedagogy but also in our workplace more generally. It is not, however, obvious how to move from these abstract values through meaningful change to create an institution that lives up to these avowed commitments. Here we'd like to make a pitch for broadening and deepening our engagement with diversity and inclusiveness in our applied ethics courses across the curriculum. Moreover, we believe that we can use this pedagogical practice to motivate and inform effective, progressive change throughout the institution.

On reflection, it is a little strange that we don't always think of diversity and inclusiveness as urgent moral issues that are integral to applied ethics courses. After all, ethics is the study of right conduct. Right conduct must include just conduct, and just conduct must be sensitive to historical wrongs, institutional and social power structures, and oppression (Walker, 2007). In practice, a commitment to justice means that we should attempt to ameliorate injustices or, minimally, not perpetuate them in our personal, political, and professional lives.

Yet, often applied ethics questions are approached as if inherited oppressive power structures are irrelevant

to the subject at hand. As one example, the debates over whether to legalize physician assistance with dying have for decades focused on issues of informed consent and the risks of eugenics, without considering how power relations and social position may affect patient autonomy or which social groups may benefit or be harmed from passing or thwarting relevant legal reforms. Disadvantaged communities may have their vulnerabilities exposed and exploited by advocates on both sides. Unfortunately, it is easy to ignore or neatly gloss over the interests of those from communities that have traditionally been marginalized (and indeed the diverse interests within those communities). If justice is our aim, then it is especially important to bring these diverse perspectives clearly into focus.

The dangers are especially acute in the professions, which tend to be historically structured to resist progressive change, despite the best intentions of professionals (or indeed, those teaching or learning a professional practice) (Epstein, 2012; Witz, 1992). Thus it is particularly important that the education of professionals attune them to the moral contours and complexities of the institutions within which they will work, as well as the historical injustices in society at large that need redressing. Students must be given the tools to critically reflect on their own actions and empowered to make thoughtful, ethical decisions. Our students will not only need moral courage and personal integrity, but they will also need to be morally literate and able to build ethics capacity in their communities (cf. Israel et al., 2010).

Ethics capacity-building refers to the creation of the basic knowledge, institutional structures, strategies, and skills that help the members of an institution or a profession live up to their avowed moral values and explicit commitments. This includes things like

familiarity with relevant codes of conduct and ethics review processes, but is not limited to constructing and following good policies. To be effective, written rules need fair, rational, and accountable implementation. Moreover, rules need to be supported by a culture that builds ethics capacity across the institution through supporting critical reflection and open discussion, including engagement with experts when needed.

Moral literacy is both more nebulous and more challenging, albeit no less essential to an applied ethics education. It is the awareness of and ability to interpret the many moral contours of daily life (Krahn, 2009)—an ability to see practical issues through an ethical lens, sometimes referred to as moral perception (Blum, 1994). This is the kind of moral knowledge that one acquires in a humanities education (Nussbaum, 2010). Moral literacy cultivates the moral emotions and challenges us to become responsive beings who consider the importance of what we care about. It fosters the moral imagination and helps us to appreciate the many different ways of being in the world that are not our own (Krahn, 2009). Moreover, to be truly morally literate, one must have not only a sensitivity to difference through exposure to various culturally distinct approaches to ethics, but also knowledge of historical injustices and their many complex effects on the present (Minow, 1990; Young, 1990). Although it is tempting to focus on ethics capacity-building, the deep personal commitments required to ground integrity and moral courage are the result of moral literacy.

In applied ethics education—including ethics capacity-building and moral literacy—the trick is to have our students take what they learn beyond the classroom and into their professional and personal lives. One of us has argued elsewhere that applied ethics courses in professional programmes should not only be taught by those within the faculty, but also by experts who are knowledgeable but external to the field. This adds an important critical dimension and reminds students that the ethical standards to which they are responsible include those of society at large, not simply the norms of their field (Meynell, 2015). Moreover, we need to look for opportunities to get students from disparate fields to interact with each other and discuss their various approaches to ethics, especially in applications where their fields overlap (for instance, business, law, philosophy, medical, and pharmacy students considering the ethics of pharmaceutical research). Finally, we need to model ethical behaviour ourselves throughout

the institution. Doing so includes making sure that our own professional practice as professors is inclusive, respectful, and committed to justice (Krahn, 2009).

When our own knowledge of diversity issues is limited, expanding pedagogical practices to include this type of material can *feel* like walking a tightrope. There are the dangers of alienating students both from the cultural mainstream as well as from those groups that we are trying to include (for example, through implicit bias (Brownstein, 2015), and stereotype threat (Inzlicht, 2011)). Admittedly, failures are inevitable. Happily, we have each other as resources, as Dalhousie boasts a wealth of expertise across our various faculties on these issues. With collaboration and coordination, we should be able to build inclusiveness, diversity, and commitment to social justice into our applied ethics pedagogy across the curriculum. The collaboration required to do this would offer an opportunity to reflect on and improve the practices of the institution itself.

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Hellos and Goodbyes from the eLearning Team

Welcome aboard, Krista & Chad!



Krista Mallory, MAEd, TB DL

Instructional Designer

Tel: (902) 494-6828 | Email: Krista.Mallory@dal.ca

As an Instructional Designer and member of the eLearning team at the Centre, I work with faculty to design and develop blended and online learning environments that facilitate learning and engage students. Using eLearning design principles, I assist instructors to determine the most relevant mix of technologies and tools for their class. I also develop and facilitate workshops on blended and online learning design.



Chad O'Brien, MEd

Instructional Designer

Tel: (902) 494-6792 | Email: Chad.O'Brien@dal.ca

I am a part of the eLearning team working as an Instructional Designer for the Center for Learning and Teaching here at Dalhousie University. I work with individuals, groups, departments and Faculties in multiple capacities to ensure that quality online teaching and best practices related to the use of technologies are well understood and properly implemented. The focus is always on what constitutes good pedagogy, and how technology can facilitate and enrich the learning experience for students. These goals are often achieved through workshops, training events, consultations and partnerships with various stakeholders.

I have a grassroots background in teaching, starting my career in the classroom, teaching Physics and English with nothing more than a textbook, chalk and chalkboard. The augmentations to my own practice over the years have given me pragmatic insight into how technology can facilitate learning. I promote the under-utilization of existing tools, and encourage the use of technology to overcome existing challenges. I also, on occasion, get to test and work on new concepts and technologies that test and push the barriers of pedagogical innovation.

We'll miss you, Adrienne!



Congratulations to Adrienne Sehatzadeh, who after 14 years of dedication and hard work as an eLearning professional, has taken a well-deserved retirement.

Adrienne worked as an Instructional Designer at the Centre for Learning and Teaching. She assisted faculty in developing courses for blended and fully online teaching. Prior to joining the CLT, she worked with Continuing Medical Education supporting faculty development, and was a program coordinator with the School of Social Work before joining ILO in 2005.

The Centre for Learning and Teaching wish Adrienne many happy years of retirement!!

6th BIENNIAL THRESHOLD CONCEPTS CONFERENCE

Thresholds on the Edge...

Dalhousie University
McCain Arts & Social Sciences Building
Halifax, Nova Scotia
June 15-17, 2016

Dalhousie University invites you to join us on the eastern edge of Canada - or the western edge of the Atlantic, depending on your perspective - for lively discussions, edgy keynotes, and inspiring sessions. This year's theme, *Thresholds on the Edge*, pushes us to think about and beyond the edges of our current understandings and practices around threshold concepts. How is the notion of threshold concepts prompting us to reconceptualize our understanding of what it means to teach, learn, and design courses and curricula? How has integrating threshold concepts into your teaching pushed you to the edge of your knowledge, comfort, and identity as a teacher? What new research and practice frontiers lie ahead as we contemplate the next decade of threshold concepts work?

Deadline to submit proposal: Monday, January 4, 2016

Keynote Speakers



Elizabeth Wardle
Professor & Chair
Department of Writing and Rhetoric
University of Central Florida



Linda Adler-Kassner
Associate Dean, Undergraduate
Education, Professor of Writing
Studies University of California,
Santa Barbara



Ray Land
Professor of Higher Education
Durham University,
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