

Centre for Learning and Teaching
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on university teaching and learning



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What is the purpose of a university education? In this issue of *Focus* the authors explore the importance of thinking about the role education plays in *who* our students are becoming, personally and professionally, and the pedagogical approaches we can take to supporting the growth of the whole person.



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Beyond Content: Teaching and Learning for the Development of the Whole Person



Jill McSweeney,
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As educators, we often place emphasis on how students grasp disciplinary skills and knowledge, and forget to spend time reflecting on how we impact the person our students become. What we teach, how we teach, and who we are when we teach, are all important factors in developing students as whole human beings, and should be considered a critical component of the teaching and learning process (Harvard, 2012). A whole person approach to education nurtures an integrated development of the mind, heart, and ego of the learner, in order to foster a holistic and equal growth of what the student understands, what they care about, and their daily actions and behaviors (Mustakova-Possardt's, 1998). Educating the whole person is a distinctive shift within higher education, and may be one of the most significant and valuable outcomes of learning (Long, 2013), as it has the potential to cultivate students who are critical thinkers, life-long learners, and global citizens. The theme of this *Focus* examines the impact of going beyond disciplinary content and skills, encouraging us, as students and educators, to think about alternative forms of inquiry in order to foster social, ethical, and psychological development and awareness.

This issue of *Focus* opens with a piece by Lucy Hinton, an M.A. student in International Development Studies, who discusses how to develop students' awareness of their daily choices using social justice and reflection in the classroom. Through the integration of a pedagogy of reason and contemplative methods, Lucy suggests that educators can create an opportunity for students to critically reflect and rationally think about their impact on social change, and how their daily actions can reflect broader social processes.

Nathan Thompson, a PhD candidate from the Sociology Department at the University of New Brunswick and instructor at Renaissance College, shares his own experiences and insights on the use of anti-

oppressive education in the classroom. Nathan challenges readers to think beyond their disciplines, and how integrating approaches such as “pedagogy of discomfort” can challenge both students and educators to face and discuss difficult topics, which result in transformative experiences in the classroom.

Next, Emily Pelley, a Ph.D. candidate in the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. program introduces the readers to the idea of social research inside the classroom, and encouraging students to reflect on researchers’ responsibilities to the community. She speaks of her own work with the Children and Youth in Challenging Context Network at Dalhousie University, and how it has shaped her own perspective of ethical, social and community-engaged research. She uses her own journey to shape her pedagogy and challenges the reader to think about how they can bridge the gap between research and the classroom, and encourages both students and educators to consider their responsibility of being and creating ethical and socially accountable researchers.

Janice Allen, a PhD candidate in the Department of Earth Sciences asks readers to evaluate and reflect on their graduate school journey. Bringing in the perspective of someone who has spent time working within her industry, Janice presents a perspective of graduate school that incorporates more than just disciplinary content and research skills, and suggests that students should consider the value of cultivating experiences beyond their dissertation work. She notes how this can enhance your employability and satisfaction with your degree. Moreover, Janice seeks to foster a sense of empowerment in the reader,

through the realization that grad school can be what the student makes it - that it is about taking a rich journey and not just reaching the finish line.

Lastly, Katie Birnie, a Ph.D. candidate in the Clinical Psychology program, closes this issue of *Focus* with the topic of female role models in the sciences. In her piece, she discusses the importance of mentors for undergraduate female students, and how female educators in the sciences can shape the experiences of students by living a life that fulfills both their professional and personal goals. Katie highlights the significance of modeling the values and behaviours we wish to instil in our students, and that you, the graduate student, can be a role model.

Education is evolving to create a holistic experience that is both multidisciplinary, and multidimensional (Long, 2013). Viewing education as a whole allows students to develop genuinely new capacities and perspectives, that stem from deeper and higher learning (Harward, 2012; Mustakova-Possardt, 1998). Experiences within the classroom move beyond teaching knowledge and skills, and seek to foster the development of a diverse student body, that will graduate with a defined and authentic identity.

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Teaching and Learning Journal Club

The journal club was created in order to form an interdisciplinary community of students interested in the topic of “teaching and learning” at Dalhousie. The purpose of the journal club is to share literature from a broad array of disciplines related to the topic. The literature discusses a range of theoretical, methodological, and/or original research from multiple disciplines, and will be discussed and debated during meetings.

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Developing a Sense of Responsibility Towards Social Justice



Lucy Hinton, M.A. Student,
International Development
Studies

My own teaching experience has come through many different lenses - as a flight instructor, a yoga teacher, and more recently, a teaching assistant for the *Introduction to Development* classes, INTD 2001 and 2002. I was excited to begin teaching in my field of study and to use

the opportunity to motivate undergraduate students to take action in the realm of social justice. International Development Studies (IDS) often attracts highly passionate students, who, while enthusiastic, can be naïve in their assessments of the complexity of global systems. They begin with ambitious ideas of social justice the just distribution of benefits and burdens in society, such as wealth, opportunities, disadvantages and privileges (Miller, 1976). These naïve impressions often and soon give way to a feeling of helplessness, as students realize they are not going to save the world. Instructors attempt to impart the many decades of failed solutions onto students in order to prevent their future actions from doing more harm than good, a logical and rational approach to teaching development. However, in my experience, this seems to exacerbate a feeling of hopelessness in students. In my own undergraduate degree a professor once asked if we felt empowered to make social change a reality, and when given our answers of disempowerment and dissolution, was disappointed by our deflated attitude. As we progressed through four years of problems without solutions, we were tired and fed up.

In our experience, this often resulted in abandoning any social justice ambitions. Classes got smaller and smaller as the years went on – as we lost our naïve enthusiasm. Many students divorced any sense of responsibility to others in their daily lives – it’s too hard, I think, to hear how much is wrong every day. Teaching undergraduate students in a way that tempers idealism, but leads them to understanding the true complexity of the world we live in is a fine line to walk. Instructors must elucidate the nuances of a multi-faceted global system, intimating the dangers of oblivion and overconfidence, without ‘crushing their dreams’ (Youde, 2008). The question then arises:

How do we prevent students from losing that sense of responsibility, but still give them the tools to avoid the failures of past generations? How do we thwart the exhausted disassociation of social responsibility?

Rossiter (2012) observes that in Australia, concepts of responsibility, respect and democracy are emphasised in school-age children. These concepts transition to support responsible citizenry and effective government as students get older. Graduate students in particular are expected to “engage responsibly in work and civic life with respect for diversity and social justice principles.” We value these principles in Western society, and yet we keep seeing students getting overwhelmed with negativity.

Simple knowledge transferal is not enough. If this were the case, we wouldn’t keep buying Joe Fresh following the Rana Plaza collapse that killed 1,135 Bangladeshi workers and injured 2,500 more (Sisler, 2014). I wonder if there is a way to empower *all* students, not just IDS students, to take the small steps towards big change. What would the world look like if these students grew to be responsible global citizens? What if they demanded a more equal society for all? What if, instead of overloading a few, we empowered many?

Pedagogy of reason is often used to motivate social change, illustrated through Peter Singer’s (1997) rational thinking, and generally summed up in the following example: (1) every 60 seconds, a child in Africa dies of malaria; (2) imagine how much you spend weekly on coffee; and (3) a malaria bed net costs \$10. Rationally speaking, we should then give up our lattes and instead, buy bed nets – this is a moral duty if we value others’ lives over our coffee. Singer’s argument is “that from an impartial standpoint, the gross disparities in wealth and life prospects across the globe are morally indefensible” (Kahane, 2009). Under this logic, we wind up wondering why we don’t take these steps. But as we know from Rana Plaza, knowledge doesn’t always translate to change. Western society values reason and logic, but can you use the scientific method to highlight global responsibility for young and impressionable students? Instructors at the post-secondary level understand how quickly students can become overwhelmed and are forced to shut down to

cope. Rather than overwhelming students with logic and reason, we need to allow them the time to contemplate global complexities in their own lives.

Kahane (2009) suggests that our inability to change our habits is due to our disassociation with the suffering of strangers, and that this disassociation stems from our own profound alienation from our internal realities. The chaos and busyness of our modern, privileged lives have not only led us astray from any moral obligation to others, but also to our own internal workings. Undergraduate students face the intense and overwhelming pressures of our time; keeping up with their peers in social, online, and academic realms amongst their busy lives often means they take little time to reflect on their relationship with others. We, as instructors, need to allow students the moments to reflect on global complexities and how they relate to their own lives in order to re-associate our inner realities with the suffering of strangers. Kahane (2009) calls for this contemplative pedagogy to be used to inspire global change, paralleling Fink's (2013) human dimension (learning of the self and others) of significant learning, which emphasizes reflection in teaching. Kahane (2009) suggests using mindfulness and reflection to allow students the time to reconcile the complex realities of the world we live in. I think as instructors, to empower social change, we need to offer the tools and time to slow down, rather than piling on further content. Knowledge alone does not equal change. In fact, knowledge and reason alone might be the problem.

Turbulent Waters Ahead: On the Importance of Making You and Your Students Uncomfortable



Nathan Thompson, PhD Candidate
Renaissance College,
University of New Brunswick

Teaching anti-oppressive education has often been suggested to me as something one does “in those kinds of classrooms,” but not in any “regular” or “normal” university setting. Such a pedagogical approach is often relegated to the realm of women and

gender studies, and I've heard both students and teachers refer to said approach as a purely political endeavor to indoctrinate students into a liberal and leftist

A contemplative pedagogy may offer time to slow down and reflect on whether students can part with their caffeine to save lives. Kahane (2009) believes that students are ready to experiment with their own willingness to let others suffer, something Singer's (1997) rational pedagogy is often unable to accomplish. In my own experience, giving students time to reflect on their own lives in a structured way allows for them to re-associate with the world around them. Instead of overwhelming students with our inarguable logic, we should be teaching students to explore their own perceptions of responsibility to others.

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worldview that places white heterosexual men into an overly criticized position. While such an understanding needs to be interrogated, that's not the goal of this piece. I am calling on university educators to re-think anti-oppressive education not as something one does “in those kinds of classrooms,” but as something that has the potential to be ingrained within all university classroom settings, regardless of discipline. The aim of anti-oppressive education is not to “indoctrinate” students into a progressive leftist worldview, but to introduce students to concepts such as structural inequality and privilege so they are better able to negotiate their own and others' social positioning in equitable ways (e.g. as future employers or employees of culturally

diverse workplaces). Introducing an anti-oppressive pedagogical frame into your classroom not only reduces possible harm and ignorance towards others in culturally and socially diverse communities, but, from my own experience, it results in more effective and productive classroom discussions and collaboration.

One of the most well known experts on anti-oppression pedagogy is Kevin Kumashiro. In his 2002 book, *Against Common Sense: Teaching and Learning Toward Social Justice*, he outlines a framework for anti-oppressive education that includes examples of how the framework can be employed in a number of different disciplines (such as Mathematics or Music). He asserts that students need to be ‘troubled’ in their knowledge and made to feel uncomfortable in order for new and more equitable understandings of the self and others to emerge. Building on Kumashiro’s anti-oppressive framework, Boler and Zembylas (2003) refer to an approach that ‘troubles’ knowledge as a ‘pedagogy of discomfort,’ and state that it is not only students who need to be made uncomfortable, but also educators. There’s an underlying message that, as educators, we need to think of ourselves less as transmitters of knowledge and more as captains of a ship about to head into turbulent waters. We may be able to keep the ship afloat, but we’re in for a rocky ride. So how does one enter turbulent waters and what does that look like in a classroom setting?

I’m currently a part-time instructor at Renaissance College (RC) at the University of New Brunswick (UNB). RC houses UNB’s Bachelor of Philosophy in Leadership program (a 3-year intensive Bachelor program where students go on national and international internships and focuses on interdisciplinary education). In the first year course I teach, we concentrate on basic university skills (such as essay writing, presentations, group projects, and literature reviews), and spend a considerable amount of time on critical thinking and reflection in both group discussions and individual assignments. In order to prepare students for effective group discussions on a variety of topics (we tend to focus on current affairs), they need to be provided with a framework in order to help them think critically. One way I do this is by introducing the concept of “privilege” very early in the semester. I do this via a privilege walk where the students line up in a straight line and are read a series of statements. Each statement is followed by the instruction to take a step backward or forward. For instance, “If you came

from a supportive family environment, take one step forward” or “If you took out loans for your education, take one step backward.” Once all statements have been read, the students are spread out in the room based on levels of privilege. The person in the front is declared the “winner” and then we have a chance to debrief the activity as a group (for one example of how to do a privilege walk see State University of New York at Albany School of Social Welfare, 2009). I also introduce the students to Peggy McIntosh’s now seminal 1989 piece “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack,” where she “unpacks” some of the ways her white privilege effects her daily life. The concept of privilege encourages the students to self-reflect on how their social positioning may benefit themselves, while making things more difficult for others.



Photo: Class photo from Nathan’s course at Renaissance College

Based on feedback from students and my own experience, the walk and the reading make all of us a bit uncomfortable. Many of my students have been told throughout their lives that as long as they work hard enough, they can be anybody and do anything they want. The concept of privilege (as demonstrated in McIntosh’s piece) introduces students to the idea that we aren’t all starting off in life equally, and that some will struggle more than others to achieve their goals solely because of things they cannot change, such as race or gender. The walk makes this visceral by forcing students to recognize levels of privilege amongst their fellow classmates; they literally “see” social inequality within their own classroom as they are spread out across the room and are often a bit shaken and unsure of how to respond right away. Some get angry, some feel awkward, some get sad or frustrated, others are confused and need time to process, and I always feel nervous about the ensuing conversation and how I will be able to manage the palpable tension in the room. In fact, I tend to have a large amount of anxiety before I head into the classroom on the privi-

lege discussion day, and it doesn't seem to get better regardless of how many times I've done it before. It always feels a bit strange engaging with my students in matters that tend to be deeply experiential. I think the strangeness lies somewhere between the feeling that the educator/student relationship is not one that should encourage emotional bonding and that the classroom is not a space for personal sharing and vulnerability. Making the classroom uncomfortable both with content and between each other always feels a bit risky and an ill-planned idea.

However, this "uncomfortable" classroom gives me the opportunity to start talking with my students about difficult and personal experiences around inequality and oppression in their own communities and lives. I allow them to express their anger, frustration, confusion, or whatever they happen to be feeling so that we are able to eventually move forward in the discussion. Students begin to see why the activity matters and how it will change the way they look at themselves and others within and outside the classroom. Group discussions after the privilege walk are always more critical, reflexive, collaborative and nuanced and students assignments throughout the semester often bring up the concept of privilege even if the concept was not a necessary requirement (for instance in research essays on topics like the Energy East Pipeline – the proposed oil pipeline from Western to Eastern Canada). In addition, the class begins to feel more like a community (or crew). The students and myself navigated the turbulent water together as a team as we all shared personal experiences of marginalization and oppression (or lack thereof). There's a greater sense of camaraderie and support that carries through to their group projects and other forms of group work. In short, the classroom becomes a more effective space for teaching and learning.



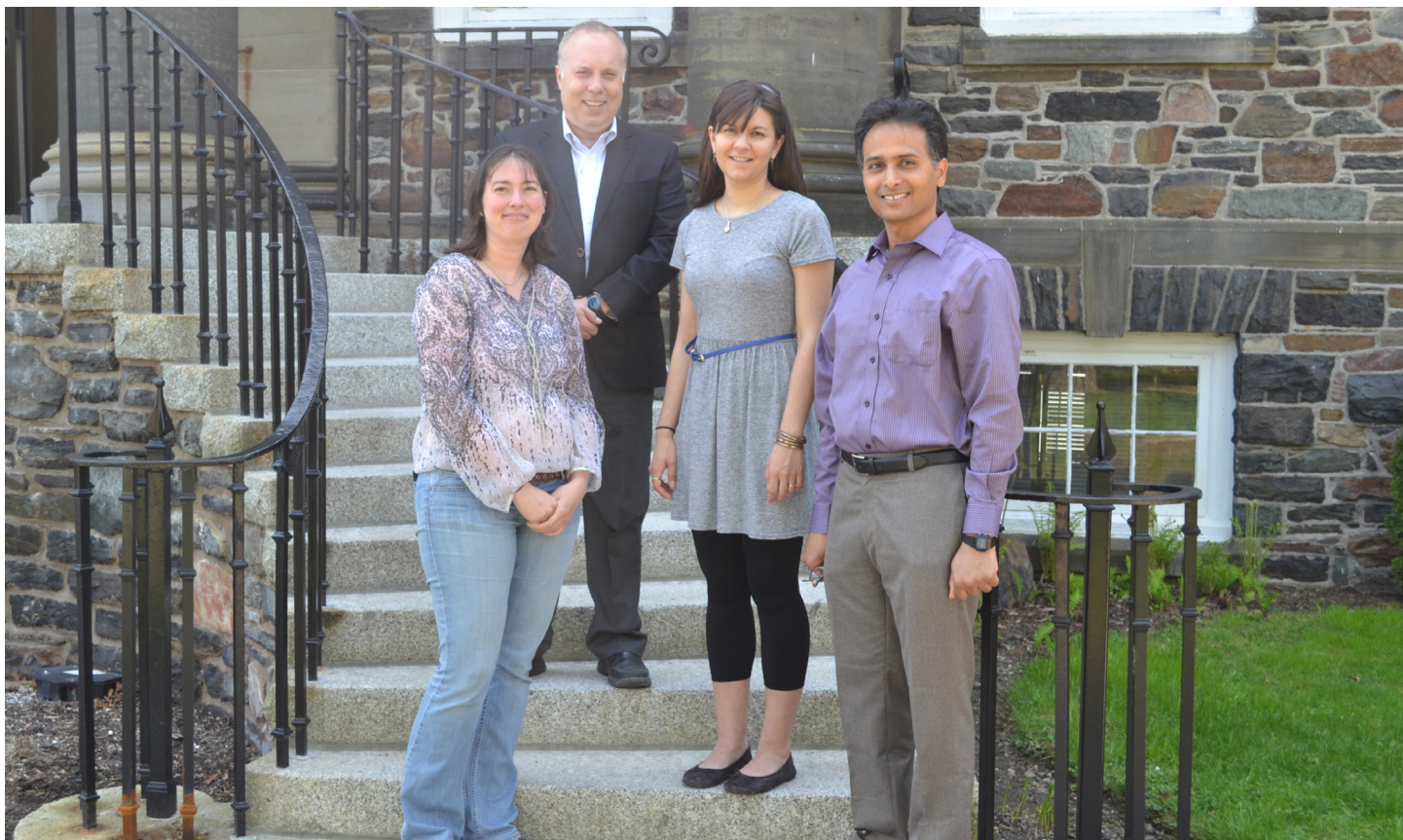
Photo: Community volunteer day with Habitat for Humanity

I recognize that the RC class I teach provides an ideal example of where such a pedagogical approach could be easily implemented, but I also include similar activities in the classes I teach in other disciplines, such as Education and Sociology. For instance, I have taught a class in the Sociology Department on technology that caters to engineers. While it may not seem like an "ideal" class to talk about gender or race, I still include readings and activities that make my students and myself uncomfortable, as they tend to produce mixed reactions and opinions, such as discussions and readings on gender privilege in the engineering profession and the impact of religious belief on personal ethics or 'moral' decision making. I also use role-playing activities where they take on stakeholder positions in case studies that involve rather 'uncomfortable' topics like genetic screening in the workplace or 'designer babies.' Kevin Kumashiro (2001) provides examples from the hard sciences such as Mathematics or Physics. One suggestion he makes is to use science and math to "(con)test prior scientific/mathematical findings that have been used to privilege and marginalize different groups (such as findings that perpetuate stereotypes)" (p. 7). The point is that you do not need to turn every class into a discussion on oppression. Start slow. Try one lesson that engages your students and yourself in pedagogy of discomfort. Reflect on it and see where it takes you and your class. Don't let disciplinary boundaries or your own discomfort get in the way. That being said, do be sure to read the books and articles I've mentioned before you give it a try; don't try to steer the ship without a map or compass.

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Congratulations to the 2015 Graduates of the Certificate in University Teaching and Learning



Rebecca Langlois-Warnat; Jules Fauteux; Jillian Rourke; and Al-Mokhtar Mohamed
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Student Engagement in Community Research: An Imperative for Academic Excellence

“They come, they take our stories, and they leave. They come, they get rich off of our experience, and we are left in poverty.” Young person in Freetown, Sierra Leone



Emily Pelley, Interdisciplinary PhD Candidate, Children and Youth in Challenging Contexts Network, Dalhousie University

These chilling words have forever changed how I approach research. We sat around a table, under the hot sun in Freetown, Sierra Leone - an inspiring group of young people whose lives have been forever marked by a bloody civil war that plagued their country for nearly 12 years. As I listened

to them, I was reminded that social research is not a right, but a privilege.

I have been honoured to work with the CYCC (Children and Youth in Challenging Contexts) Network here at Dalhousie University, exploring how we can better support vulnerable and at-risk young people. As I have sat with community members, youth workers, and young people themselves, I have been repeatedly struck by this challenge: whose purpose is research meant to serve - the curiosity of academia or the needs of the community?

It is not to say that academic research does not have a sincere intention to make positive change. But good intentions are not enough. Even if a brilliant research project is set within a pragmatic epistemology, employing a critical theoretical framework, where the main intention of the research is to see social change, often what happens is that the research question itself has not seen the light of day until the research process is already in full swing. This process contradicts the transformative goals of the research by not involving stakeholders in the community. This is particularly relevant for research with youth.

In my work with young people, I have repeatedly heard the mantra, “nothing for us, without us”. This is a principle I believe, and I am confident that many researchers and grad students would also agree. Yet there is a disconnection between this belief and equipping students to do research in this way. How do we make community consultation and engagement a starting point for both graduate and undergraduate

research? If we know that good social research requires this grounding in local knowledge, why are we not better equipping students to do this “real world” research?

In a book edited by Catherine Etmanski, Budd Hall, and Teresa Dawson¹, they suggest that community based research can also operate as an innovative pedagogical practice that engages not only the student, but the community members and the researchers themselves. This innovative pedagogy views the process of learning that will affect change to consist of three levels: micro, which is the interactions and personalities of the student and professor; the meso level, which includes the wider school administration and interactions with the bureaucracy; and the macro level, which encompasses the broader social and cultural context in which research is being done². This multi-level understanding can be a valuable approach to teaching community based research as well as facilitating it.

The CYCC Network is a great example of how to do community-engaged research. The project was conceived by three academics in different faculties, in collaboration with key organizations and individuals in the community. The leadership of projects within the Network was taken on by a multi-sectoral committee that represented academia, service providers, community members, policy makers, and youth themselves. While this breaks out of the common structure for a university-run research project, it was an opportunity to showcase the benefit of doing collaborative research - not just for more relevant findings, but for the application of those findings into practice.

1 Etmanski, C., Hall, B., & Dawson, T. (Ed.). (2014). *Learning and Teaching Community-Based Research: Linking Pedagogy to Practice*. University of Toronto Press, Scholarly publishing Division.

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Photo: Emily working with a group of young people in Western Kenya for her master's research.

What needs to change is how we prepare students for doing research. Whether qualitative or quantitative, students doing social research need to be equipped with skills beyond crafting abstract methodologies. I am not negating the importance of training in research design and methodology - that is an important outcome of graduate training. But what good is it if a student can skillfully articulate the epistemology of their research, but is unable to engage with community members with whom their research is focused? What a disservice we do to people's lives and experiences when we treat social problems like vending machines that we can draw from to publish "interesting" research findings in our theses.

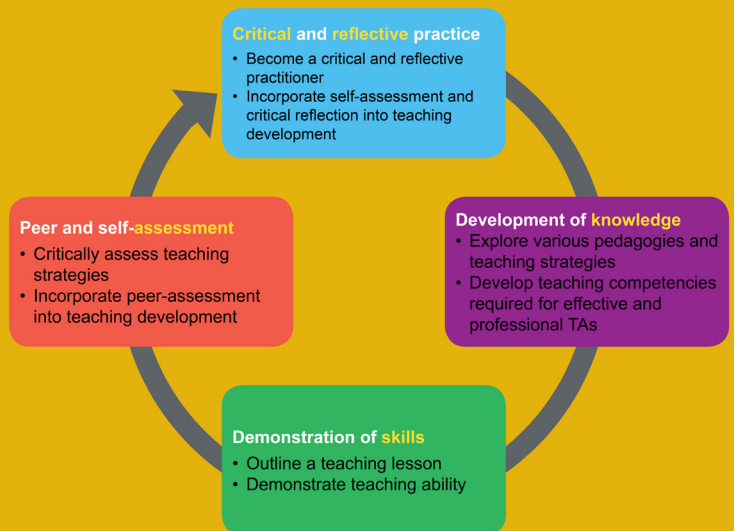
Students are in a unique place to offer time, energy, and expertise to community work that can afford them valuable experience to apply their theories. Instilling this value in students must be done through closer integration of university and community life. Finding ways to get students involved in research projects that are co-identified and valued by the community members involved, and facilitating connections with community members so that students can build relationships with the people and familiarity with the issues that they are researching. Equipping students with these skills needs to be the channel through which students engage with social research in order for us as an institution to both train community-minded scholars, and to better steward ethical research. Universities and their students have something to offer the community in which they find themselves.

I am on a journey of understanding this more myself. Thinking back to the Sierra Leonean youth I spoke with, I never want to be part of any project that would disregard their agency solely for the sake of academic convenience. The more I see the damage that research can do, the more I am reminded of the responsibility we have as researchers and as research institutions to do ethical work that does not alienate but rather builds up the community in which we live.

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Breadth in Graduate School: Acquiring a Diverse Skill Set to Enhance your Personal Experience and Professional Prospects



*Janice Allen, PhD Candidate
Department of Earth Sciences*

Graduate school is a unique experience, with great potential to expand your horizons. The student determines what their path will be, and what achievements, skills, and experience they will have upon graduation. Students are often encouraged to focus on their research work, to the exclusion of

other pursuits. While this will suit some students, it may not be a good fit for others, especially for those wishing to pursue non-academic positions (for example in government, or a relevant public sector industry). With the majority of students continuing on to positions outside of academia (over 80% of doctoral graduates do not continue to a full time professorship¹), it's important to consider what skills and experiences you need to acquire during graduate school, in order to better prepare you for a job search after graduation. Furthermore, graduate school is a significant commitment of time, typically 4 years for full-time doctoral students. Most people will need to cultivate meaningful experiences outside of work to stay focused, content, and productive over this stretch of time.

When considering what experiences to pursue in graduate school, it's helpful to think ahead to the position(s) you'd like to hold after graduation. What work environment(s) are you considering, and what skills will be valued there? What will be expected of new hires, and how will you stand out in a crowd? Having worked as a consulting engineer between my masters and doctoral studies, I have experienced firsthand that employers often look for more than academic experiences when making hiring decisions. The Canadian Associate for Graduate Students suggests that 'to be competitive [...] graduate students increasingly need to engage in ongoing development of their skills in areas that complement their academic

programs'.² Consider your strengths, and the aspects of your current work that you particularly enjoy. Think about workplaces where your strengths and your preferences will be valued. In other words, look for a position that will be a good fit for your particular traits. In addition, personal aspirations can demonstrate commitment and determination, and can be used to point to these qualities on a resume or in an interview. A variety of transferable skills, including interpersonal, leadership, and communication skills can also be demonstrated using personal activities.

Many different options exist during graduate school that allow one to acquire professional skills and experience not directly related to research. Internships can be a great way to both gain a little breadth of experience, and make contacts that may prove useful when looking for work after graduation. Internships also offer the unique opportunity of working within a professional environment, thus allowing students a chance to assess the particular workplace themselves (Is this is a place you would like to work? What sort of work is done here, and how do new hires fit in?). Depending on your program, teaching or teaching assistant opportunities may exist. These offer opportunities to practice (and demonstrate, when it comes to writing a resume or interviewing) communication and interpersonal skills. Wide ranges of volunteer opportunities exist on most university campuses (and in the surrounding community). As such, volunteering can be used to fill perceived gaps in your experience, by choosing a volunteer position that requires practicing the skills you'd like to demonstrate. Many graduate supervisors take on undergraduate students, either for summer positions or as honours students during the school year. If looking for management or leadership experience, ask about co-supervising a student in one of these roles. Think broadly; professional development opportunities may exist within your university, be run by national organizations (such as MITACS), or be found in the larger community. Numerous opportunities exist to

1 http://www.conferenceboard.ca/topics/education/commentaries/15-01-06/where_are_canada_s_phds_employed.aspx

2 <http://www.cags.ca/documents/publications/working/Prof%20Skills%20Dev%20for%20Grad%20Stud%20%20Final%2008%2011%2005.pdf>

gain experience and build skills not directly related to your research during graduate school, and these opportunities are much more likely to materialize if you actively seek them out.

Personal goals can be at least as important as professional goals, and often directly contribute to success in your professional life. Setting and pursuing personal goals can improve morale and confidence, and can provide balance when your work life is in flux. Research generally involves a degree of uncertainty. There will be times when your research and professional life seems chaotic, unpredictable, or outright unsuccessful. Having personal pursuits to draw from at these times can provide a much-needed balance, offering a sense of accomplishment and purpose when these notions do not flow from your work life. Non-research activities may also improve research productivity in more tangible ways, for example by improving verbal communication skills, leading to more impactful conference presentations.

Of course, graduate school is not exclusively about preparing for your next job; some pursuits will be purely for your own enjoyment. Distributing your time between professional development and personal pursuits can be done purposefully, to find a balance that truly works for you, and to prepare for the position(s) you'd like to hold after graduation.

It's sometimes necessary to be persistent when creating time to pursue your personal goals. Graduate school is generally seen as a time of focus, of honing a particular, and often rather narrow, skill set.

Experiences not directly related to one's research are often less valued than research-related skills. Most students will continue to pursue positions outside of academia, and as such, must prepare themselves to be marketable in that environment. More broadly, your goals will never seem as valuable or important to someone else as they do to you. You must push for the experience and accomplishments you want in graduate school; they will happen if you make them happen. Finally, broadening one's experience, in the ways described above, can increase enjoyment of graduate school, and may in this way improve research outcomes. When a student's sense of overall wellbeing is secure, they are more likely to be determined and motivated in their research.

While setting goals and pursuing opportunities outside of research falls primarily to the student, supervisors and mentors within the university should encourage a wider range of experience among graduate students. Not only will developing a broader skill set better prepare students for the job market, it will enhance the students' experience while at graduate school, and will likely also improve research outcomes.

Teaching and Learning Resources

CLT LibGuide

The CLT Libguide is an online guide that provides teaching and learning support for those who desire to improve their knowledge and skills within the realm of higher education teaching and learning.

University Affairs

University Affairs is the most trusted source of news, information and opinion about higher education in Canada.

CLT Library Collection

The CLT has a resource library of roughly 600 books covering topics including, but not limited to, assessment (of faculty and students), computer-assisted instruction, higher education (philosophy), and diversity.

Teaching Innovation Projects Journal

TIPS is an open-access journal that publishes articles describing the scholarly and pedagogical foundations for workshops about a variety of timely educational topics.

To learn more about these and/or to discover the many other resources and the support available to you as a Dalhousie graduate student, visit <http://www.dal.ca/dept/clt/resources.html> or drop by the CLT office, Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.

Nominate an Outstanding TA for the President's Graduate Student Teaching Award

Graduate student instructors, including in the critical role of teaching assistants, make an indispensable contribution to university education: teaching in the classroom, leading seminars and tutorials, demonstrating in the laboratory, coaching, providing feedback on student work, and supporting students' success in numerous ways.

The Dalhousie President's Graduate Student Teaching Awards are open to all qualified graduate student instructors (currently registered Master's and Ph.D. candidates), including previous nominees (but not previous recipients). Up to three awards will be presented annually.

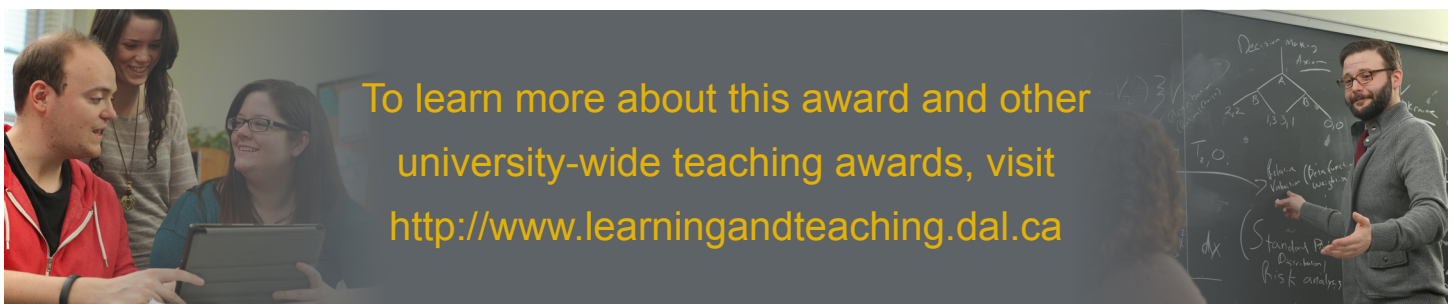
Criteria

Both nominators and evaluators should consider the following list of criteria. Please note that these two areas of criteria are weighted equally. Recognizing that graduate student instructors play different roles and work in disciplines with different demands, nominees should:

1. Provide exceptional student learning experiences that are reflected through effective teaching practices, demonstrated in the following ways:
 - having a comprehensive knowledge of subject
 - being consistently prepared for class/TA duties
 - showing enthusiasm for the subject and encourage student interest and participation
 - setting high standards and motivate students to attain them
 - communicating effectively
 - using technology appropriately for online, blended, and face-to-face contexts
 - being available to students outside class hours, whether in-person or online
 - providing constructive feedback on student work
 - working in a collegial manner with students, faculty supervisors and other teaching assistants
2. Demonstrate a commitment to their own professional development in teaching by:
 - participating in, and/or contributing to, workshops, conferences, and seminars on teaching or other concerns of graduate student teachers
 - developing solutions to graduate student teaching dilemmas (e.g., time management, classroom interaction, motivating students)
 - incorporating new teaching and learning approaches, where appropriate
 - developing teaching materials, where possible

Up to 3 awards will be presented annually and each winner will receive \$500!

Annual deadline to apply is January 31



To learn more about this award and other university-wide teaching awards, visit <http://www.learningandteaching.dal.ca>

President's Graduate Student Teaching Award 2015 Recipients

Becky Spencer (Interdisciplinary PhD, Faculty of Health Professions)

Travis Lundrigan (Department of Chemistry)

Danen Poley (Department of English)



Becky Spencer has been a teaching assistant for over five years, and an active participant in the Certificate in University Teaching and Learning at Dalhousie. She was recognized for her role in developing and implementing instructional technology as well as her leadership skills among teaching assistants in her unit.

Travis Lundrigan has been a teaching assistant for over seven years and, like Ms. Spencer, is also an active participant in the Certificate in University Teaching and Learning at Dalhousie University. He was recognized for his appreciation and dedication to his students, extensive knowledge and conscientious approach to his teaching responsibilities.



Danen Poley has been a teaching assistant for almost four years and more recently taught his first course as a primary instructor. He has been described as a philosopher, actor, and teacher who produces highly engaging classes by combining a variety of teaching methods to help his students develop essential skills.

Being a Role Model for Undergraduate Women in Science by Living Out Our Own Professional and Personal Goals



Katie Birnie, PhD Candidate in Clinical Psychology, Dalhousie University

There are many news headlines about how having children is a career killer for women in academia (Mason, 2013); and that motherhood is in part to blame for the inequalities between men and women, and the loss of women from the sciences (Shen, 2013; Adamo, 2013; Wolfinger,

2013). If you read further, you find that women, more than men, see academic careers as all consuming, solitary, and unnecessarily competitive (Rice, 2012). Women are also less likely to pursue careers in fields that appear to place greater emphasis on “brilliance”, such as the sciences (Turk, 2015). These are horrible messages for all women, but particularly for those in undergraduate and graduate science programs who may be interested in achieving both career and family success.

I was inspired to write about this topic as I think that we are well poised, as female graduate students in science, to support undergraduates in realizing themselves as whole people – in whatever capacity that may be. Over time, I have come to realize that my personal and professional experiences have played a key role in supporting the pursuit of my own goals in both of these areas. I come from a long line of women pursuing higher education, several of whom completed graduate degrees in science when it was not the norm for women of their time. My grandmother completed a master’s degree in chemistry and was a mother of five, including my father. My mother is an engineer and was one of three women in her graduating class of hundreds, before then completing a master’s in business administration. She is also a mother of three. My own PhD supervisor has four children, achieved tenure, and was recognized as one of the most productive female psychologists in Canada (Carleton, Parkerson, & Horswill, 2012), all before the age of 40.

So, it’s not by accident that I am a graduate student in science with a toddler, although this was never

my intention when I started! Instead, life happened (as it does), and grad school became a good time for me to consider having a child. I share this, not because I am advocating that all women should be mothers, nor that having a family is the only (or even the most important) personal goal. Nor would I ever say that women can “have it all”. There is an ever-evolving balance and there are always trade-offs. Rather, I share my own experience to illustrate that there is a powerful impact in being surrounded by women who live by example, and by those who encourage happiness in both professional and personal arenas. Perhaps most importantly, research supports this. People look for leaders within whom they can see some version of themselves (Rice, 2012). Furthermore, female students, in particular, want and need to have some same-sex role models (Lockwood, 2006).

A few years ago, I went to a conference whose goal was to connect women and support female leadership development. What became very apparent to me is that we have a built-in mentorship model in academia that women in other industries crave. Indeed, lack of mentors (female or male) is a commonly cited explanation for why there are so few women in top leadership roles in companies across various industries. Women are often given the advice to find mentors. Now don’t get me wrong, not all mentors are created equal and not all mentors support the pursuit of personal goals. And let’s be honest, we don’t choose our supervisors for our personal lives, we choose them for our careers. But, I think it’s important to reflect on the challenges we face as female graduate students in the sciences (or in any discipline, really), that make it harder for us to be optimistic and encouraging mentors to undergraduate women who may be considering this same path.

So, what can we do about it? We need to seek out more positive role models and we need to begin changing the social narrative about women in

We need to seek out more positive role models and we need to begin changing the social narrative about women in academia and science

academia and science (see the response from female scientists to Tim Hunt’s sexist remarks for an inspiring example; Bilefsy, 2015). But importantly, we also need to see ourselves as mentors and role models. We don’t need to have it all figured out before we can engage in real conversations about the challenges of academic culture, or to be able to support our own students to live the lives they desire. I have had many discussions with undergraduate and fellow graduate students about whether they want to pursue further education or academic careers given the uncertainties of balancing work and family life to the extent they are comfortable. I try to respond to them in the way that has best helped me, by trying to be authentic and supportive, even when their goals are different from my own.

These experiences continue to shape my teaching as I strive to ask about, listen, and support students’ personal interests both within and outside of academia. It has also encouraged me to be more open in sharing my experience of the joys and challenges of pursuing personal and professional dreams. By engaging in the broader dialogue around women’s leadership and mentorship, I have also seen beyond the negative headlines. Media stories cite research that an increasing number of highly educated women are having children and larger families (Livingston, 2015), and that women in engineering, mathematics, and computer science are more likely to have comparable pay, access to academic jobs, and grant success as their male counterparts, than women in other disciplines (Ceci et al., 2014) So, maybe there is cause for greater optimism, and if we forge ahead living out our own professional and personal goals, our students and classmates will be more likely to do so too.

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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.

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