



## STLHE SAPES

Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education  
La société pour l'avancement de la pédagogie dans l'enseignement supérieur

"TEACHING AND LEARNING WITH  
EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES"

### Virtual Education: Teaching and Learning in Second Life

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**Mike Atkinson, Tim Wilson,  
& Jonathan Kidd**  
*University of Western Ontario*

Today's university students are steeped in a culture of technology. On university campuses around the world, cell phones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), and personal computers are approaching ubiquity. At the University of Western Ontario, one has only to step into a typical first-year class and the trend is apparent. Our tech support departments have kept abreast of these changes, but as instructors, many of us have yet to tap the true potential of these media. In lectures and labs, we reach visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners, but they must learn on our terms, in the timeframe available. Texts offer more scope for independent learning, but again, the insight that a student might pull from the text is limited to what is on the page. Using computer technology, we can reach more students, providing them with learning modalities that allow them to explore content on their own terms and at their own pace. We can do all of this in a rich immersive environment called "Second Life" (SL).

SL is a free on-line multi-user virtual environment (MUVE) that allows users to meet in virtual space, build and manipulate virtual objects, and converse via text or voice over internet protocol (VoIP). A number of teaching innovations have already emerged from this unique combination of features. For instance, it is now possible to conduct distance education in an online environment where students can actually watch and listen to their professors, as they give a lecture, and raise their hands to ask questions. As if this were not enough, students can converse with one another during lectures on private, non-disruptive channels, and instructors can administer online and offline courses simultaneously - conserving resources and offering a more involved, economical experience for distance learners.

The 3D capabilities of SL offer a whole new set of possibilities - both for distance learners and students on the main campus. Using the SL client software, 3D simulations, models, and demonstrations can be created for students to manipulate, interact with, or store for later use. This can be done using the SL program itself, or by importing existing models into the SL environment. Using SL, we can give students the opportunity to see what the brain looks like, conduct virtual autopsies, track the movements of the

solar system, or even experience a simulated schizophrenic episode from their desks. Below are some examples of what has already been done using SL. To date, there are over 100 universities with virtual campuses in SL. Different campuses host different types of events, such as scheduled lectures, media screenings, theatrical productions, labs, and virtual office hours. Practically anything possible in real life is possible in SL. We have started to explore the potential of virtual anatomy labs and on-demand



*Students can observe the functioning of a eukaryotic cell in 3D, and can enter it for a closer look. Individual chromosomes and gene loci can be examined.*



tutorials in psychology but this only scratches the surface. We invite you to think about applications in your area and join SL. For more information, check the following:

[www.secondlife.com](http://www.secondlife.com)  
<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-5182759758975402950>  
<http://blog.secondlife.com/2007/01/08/embracing-the-inevitable/>

*Scheduled events at Princeton*



*An outdoor auditorium, complete with multifunctional screen (PPT/video/audio).*



*Mike Atkinson, at the STLHE conference in Windsor, Ontario (June 2008)*



*Faculty offices at Bowling Green State University*



*A replica of the Sistine Chapel (ceiling view).*

# Getting to Know You:

## Statements from the 2008 3M National Teaching Fellows

**Malgorzata Dubiel**  
*Mathematics*  
*Simon Fraser University*

During the last several years, I have been teaching classes in which the majority of students has a weak mathematical background, lacks confidence, and fears or dislikes the subject. At the same time, in each group, there are some students who have reasonably strong backgrounds, and sometimes even an interest in the subject. My challenge is to teach in a way that engages the whole class. While my main focus is to provide an opportunity for the weak students to build their knowledge and understanding, learn how to study mathematics and gain confidence in their abilities, I want the class to be sufficiently interesting and challenging for the best students as well.

An important milestone in my teaching career was coming to the realization that many students need more than reaching the point at which learning mathematics is not as daunting a task as they thought. They need a reason to learn it other than the fact that math is part of their program requirements. I want to inspire them; to show that mathematics can be interesting, beautiful and entertaining, that it is useful and important, and that it is much different from what their school experience has taught them. In my teaching, I collect and implement assignment tasks that engage students and seem more like puzzles than traditional problems; stories about interesting people involved in doing mathematics; cartoons and quotations that present mathematics and mathematical thinking in a different light. I also include games and hands-on activities in class, such as building interesting geometrical objects – and show students unexpected applications of them. It is rewarding when students later tell me about working on my problems with their parents, their children, or friends, and when they send me pictures of models they have constructed.

**Katherine Frego**  
*Biology*  
*University of New Brunswick*

During 12 years as an itinerant sessional instructor, I became accustomed to taking over not only a colleague's courses, but also his or her office, house, and sometimes pets and elderly relatives. My dream was to find a place where I could "put down roots," and watch the trees that I planted reach maturity. Recently, it struck me that my dream was a metaphor that described my teaching journey. (I guess I am a slow learner!)

As a plant ecologist, it's probably not surprising that I have a botanical metaphor for teaching and learning. A learner is a seed—a unique package of self-regulated growth and unimaginable potential, but often dormant, awaiting a special trigger. As a gardener, my

task is to provide that trigger: for some, simply providing moisture is sufficient stimulation; for others, an impervious "seed coat" of complex obstacles must be overcome before germination—a personal life-changing learning process—will occur.

Even after germination begins, the environment for the developing seedling is critical: a blast of cold (or heat), too much light or too long a night may stunt it, or shut it down. A skilled gardener seeks to understand the requirements of each seed—nurturing it while it is young and vulnerable, gradually allowing it to face the stresses that will "harden it off" to withstand real life conditions. As with most gardeners, I take greatest joy in watching both the previously "dormant" seeds blossom and, when I am really fortunate, watching them bear fruit. These are the students that eventually tower above their gardener.

One of the hardest lessons I have had to learn is that I am a gardener, not a farmer: I do not germinate hundreds of identical seeds, nor do I "mass produce" a field of similar plants. Cultivating a diverse mix of seeds with unknown backgrounds and potentials means that my own learning is never done. I'm a seed, too!

**Sorel Friedman**  
*Département d'études anglaises*  
*Université de Montréal*

Everything I learned about teaching I learned from other teachers.

- From the person who first held open the door for me, and to whom I am eternally grateful, I learned that one cannot really teach; one can only provide opportunities for learning.
- From my colleagues at the Université de Montréal, I learned how to think outside the box when using new technologies in the classroom.
- From my sailing instructor, I learned about being an independent life-long learner. He told me, "Anyone can sail when there is wind, but only an EXPERT can sail when there is no wind."
- From my teacher of Russian language, I learned about the difficulties of learning a foreign language: "If it sounds funny to your ears, then it is right."

I can sum up my teaching philosophy very simply: "outside the three-hour class, beyond the 15-week semester." Throughout my career, I have come to understand that learning must extend further than the physical walls of the classroom and beyond the few weeks of instruction that they receive from me. Mastering a language is unlike learning any other kind of academic subject; a language is indeed, acquired, and the teacher must create contexts for immersion, so that students can increase their contact hours with the language and culture outside of the classroom. A language is learned to be used for academics, for travel, for employment, for personal development. However, many of my students lack the opportunity to immerse themselves in the English

language and its many cultures outside the classroom. It is through my experimentation with technology that I have come to discover innovative ways to counteract this problem and to implement my philosophy.

**Robert Lapp**  
*English Literatures*  
*Mount Allison University*

I recall as an undergraduate being struck by—something Northrop Frye suddenly declared in the middle of a lecture on *The Book of Job*: "There are no answers," he said. "There are only better and better phrasings of the question." His remark contained a lesson I have revisited many times, both as student and as professor, and one that has come to seem as true of the questions raised by teaching and learning as those at the heart of human life. We are all students, it implies, and our learning takes the form of returning over and over again to what we thought we knew in order to regard in a new light, to approach it from a different angle, to ask fresh questions



about it. One such question that I return to, as a teacher of literature, is how best to evoke in my students a taste for the subtle, a tolerance for the paradoxical, and the night-vision required to glimpse the profound, all the while meeting the demand for immediate and measurable results. How can I invite my students to temper the linear pressures of career and accreditation with the patience required for a non-linear, recursive process of reading and writing about works of philosophical art that take a lifetime (or more) to unfold? With any luck (and once the grades are submitted), my students will return to the questions raised by the course, will re-phrase them in their terms, and thus carry forward that inner “career” in quest of deeper knowledge, wider consciousness, and sounder understanding.

**T.A. Loeffler**  
*Human Kinetics and Recreation  
 Memorial University*

Metaphors are how I make sense of the world—and how I communicate that understanding

them to learn while filled with uncertainty and sometimes with joy. I seek engagement— for them to climb or teach or learn without focus leads to unwelcome consequences.

Mountains are both solid and moving. They are steady, wise, and seemingly unyielding while at the same time they are changing through erosion and time. As a teacher, I seek to provide a solid authentic presence for my students. I am reliable, accessible, and my students come to know they can depend on me but that I also move and change. I reflect on my life experiences and bring change to who I am which in turn, shifts how I teach. I teach differently over time and season, continuously trying to improve my ability to facilitate student learning.

**Peter Mahaffy**  
*Chemistry  
 King's University*

My teaching and learning is focused on chemistry, which is the art, craft, and science of change. Chemistry education is the art, craft,

“chemistry” to support that larger community of learners in Canadian universities and colleges? My own list includes:

- Teach and learn as if our planet matters.
- Teach and learn as if each human being in our bursting-at-the-seams Canadian classrooms matters.
- Nurture learners’ understanding of and critical reflection about the worldviews and human elements that shape their approaches to science, learning, and life.
- Understand and use research on how novices and experts learn.
- Seamlessly weave content and context into science curriculum to make it relevant to learners’ lives.
- Teach and learn to empower with understanding of how to live with integrity in a very complex world.
- Carry out investigative academic research that is not divorced from teaching, but which pushes back frontiers while mentoring undergraduate collaborators.
- Amplify the voice of voiceless learners from around the planet.

What’s on your list? What list would the learners in our classrooms draw up?

**Daniel Pratt**  
*Educational Studies  
 University of British Columbia*

University teaching brings challenges that are intellectual, relational, moral, and cultural. Intellectual because it deals with claims to truth; relational because it places people in interdependent roles and responsibilities; moral because it requires judgments of propriety, value and worth; and cultural because relationships and propriety are culturally and historically constituted. Of all these, it is the relational challenges that most often accompany me home at the end of the day. Let me explain.

Students come to me with experience and expertise that is enviable. They are educators, nurses, physicians, managers, scientists, artists, and ministers—veteran practitioners of crafts about which I know little. Seldom am I the most knowledgeable person in the room, except in one domain—the topics of my classes. Thus, our relationship is one of mutual exchange and respect.

This does not mean that I am their ‘friend’. I am not; I am their teacher, with duties and responsibilities that would be complicated or possibly compromised between friends. My role is as a colleague and co-inquirer into educational issues that matter to them and to me. In this role, I need to establish a learning climate where it is safe to take risks, to try out tentative understanding, and accept feedback that challenges current thinking and assumptions. In other words, it’s my responsibility to establish a place of learning that is respectful, challenging, supportive, and productive; a place where people will be willing to share what they know and admit when they don’t know. To do this, I have to park my ego at the door and enter with a delicate balance of authority and humility—authority for what I know, and humility for what they know that I do not yet know. Finding this balance is one of my biggest challenges in teaching.



and science of coaxing learners into deeper conceptual understanding about the molecular world. But conceptual change is not an end in itself, nor is it merely an ‘academic’ exercise. It should enable learners to see and to understand the world better, and it should empower learners to use the tools of science to transform their own circles of influence for the better.

The most effective learning takes place within a supportive and caring learning community – and I feel both a great privilege and responsibility to learn how to walk in the shoes (cross-trainers, flip-flops, crocs and mukluks) of the learners in my classroom. What “elements” of change might contribute to finding the right

to others. Recently, I have been on an intense journey seeking the summits of some of the world’s highest peaks and these mountains have become my teachers.

They exact deep lessons and now, I teach my students like the mountains teach me. With vision. With struggle. I ask them to reach up and out for an unknown sky. I ask

**Patangi Rangachari**  
Medicine  
McMaster University

The modern research University in a pluralistic society should provide a privileged space for fostering disciplined dissent. "We few, we happy few", who work in them, owe a responsibility both to our students as well as to society. Idols stood in Bacon's way as he fostered the New Learning of the seventeenth century. Our standards-based world which sanctifies objective tests fails to recognize that true learning needs time. Teachers should not be mere passport

control officers busy checking off lists but rather be agent provocateurs inspiring students to change the world. Braudel and other French historians of the Annales School evoked the notion of the "longue durée" where they went beyond events and looked at deeper structures of the past. We too, should teach our students to look not at the near future but the distant one (l'avenir distant, pas plus proche). This is not easy as Society sanctifies the bottom-line. About a decade ago, I took part in a panel discussion at the CBC discussing schools and universities. Pushed to give my vision of the future, I quoted an old poem by James Elroy Flecker:

I care not if you bridge the seas  
Or ride secure the cruel sky,  
Or build consummate palaces  
Of metal or of masonry.

But have you wine and music still,  
And statues and a bright-eyed love,  
And foolish thoughts of good and ill,  
And prayers to them who sit above?



W.H. Auden once wrote feelingly that "As biological organisms made of matter, we are subject to the laws of physics and biology; as conscious persons who create our own history we are free to decide what that history shall be. Without science, we should have no notion of equality; without art, no notion of liberty". To that end, I have strenuously sought to give my students a glimpse of the wonders of the natural world and help them reflect on their own responsibilities to blend harmoniously the world of the sciences and the humanities so that both cherished notions, equality and liberty, can be well preserved.

**Mercedes Rowinsky-Geurts**  
Languages and Literatures  
Wilfrid Laurier University

Teaching is about sharing information, motivating young minds to explore endless possibilities, creating a classroom environment that is safe and challenging at the same time. Teaching is about posing questions and offering tools so students can find the answers. Most importantly, teaching for me is about passion. Passion for the subject at hand, for the topics presented: passion for teaching. If we teach with passion, students feel it. They sense it. The most rewarding experiences occur when students respond with the same enthusiasm and commitment that the instructor has shown them. I feel privileged and honoured to be able to live my life doing something that I profoundly love. This is a path where rewards are presented to us daily: a student leaving a book of poems that he has written after leaving the university; a journal created by another student with quotes from my classes (apparently she had been writing them on the margin of her class notes through the years);

and those who keep in touch, even years after graduation. Their accomplishments and life experiences are the unexpected rewards that keep on giving.

**Jim Silcox**  
Obstetrics and Gynecology  
The University of Western Ontario

As I reflect at the end of my career, I see that I more or less tumbled into teaching by default. In my youth, I always considered teaching as a career alternative to Medicine, but in the end decided on Medicine, never dreaming that eventually I would be able to combine both paths in a very satisfying way. It is that combination of praxis and theory that has been at the heart of all that I teach since I constantly crave to see ideas translated into action and results. I have discovered that most of my students do, too. The result is that I thrive in small group settings where I can ask questions and get students to teach me what they think and how they plan to put their thoughts into action in the medical setting. The queries "what," "where," "when," "why," and "how" have stood me in good stead over the years and I think have helped students to get past the temptation to learn simply by rote but rather search out the reasons for what they see and what they do. Such learning "conversations" often have the effect of blurring the boundaries between teacher and student and have led me (a decidedly "small c" conservative) to engage in activities that I would not have considered on my own. Ask me sometime what my tutorial group and I were doing in a "hot yoga" class this past winter and you will see what I mean.

# eCole :

## Individualiser le développement des compétences

**François Georges, Marianne Poumay**  
Université de Liège, IFRES-LabSET, Belgique

Le projet eCole a pour objectif de soutenir le développement des socles de compétences visés dans l'enseignement primaire et secondaire de la communauté française de Belgique. Il propose une plateforme en ligne reprenant par compétence des tâches susceptibles de les servir (<http://www.e-cole.be>). Environ 430 tâches y sont jusqu'ici répertoriées. Les deux premières années (2006 et 2007) ont été consacrées à la conception de l'outil, à la sélection et la création de tâches utiles au développement des compétences « lire » et « écrire » en français à destination des enfants de 10 à 14 ans. La troisième année (2008) est dédiée à son expérimentation et au déploiement d'activité au service du développement de compétences en mathématiques.

Nous décrivons dans les paragraphes qui suivent une brève description de l'outil, de sa mise en œuvre et des perspectives qui en résultent.

### L'outil

La plateforme présente une carte de navigation (type GPS) dans laquelle sont affichées sous forme de rond-point les compétences, les sous-compétences et leurs ressources. Via chaque rond-point, l'apprenant accède à une série



de sa perception de son niveau de maîtrise de la compétence travaillée et d'en apporter la preuve. Un débat peut dès lors s'installer entre l'élève et son enseignant. Si la preuve est à charge du premier, l'apport d'informations diagnostiques et formatives revient au second.

### Premiers usages

L'outil a été testé sur 360 élèves répartis dans 18 classes différentes, dont 6 de sixième primaire et 12 de première secondaire. Il suscite un grand enthousiasme auprès des enseignants comme des élèves. Trois types de scénarios ont été éprouvés. Les

d'activités complexes, semi-complexes et simples. Pour chaque tâche, l'élève peut consulter une fiche descriptive à partir de laquelle il peut évaluer et commenter l'activité. Le rond-point donne également accès un dossier de suivi dans lequel sont reprises les activités qui ont été consultées. À partir de ces informations, l'élève est invité à rendre compte à son enseignant

premiers proposent des parcours individualisés conçus par l'enseignant et/ou l'enfant (3 enseignants dans 3 classes). Les seconds proposent un même parcours pour tous les élèves d'une même année (2 enseignants dans 13 classes). Les troisièmes laissent à l'apprenant la liberté d'utiliser ou non l'outil. Aucun parcours n'est imposé (2 enseignants dans 2 classes).

De ces premiers usages, nous constatons tout d'abord une forte satisfaction des enseignants, qui souhaitent d'ailleurs poursuivre leur usage de l'outil les années ultérieures. Cependant, seule la fonctionnalité d'exercitation a été réellement exploitée. Les enfants ont bien réalisé les tâches, mais n'en ont pas analysé les résultats pour évaluer leur niveau de maîtrise de la compétence et en rendre compte à leur enseignant. Trois hypothèses expliqueraient cet usage restrictif de l'outil. La première relèverait du contexte, la seconde de l'outil et la troisième des acteurs. La première n'est autre que le manque de temps. L'usage de l'outil s'est restreint à en moyenne deux séances collectives organisées sur un même mois. Le développement des compétences demande du temps et ce n'est pas en l'espace de 100 minutes que l'on peut prétendre atteindre un niveau supérieur de maîtrise de la compétence visée. La seconde hypothèse relève de la nature des activités en ligne. À l'époque de cette première expérience, sur les 200 activités en ligne, seule une petite dizaine était semi-complexe ou complexe. L'outil ne permettant pas aux enseignants de déployer une réelle stratégie couvrant la carte des compétences « lire » et « écrire » dans son entièreté, ils ont donc opté pour une stratégie plus minimaliste. La troisième hypothèse est liée à l'absence de développement de certaines compétences des élèves parmi lesquels l'autoévaluation. Ce constat nous renvoie aux manques de compétence de l'enseignant à soutenir la réflexivité, mais aussi au manque de compétences des accompagnateurs pédagogiques à les y initier.

### Perspectives

L'outil a été conçu sur base de modèles qui tentent de soutenir le développement de compétences. Force est de constater que sans formation ad hoc, les enseignants restreignent l'outil eCole à un exerciciel. Pour pallier ce manque, nous avons repensé l'accompagnement des enseignants sur 2 mois. Nous prévoyons des formations de 3 journées. Si la première est axée sur une rapide prise en mains et une réflexion sur les principes pédagogiques sous-jacents aux usages de l'outil, les deux suivantes se centrent sur l'analyse par l'enseignant des traces objectives d'apprentissage de ses propres apprenants. C'est en tentant de comprendre les trajectoires de chacun de ses élèves que l'enseignant se donnera les moyens de réguler son action, de maximiser l'usage de l'outil et, en conséquence, de développer chez ses élèves à la fois les compétences « matière », l'autonomie et la métacognition. Par cette étude des traces de leurs élèves, les enseignants deviennent aussi des praticiens-chercheurs réflexifs. Ils se professionnalisent par une recherche constante de l'amélioration de l'apprentissage de leurs élèves.

eCole est aussi une occasion de partager entre collègues. Ainsi, l'outil est gratuit et nous sommes ouverts à tout souhait de collaboration, à condition de recevoir sur cet outil les avis critiques qui nous feront progresser.

*Le projet est coordonné par le Laboratoire de Soutien à l'Enseignement Télématique (LabSET) de l'Université de Liège (ULg) qui y œuvre en partenariat avec la Haute Ecole Mosane d'Enseignement Supérieur (HEMES). Il est coordonné par Valérie Vreeswijk et piloté par un comité composé de représentants du ministre de l'Éducation et des inspecteurs issus des divers réseaux d'enseignement subsidiés par la communauté française.*

## Transforming e-Communications to Civil e-Learning Communities

Jennifer A. Hudson,  
Bonnie S. Farley-Lucas  
Southern Connecticut State University

The e-writing revolution, for better or worse, has filtered into academia. And never has the gap between traditional and digital native discourses seemed wider than now. But this gap can be bridged! Through mediation of cultural and discursive differences, instructors can facilitate respectful communities of shared inquiry with students.

The following seven suggestions for enhancing civility in faculty-student e-mail communications are culled from related literature, informal discussions and focus groups with students and faculty, and practical experience.

### 1. Consider the benefits and downfalls of e-mail.

Benefits of student-faculty interaction via e-mail include connecting easily, inexpensively, rapidly, and globally. Others include the development of language fluency and giving students opportunities to take chances they might not feel comfortable taking in face-to-face encounters (Bloch, 2002; Duran, et al, 2005). Finally, e-mail can enhance face-to-face interactions with students and increase students' course-related learning (Duran, et al, 2005).

Of course, the medium (by its nature) also poses setbacks including on-line bullying, hastily composed messages that get misinterpreted, and the erasure of boundaries—namely time, space and status differentials (Epstein, 2006; Bloch, 2002). By recalling one's own mistakes using e-mail, we can help students learn more effective e-communication. Sharing an anecdote or talking through consequences of using the "Reply All" function can be instrumental, as is pointing out that e-mail is not private and can be forwarded to anyone.

### 2. Make your preferred title clear to students.

One way to thwart tension between social distinctions (see above) is to tell students your preferred title. Let them know if you prefer the relational distance provided by "Dr." or "Professor" versus preference for closeness provided by a first-name basis and that this preferred title should be kept in e-mail messages.

### 3. Be forgiving of grammatical errors, yet aim for increased professionalism.

Understand that students' attention to grammar and structure decreases in e-mail as they focus more on personal connections (Bloch, 2002). So while typos may seem careless, students generally see e-mail as a more casual and interpersonal medium (Epstein, 2006) than, say, term papers. Instructors might then be forgiving of errors in e-mail, particularly if student engagement out-of-class is a desired outcome. However, instructors also need to help students understand that their professionalism and credibility is tied to e-mail messages.

### 4. Encourage one-on-one communication and office visits.

While e-mail seems to have usurped office hours, there are some concepts and operations that are too complex for clarification in an e-mail message. Add in language, culture, or even disciplinary differences, and e-mail becomes less helpful in moments requiring enhanced clarity. Telephone also remains another viable channel, so check messages on a daily basis.

### 5. Create a syllabus statement and gain student input.

Values that will guide in-class and out-of-class communication should be reflected in the course syllabus. Instructors can state which university-sanctioned platforms to use, the frequency with which one responds to e-mail, preferred title, expectations for language and grammar, and the types of communication that should be reserved for in-person contact during office hours. Students should be invited to share their expectations as well.

### 6. Model e-civility with effective use of e-mail.

Instructors should model e-civility by enacting behaviours that enhance learning and mirror the expectations placed on students. Key recommendations include: 1) consider the audience and impact of messages while composing; 2) include a brief salutation and a closing sentiment to impart relational connectedness and politeness; 3) refer to the previous message and provide a specific, yet brief response; and 4) edit messages prior to sending. The "Signature" option can be used to add a formal title to save time. For large groups receiving the same message, consider using the "BCC" function to limit text. In the interest of efficiency, check e-mail 2 or 3 times daily (not continuously), respond to student inquiries in a timely manner (within 24 hours to meet their needs), and clear out the inbox often to eliminate outdated messages. Also, hold off from replying immediately to any inflammatory messages received.

### 7. Use explicit e-mail writing assignments.

In-class and out-of-class exercises regarding e-civility can support writing-across-the-curriculum efforts and expose students to more formalized processes for assessing impact, quality, and appropriateness of e-mail communication. Case studies analyzing effective and ineffective e-communication, samples of appropriate and inappropriate e-mail messages, and public domain correspondence (e.g. newspapers and Blogs) can be used to generate group discussion, critical reflection, and possibilities for revision. Students can practice navigating cultural and organizational hierarchies through writing assignments that require communicating with people of different ranks and roles.

### CONCLUSION

In order to play the role of translators between digital non-natives and natives, conversations about the connections among e-communication and learning must include all voices. Guided by this spirit of dialogue, the liminal e-space can enrich human relations, understanding, and learning when mediated by instructors and students.

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## President's Report

**Joy Mighty**  
*STLHE President*  
*Queen's University*

I hope that you have all had a productive, enjoyable and rejuvenating summer, with at least some "R & R," and free from the usual stressors associated with the hectic pace of Fall and Winter terms in our institutions. May you all have a happy, successful and rewarding 2008-2009 academic year!

I am thrilled to share with you the wonderful news that STLHE was officially incorporated as a not-for-profit organization on September 17, 2008. This is an exciting historic achievement to which you have all contributed through your extensive feedback over several years and your unanimous ratification of the new By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation at the 2007 Annual General Meeting. I take this opportunity to thank publicly the STLHE Conference and Events Co-ordinator, Margaret Wilson, who, expertly and very patiently, shepherded us through the lengthy process necessary to

bring us to this point. I am particularly proud and appreciative of the consultative, participatory approach that Margaret used throughout this challenging process. Incorporation allows us to seek charitable status which, once achieved,

and inspiring. We were delighted that the organizing committee established the STLHE Poster Prize which simultaneously honours Pat Rogers, our former president extraordinaire and recognizes a poster of exceptional quality. Congratulations to the inaugural winner of the STLHE Pat Rogers Poster Prize, Julia Tum from Leeds Metropolitan University in the UK.

Of the many other highlights of the conference, one of my favourites was the unveiling of the new STLHE logo at the opening reception. The logo imaginatively captures the dynamic and collaborative spirit of the STLHE community, and it was an honour to share the task of unveiling it with three former STLHE presidents, founder Christopher Knapper, Pat Rogers and Julia Christensen Hughes.

The "Green Initiative" at the Windsor Conference encouraged us to lighten the STLHE conference footprint on the environment. Heeding the call, the Standing Committee on Publications proposed that, in the 2008-2009 newsletter cycle, the first two issues be distributed electronically and that the third be printed and distributed at the 2009 annual conference to be held at the University of New Brunswick. This proposal was unanimously approved by the Board of Directors. We would welcome your feedback on this environmentally friendly and cost-saving initiative.

I am pleased to report that, at our meeting in June, the Board of Directors unanimously passed a motion to approve the application for the establishment of our second Special Interest Group (SIG). SIGs represent one way in which inclusivity and increased participation of members can be achieved, and the newly approved SIG brings together persons interested in

will make us eligible to apply for funding that is only available to incorporated not-for-profit organizations. Thank you, Margaret!

I would also like to thank the organizing team at the University of Windsor for being such excellent hosts of our 28th annual conference. Co-chaired by Alan Wright and Pat Rogers, the team did an outstanding job of modelling diversity in every aspect of the conference in keeping with the conference theme, "A World of Learning." Who can forget the amazing opening plenary led by the Theatre Players from the Centre for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT) at the University of Michigan? Their dramatization and facilitated discussions of issues relating to identity and inclusion in the classroom were engaging and provocative. Similarly, the poster session and reception were combined into a fully interactive event showcasing and modelling active learning approaches. The result was truly innovative

teaching and learning in Canadian colleges, university colleges, institutes, cégep and polytechnics.

Finally, I take this opportunity to express our deepest gratitude to two Board members whose terms of office ended in June and whose contributions to the work of the Society have been invaluable. Aline Germaine Rutherford was the Regional Representative for Ontario East and Vice-President (Partnerships). Alex Fancy was the Chair of the Council of 3M National Teaching Fellows, one of the Society's permanent constituencies. We thank Aline and Alex for their stellar service over many years. Denise Stockley from Queen's University has been elected to replace Aline, while Ron Smith was elected by the Council to replace Alex. We welcome Denise and Ron to the Board and look forward to working closely with them in our continued efforts to enhance teaching and learning in higher education.

## Rapport de la présidente

**Joy Mighty**  
*Présidente de la SAPES*  
*Université Queen's*

J'espère que votre saison estivale a été productive, agréable et énergisante et que vous avez trouvé un peu de repos et de détente, sans le stress habituel qui caractérise le rythme effréné des sessions d'automne et d'hiver dans nos établissements d'enseignement. Je vous souhaite une bonne, heureuse et enrichissante année universitaire 2008-2009!

Je suis extrêmement ravie de vous annoncer que depuis le 17 septembre 2008, la SAPES est officiellement constituée en organisation à but non lucratif. Il s'agit là d'un événement historique de taille auquel vous avez tous contribué, grâce aux commentaires que vous nous avez transmis au cours des dernières années et à la ratification unanime des nouveaux règlements et des statuts constitutifs lors de l'assemblée générale annuelle de 2007. J'aimerais profiter de cette occasion pour remercier publiquement Margaret Wilson, coordonnatrice de la conférence et des événements de la SAPES, qui, de main de maître et très patiemment, a su nous guider tout au long de ce processus. C'est grâce à elle que nous en sommes arrivés à cette étape. Je suis particulièrement fière et reconnaissante de l'approche participative et consultative que Margaret a adoptée tout au long de ce difficile processus. Notre constitution en société nous permet de demander le statut d'organisme de bienfaisance qui, une fois obtenu, nous permettra de présenter des demandes de financement réservées aux organismes à but non lucratif. Merci, Margaret!

J'aimerais également remercier le comité organisateur de l'Université de Windsor qui nous a si chaleureusement accueillis lors de notre 28e conférence annuelle. L'équipe, coprésidée par Alan Wright et Pat Rogers, a accompli un travail exceptionnel en veillant à ce que la diversité soit représentée dans tous les aspects de la conférence, en accord avec le thème choisi : l'univers de l'apprentissage. Qui peut oublier l'incredible séance d'ouverture, dirigée par les acteurs de la troupe Theater Players du Centre for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT) de l'Université du Michigan? Le jeu dramatique des participants et les discussions centrées sur les questions d'identité et d'inclusion dans la salle de classe n'ont laissé personne indifférent. De plus, la séance de présentation d'affiches et la réception ont été transformées en événement entièrement interactif, au cours duquel des méthodes d'apprentissage actif ont été présentées et mises en pratique. Le résultat était véritablement novateur et inspirant. Nous sommes ravis que le comité organisateur ait créé le prix de la meilleure affiche de la SAPES qui rend hommage à Pat Rogers, notre remarquable ancienne présidente, et qui récompense la qualité exceptionnelle d'une affiche. Félicitations à Julia Tum, de la Leeds Metropolitan University du Royaume-Uni, gagnante de la première édition du prix Pat Rogers de la meilleure affiche de la SAPES.



## New STLHE Logo Unveiled

Parmi les nombreux faits saillants de la conférence, l'un de mes préférés a été le dévoilement du nouveau logo de la SAPES, qui a eu lieu lors de la réception d'ouverture. Ce symbole graphique reflète de façon ingénieuse l'esprit de collaboration dynamique de l'ensemble des membres de la SAPES. Ce fut pour moi un honneur de participer au dévoilement, en compagnie de trois anciens présidents de la SAPES, le fondateur Christopher Knapper, Pat Rogers et Julia Christensen Hughes.

L'initiative « verte » lancée pour la tenue de la conférence de Windsor nous a incités à réduire l'empreinte écologique de la conférence de la SAPES. Répondant à l'appel, le comité permanent des publications a proposé que les deux premiers numéros des bulletins d'information 2008-2009 soient distribués annuellement par voie électronique, et que le troisième numéro soit imprimé et distribué lors de la conférence de 2009 qui se tiendra à l'Université du Nouveau-Brunswick. Cette proposition a été adoptée à l'unanimité par le conseil d'administration. Nous vous invitons à nous faire part de vos commentaires concernant cette initiative écologique et économique.

Je suis heureuse d'annoncer que lors de notre réunion de juin, les membres du conseil d'administration ont adopté unanimement une proposition visant à approuver la demande de création de notre deuxième groupe d'intérêts particuliers. Les groupes d'intérêts particuliers constituent un moyen parmi d'autres de promouvoir l'inclusion et d'accroître la participation des membres. Le nouveau groupe d'intérêts particuliers réunit des personnes vouées à l'enseignement et à l'apprentissage dans les collèges, universités, instituts, écoles polytechniques et cégeps canadiens.

Enfin, j'aimerais profiter de cette occasion pour remercier très sincèrement deux membres du conseil d'administration dont le mandat a expiré en juin. Ces personnes ont contribué de façon inestimable à la mission de la Société. Aline Germain-Rutherford était représentante régionale pour l'Est de l'Ontario et vice-présidente des partenariats. Alex Fancy assumait le rôle de président du Conseil des récipiendaires du Prix national 3M, l'un des comités permanents de la Société. Nous remercions Aline et Alex pour l'excellence de leur service à la Société au cours de ces nombreuses années. Denise Stockley, de l'Université Queen's, a été élue au poste qu'occupait Aline, et Ron Smith à celui qu'occupait Alex. En votre nom, je souhaite la bienvenue à Denise et à Ron au conseil d'administration. Je me réjouis à l'idée de travailler en étroite collaboration avec eux afin de poursuivre les efforts que nous avons amorcés pour améliorer et accroître la qualité de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage dans l'enseignement supérieur.



After a long and detailed process, a committee of the STLHE Board selected a new design for the STLHE logo, submitted by Peter Marval, Media Artist at the Centre for Teaching and Learning at the University of Windsor. The new logo was launched at the opening reception of the STLHE Conference in June 2008.

The maple leaf, which evokes the Canadian community out of which STLHE has emerged, suggests natural ecologies of learning. The two figures soaring out of the maple leaf represent the richness and diversity of the STLHE community, featuring a scholarship which seeks to explore and foster effective teaching and learning. The swirl creates a sense of motion, suggesting development, change, and progress in the never-ending dynamic of knowledge making. Joy Mighty, current STLHE president, and three past presidents, Pat Rogers, Julia Christensen Hughes, and Chris Knapper, celebrated the unveiling of the new STLHE logo. Gary Poole arrived from Vancouver one hour too late to be part of this "Presidential Launch." (see picture above).



*Peter Marval, the designer of the new logo.*

## Council of 3M National Teaching Fellows

**Ron Smith,**  
*Chair*

It was wonderful to welcome the 10 new 3M National Teaching Fellows into the fold at the STLHE Conference in Windsor in June, 2008. We look forward to their active involvement in the work of the 3M Council. The deadline for the 2009 Call for Nominations is Friday, November 14, 2008. We urge you to consider nominating someone from your campus.

The Conference was also the occasion to launch *Silences in Teaching and Learning*. Special thanks go to all the authors, the editorial committee, particularly Betsy Warland (external Editor) and Clarissa Green (internal editor) for their wonderful work, and 3M Canada for their continued support. Ron Marken, one of the contributors and a member of the Council Executive, did a reading from the book at McNally Robinson Booksellers in Saskatchewan in September, 2009. Alex Fancy, past Chair of the Council, did a reading in October at Mount Allison. More than 120 copies have already been sold and we invite you to purchase your copy from the Bookstore at Western <http://www.bookstore.uwo.ca/>

Forty-nine teacher scholars, including representatives from the UK, Australia, New

Zealand, and South Africa, met for the 5th Multinational Forum of Teacher Scholars to explore the theme: *Beyond Silences: Towards a National Narratives Project*. You will be hearing more about this project as the Council Executive works to move it forward.

A memorandum of understanding has been signed with EduWiki to provide support for the work of the Council Executive, and to enable 3M Fellows to use their experience and skills in reaching out to students in ways that will enhance learning and teaching.

Finally, a special note of thanks and appreciation goes to Alex Fancy for all his wonderful work as Chair of the Council since its inception in 2003 and to Sylvia Riselay for her generous and conscientious ongoing support for our work.

Fall, rather than spring, is the time for new beginnings for most academics. On behalf of the Council I wish each of you a successful academic year.

## Conseil des récipiendaires du Prix national 3M

**Ron Smith,**  
*président*

Ce fut un plaisir d'accueillir les 10 nouveaux récipiendaires du Prix national 3M pour l'excellence en enseignement lors du congrès de la SAPES qui a eu lieu à Windsor, en juin 2008. Nous espérons qu'ils participeront activement aux travaux du Conseil 3M. La date limite pour l'appel de candidatures 2009 est le vendredi 14 novembre 2008. Nous vous invitons à présenter la candidature d'une personne de votre campus.

Le congrès a également servi de tremplin pour le lancement du recueil *Silences in Teaching and Learning*. Nous tenons à remercier particulièrement les auteurs, le comité de rédaction et tout spécialement Betsy Warland (rédactrice à l'externe) et Clarissa Green (rédactrice à l'interne) pour leur excellent travail, ainsi que la société 3M Canada pour son appui soutenu. Ron Marken, l'un des collaborateurs et membre de l'équipe administrative du Conseil, a fait une lecture publique du livre à la librairie McNally Robinson Booksellers, en Saskatchewan, en septembre 2008. Alex Fancy, ancien président du Conseil, en a fait une lecture en octobre, à l'Université Mount Allison. Plus de cent vingt exemplaires ont déjà été vendus et nous vous invitons à vous procurer le vôtre à la librairie de l'université de Western Ontario <http://www.bookstore.uwo.ca/>

Quarante-neuf enseignants érudits, y compris des représentants du Royaume-Uni, de l'Australie, de la Nouvelle-Zélande et de l'Afrique du Sud, se sont réunis à l'occasion du colloque 5th Multinational Forum of Teacher Scholars afin de se pencher sur le

thème : *Beyond Silences: Towards a National Narratives Project*. Vous entendrez ultérieurement parler de ce projet en détails, au fur et à mesure que l'équipe administrative du Conseil le développera.

Un protocole d'entente conclu avec EduWiki permettra d'appuyer les travaux de l'équipe administrative du Conseil. Cette entente aidera également les récipiendaires du Prix national 3M à mettre leur expérience et leurs compétences au service des étudiants, ce qui contribuera à améliorer la qualité de l'apprentissage et de l'enseignement.

Finalement, nous tenons à remercier tout particulièrement Alex Fancy pour le merveilleux travail qu'il a accompli à titre de président du Conseil depuis sa création en 2003, ainsi que Sylvia Riselay, qui soutient si généreusement et consciencieusement nos travaux.

L'automne, plutôt que le printemps, marque un début pour la plupart des universitaires. Au nom du Conseil, je souhaite à chacun d'entre vous une excellente année universitaire.

## STLHE Values Statement

**Nicola Simmons**  
*University of Waterloo*

Over the past year, the STLHE Board has been crafting a statement to publicly articulate the values that guide our actions and decisions as a Board of Directors representing the STLHE members' interests. At the June 2008 STLHE Board meeting, the following statement was unanimously approved:

"As members of the STLHE/SAPES Board of Directors, we will endeavour to act with integrity, to value openness and inclusion but to keep confidence when necessary, to acknowledge our biases and limitations, to be responsible for our decisions, and to be fair and genuine in our words and actions.

To this end, we will:

- a represent the best interests of the membership and organisation's well-being;
- b declare any and all real or potential areas of conflict of interest;
- c respect principles of confidentiality when appropriate;
- d regularly seek input from our diverse membership, and particularly seek to hear and understand dissenting views;
- e behave fairly and equitably in all STLHE matters; and
- f be accountable to the membership for all decisions taken."

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I welcome any questions or discussion about the statement or its implications ([nsimmons@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:nsimmons@uwaterloo.ca)).



## Énoncé de principes de la SAPES

Nicola Simmons  
University of Waterloo

Au cours de la dernière année, le conseil d'administration de la SAPES a élaboré un énoncé afin d'articuler publiquement les valeurs qui guident leurs actions et leurs décisions en tant que groupe représentant les intérêts des membres de la Société. Lors de la réunion du conseil d'administration de la SAPES de juin 2008, l'énoncé suivant a été adopté à l'unanimité :

« En tant que membres du conseil d'administration de la SAPES, nous nous efforcerons d'agir avec intégrité, de valoriser l'ouverture et l'inclusion tout en faisant preuve de discrétion au besoin, de reconnaître nos préjugés et nos limites, d'assumer la responsabilité de nos décisions et d'être équitables et sincères dans nos paroles et nos actions.

À cette fin, nous...

- a agirons dans le meilleur intérêt des membres et en fonction du bien-être de l'organisation;
- b déclarerons tout conflit d'intérêt réel ou potentiel;
- c respecterons les principes de confidentialité, le cas échéant;
- d demanderons régulièrement à nos membres provenant de milieu diversifiés de nous faire part de leurs commentaires et plus particulièrement, nous chercherons à obtenir et comprendre les opinions divergentes;
- e agirons de façon juste et équitable en ce qui concerne les affaires de la SAPES;
- f rendrons compte aux membres des décisions que nous prenons.»

Au nom du conseil d'administration, je vous invite à nous transmettre vos questions ou à entamer une discussion sur cet énoncé et ses répercussions (nsimmons@uwaterloo.ca)

## Collaboration in Teaching and Learning Takes the Stage: The Alan Blizzard Award Presentation at STLHE 2008

John Thompson, Alan Blizzard Award chair

Dr. Joy Mighty, STLHE President, with representatives Dr. Gary Schajer and Dr. Peter Ostafichuk of the Alan Blizzard Award Winning Mech 2 Team from the University of British Columbia; Marlene Luscombe, Market Development Specialist, McGraw-Hill Ryerson; and Sylvia Riselay, STLHE Administrator.



"An outstanding presentation about an exemplary collaborative teaching and learning program. I was inspired." These words are the response of a faculty member to the 2008 Alan Blizzard Award presentation of the UBC Mech 2 Program, held as the final plenary of STLHE 2008 at the University of Windsor on Saturday, June 21.

Dr. Peter Ostafichuk and Dr. Gary Schajer, two members of the 14 member UBC Mech 2 team, took us on a guided tour of Mech 2, "a collaboratively designed and delivered program."

The tour began with two videos. Patrick Ferrier, President of the Higher Education Division at McGraw-Hill Ryerson, spoke of the company's sponsorship of the Alan Blizzard Award from its inception in 2000. In the second video, UBC President Stephen Toope congratulated the Mech 2 team for its outstanding collaborative achievement and gave the audience an overview of the project. He named each of the 14 team members and expressed UBC's pride in them, the Mech 2 Program, and its outstanding impact on students. In closing, President Toope cited the words of one of the students, "I'll never forget my experience in Mech 2, the people I met and the things I got to do. Programs like Mech 2 make better students, better engineers and better people."

Next, through slides, videos, and conversational style, Gary and Peter provided background on the Mech 2 Program, what it sought to achieve, and how it worked. Begun in 2004 in the UBC Faculty of Applied Science, Mech 2 involves faculty in five departments and two faculties. As a radical departure from a conventional curriculum, Mech 2 incorporated previous content from 15 disparate courses into four main courses. These four courses, one at a time, include thoughtfully integrated and coordinated lectures, tutorials, labs, design projects, presentations, field trips and other activities. Collaboration takes place within courses as well as across the entire program, among faculty and students.

Nearly 500 students have benefited from Mech 2 in developing their analytical, practical, and design skills. In two video segments, we met six of the Mech 2 students. We heard them describe their learning experiences in enthusi-

astic, articulate, appreciative, and pragmatic terms. We were given evidence of the positive outcomes of the collaborative program—compared to previous ways of teaching the program—higher levels of student satisfaction and preference for the Mech 2 format, greatly improved performance in senior year courses, and strengthened faculty morale.

No one present was left wondering whether the Mech 2 collaborative approach made a difference for students or for faculty. In Alan Blizzard's words, we witnessed how "collaboration can be a better way to teach and learn." The only question left seemed to be how we might adapt this successful collaborative approach in our own programs. For their outstanding presentation of Mech 2, Gary and Peter received a standing and sustained ovation.

Those who were unable to attend the final plenary can view it online. Peter Ostafichuk has combined the various parts of the presentation—videos, PowerPoint slides, graphics, pictures, questions and answers with the audio narrative—into a 40-minute streaming video. You can find the link to the streaming video on the Alan Blizzard Award site [www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/awards/alan.blizzard.award.html](http://www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/awards/alan.blizzard.award.html) or on the Mech 2 site [www.mech.ubc.ca/~mech2/videos/Mech2AlanBlizzard/Mech2AlanBlizzard.html](http://www.mech.ubc.ca/~mech2/videos/Mech2AlanBlizzard/Mech2AlanBlizzard.html)

After watching the streaming video, one faculty member had this to say: "The Mech 2 presentation is fabulous. I'm so sorry I wasn't able to attend the Conference this year to meet these wonderful folks. Their presentation clearly shows the collaboration and their scholarly approach to this innovative work. They have presented convincing evidence of the effectiveness of Mech 2—something that should be an essential part of every Blizzard nomination."

Congratulations and thanks go to Peter and Gary and the 12 other members of Mech 2! Special thanks also go to the Host Committee and the Theatre Technical Group at University of Windsor. Their welcome and expertise, careful attention to details, and rehearsal time, enabled the 2008 Alan Blizzard Award team to make an outstanding presentation that included video, audio, and slides.

Finally, the 2009 Alan Blizzard Award guidelines and application forms are now available online at the Alan Blizzard Award website. Next year's deadline is Friday, 16 January 2009.

### Educational Developers Caucus Corner

**Teresa Dawson,**  
*EDC Chair, University of Victoria*

Alice Cassidy and I were deeply honoured to be ratified for a second term of office as Vice Chair, Professional Development, and Chair of the Educational Developers Caucus (EDC) respectively, at the June Annual General Meeting in Windsor. We look forward to continuing to serve the goals of the Caucus in the coming years.

We are delighted to announce that we have secured "edcaucus.com" as the domain name for our section on the STLHE website. This will allow us to manage and share resources as a community, as well as to host our newly evolving wiki. We hope that this will make items much easier to find. In particular, information has been posted for the 2009 Conference which will be hosted at Durham College in Oshawa, February 24-25, 2009. This is the first time a college will host autonomously and already the conference hosts are promising exciting innovations. The conference theme is Facilitating Change and I encourage you to continue to review the EDC site for additional information in the next few months.

Over the next few months the Executive will review the 5-year plan in order to update. Please contact us with your ideas, as your feedback about the future is important.

### Le coin du Réseau des formateurs en pédagogie de l'enseignement supérieur

**Teresa Dawson,**  
*Présidente, Réseau des formateurs en pédagogie de l'enseignement supérieur, Université de Victoria*

Alice Cassidy et moi sommes très honorées d'avoir été réélues pour un deuxième mandat au titre respectif de vice-présidente au perfectionnement professionnel pour l'une, et à celui de présidente du Réseau des formateurs en pédagogie de l'enseignement supérieur pour l'autre, lors de l'assemblée générale annuelle qui a eu lieu en juin, à Windsor. Nous sommes heureuses de continuer à participer à l'atteinte des objectifs du Réseau au cours des années à venir.

Nous sommes également ravies d'annoncer que nous avons réservé le nom de domaine « edcaucus.com » pour notre section du site Web de la SAPES. Nous pourrions ainsi gérer et partager des ressources en tant que collectivité à part entière, et héberger le nouveau wiki, qui est en cours d'élaboration. Nous espérons que cela facilitera la recherche de renseignements et documents. En outre, les renseignements sur la conférence 2009, qui aura lieu les 24 et 25 février 2009 au Collège Durham, à Oshawa, sont maintenant disponibles sur le site. C'est la première fois qu'un établissement d'enseignement organise la conférence de façon autonome, et ses responsables nous promettent déjà des nouveautés très intéressantes. Le thème de la conférence est Facilitating Change (Faciliter le changement). Nous vous invitons à consulter le site du Réseau des formateurs en pédagogie de l'enseignement supérieur dans les mois à venir pour y voir les renseignements qui y seront affichés.

Au cours des prochains mois, le comité exécutif examinera le plan quinquennal afin de le mettre à jour. Veuillez nous faire part de vos commentaires et suggestions qui sont essentiels à la planification des activités futures du Réseau.

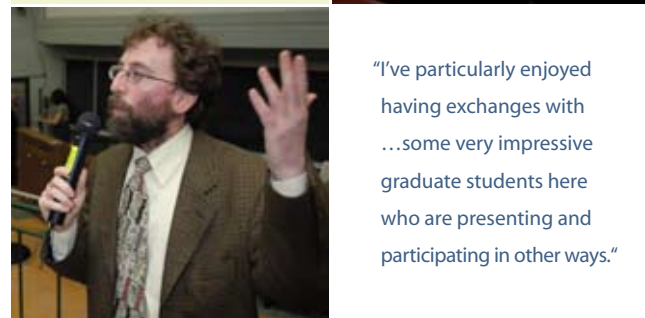
# STLHE CONFERENCE 2008

430 Participants  
43 Student Participants  
86 Volunteers  
205 Sessions  
10 Nationalities Represented  
106 Institutions

Dale Roy,  
2008 Chris Knapper Lifetime  
Achievement Award



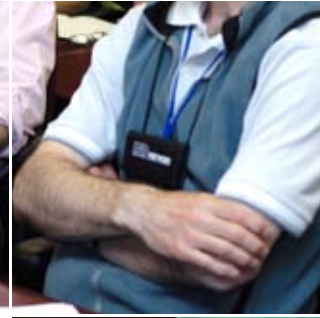
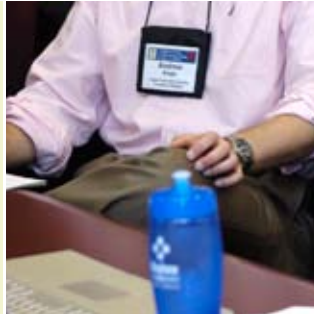
"It's very wonderful for students and faculty and staff all over Canada just to come and enjoy the experience of education and learning."



"I've particularly enjoyed having exchanges with ... some very impressive graduate students here who are presenting and participating in other ways."



"Lots of ideas, lots of people disagreeing with you, sometimes, people agreeing with you, which is very good. But it's nice to have people that exert a resistance so that you can go forward."



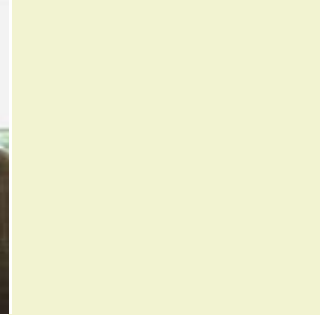
"Wonderful intellectual ferment happens across disciplines."



"Informative, challenging, and fun."



«C'est bon pour les apprenants, pour les étudiants, que les enseignants apprennent aussi.»



## Call for Newsletter Submissions

Please submit your articles, book reviews, photos, and other teaching and learning news to the co-editors for consideration in the STLHE Newsletter. Submissions must be in accordance with STLHE Newsletter Writing Guidelines and must relate to the issue theme.

Winter (February/March) -  
Creative Approaches to Teaching  
Submission due date: January 3, 2009

## Protocol for Revision of Submissions to the STLHE Newsletter

- 1 The editors closely read and scrutinize all submissions and make changes in order to reduce errors, improve sentence structure, and to improve the quality of expression in the submission;
- 2 Authors have the opportunity to review the submission (quick turnaround) as modified;
- 3 Authors have the opportunity to seek explanations of the editors and to withdraw the submission should they (the authors) not approve the proposed changes;
- 4 The editorial team maintains the right to reduce the length of a submission to meet the stringent space requirements of the newsletter; and
- 5 The editorial team posts the policy on the STLHE website as part of the instructions for authors.

## STLHE Newsletter Writing Guidelines

Articles will be reviewed by the co-editors and Editorial Associates, including the President of STLHE and the Chair of Publications. As a general rule, there are some changes for consistency of text within an issue, and for length.

Previous issues are available at:  
[www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/publications/newsletter.html](http://www.mcmaster.ca/stlhe/publications/newsletter.html)

### 1. Remember the focus for audience is the STLHE Membership.

- a. The membership is primarily faculty and Educational Developers/Instructional Developers, but there are also other members such as Administrators.
- b. The focus of all material is teaching and learning in Higher Education.
- c. The audience background is very diverse (ex. many discipline areas, different countries, different levels of experience, etc.).

### 2. Topic

- a. Each issue has a theme. Articles related to the theme will be given preference within an issue, however, some articles of general interest may be included even if they are not related to the theme.

### 3. The tone should be appropriate for a newsletter.

- a. Preference for practical articles with elements that people can use.
- b. A strong, catchy beginning to an article is more effective.
- c. Paragraphs are generally short, to help with visual scanning.

- d. Sentences that are short and in the active voice are generally preferable.
- e. Use bullets, charts or figures when they will help a reader with scanning an article.
- f. Headings and sub-headings are helpful, particularly in articles that are over 300 words in length.
- g. The article should be easily read by people from a variety of disciplines, so jargon specific to one discipline should be avoided.
- h. Spell out all acronyms the first time:  
ex. Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE)

### 4. Length

- a. 300 words to a maximum of 800 words

### 5. Reference Style

- a. Some references can be included as appropriate (they are not required), but this is not a scholarly paper.
- b. Use APA style for consistency within the issues.

### 6. Include a picture (300 dpi) if possible

- a. Pictures of the author or of a topic relevant to the article are helpful to readers.
- b. Pictures are best submitted as electronic files.

### 7. Title

- a. Include a draft title. This may be adapted, but it is helpful to the co-editors.

## Teaching Tip: Using role plays or skits in the large class setting

### Pippa Lock

*McMaster University*

Introductory Chemistry can be a challenging course for some students, because many of the concepts dealing with the molecular scale are abstract. After several years of teaching, I have found that a visual example provides a concrete way for more students to connect with an abstract concept. A quick skit or role play can help students to access a difficult concept. Skits and role plays also provide a mental break from "lecture" mode. If the skit or role play also involves students from the class, so much the better, as the remaining students will connect more personally with their peers than with me. It also allows the students with learning styles that favours kinaesthetic movement to engage with the concept by getting physically involved.

Thermodynamics is a complicated area for some students, particularly the concept of a state function vs. a path function. Simply stated, a state function (e.g. temperature) is a measure of the state of a system, and is independent of path (path being a measure of how one arrives at that state). I invite

students to participate in a skit (typically 5-7 in a class of 380), and we huddle at the front while I explain the idea to them. I provide a few parameters, namely: each student travels from one side of the front of the classroom to the other, choosing individual routes. Leaving the classroom is okay! I then invite the rest of the class to observe what follows. Once all have reached the other side, we then have a few moments to discuss what has occurred, and what the class would have observed if they had all had their eyes shut while the actors moved from one side to the other. What the students see is that all travelers start and finish at the same place (state), regardless of the path chosen. After one session using this demonstration, I had to introduce a new parameter – namely that the travel be accomplished in fewer than 2 minutes – one student had left the room for an extended period of time!

Role play and skits have proven to be so beneficial that once I am comfortable with course content in any course, I will spontaneously create people-based demonstrations by taking the time to read the comprehension level of the class and responding as needed.

# Book Reviews

**Roger Moore**

St. Thomas University

Aylwin, U. (2008). *Teacher's Little Helper (Don't start teaching without it)*. Montreal: Association québécoise de pédagogie collégiale.

This book, written by one of Québec's leading pedagogical experts, consists of 10 idea-packed chapters. The Introduction makes two points: first, this book is a handy guide for beginning teachers; and second, it can be used as a checklist for experienced teachers to compare their thoughts and ideas with those of the author. Chapter 1, *The Essential Role of the Teacher*, begins with a statement that seems obvious, yet is perhaps one of the keys to teaching: "A teacher cannot educate students, only students have the power to educate themselves" (9). The contemporary teacher's primary role, therefore, is to facilitate student learning and to set up situations which encourage students to teach themselves.

Chapter 2, *Stressful Thoughts to Avoid*, emphasizes that the teacher does not, in fact, have to know everything. The knowledge explosion, makes more knowledge than most people can handle available to both learner and teacher. As teachers, we can keep ourselves up to date in our specialized field, but it is more and more difficult to carry that specialization across multiple subjects. Chapter 3, *Ways to Overcome Day One Jitters*, suggests that we all get nervous when facing a class for the first time. In order to cope with that nervousness we must have realistic values, avoid exposure by giving students something to do instead of studying us, start slowly by arriving in class early, by chatting with students as they arrive, by using some physical activities, by asking the students to identify themselves, by asking students about their expectations, and by avoiding teacher vs student stereotypes.

Chapter 4, *What are the Key Components of the First Course?* (25-37), presents some useful ideas about what we should do early on in a course. These include showing the importance of the course and its place in the curriculum, and explaining shared roles and responsibilities (26-27), so that students have a concrete, clear, and detailed image of their obligations. The instructor should accompany this explanation with a vision of the kind of help the teacher will provide. Then the instructor should proceed with introductions by first inviting the students to present themselves, followed by his or her own in-

roduction. The instructor should discuss the course plan, by highlighting key components of the course or by circulating questions for students to answer in groups. Aylwin recommends structuring the first course as a model for all courses to come, triggering the learning process.

Chapter 5, *Conditions for an Effective Lecture* (39-43), offers several suggestions for improving the delivery of a lecture, changing it from

passive to active. He suggests including learning breaks, attention renewal, respect for individual learning styles, and regular formative evaluations.

Chapter 6, *How to Get Students to Participate*, is one of the longest and most important chapters in the book. It is filled with wisdom, and I recommend it strongly to those who wish to reflect on participatory techniques in both active pedagogy and differentiated learning. Pre-class preparation is essential and

this text recommends that without this preparation, there should be "non-admittance into the classroom".

In Chapter 7, *What Assessment System Should We Use?*, the author suggests that assessment is at the heart of all learning. The need for formative, non-threatening assessment is explained, as is the process of regularly teaching and assessing in tandem. The book provides a very useful check list of simple formative assessments and stresses the need for observation grids and self-assessment tools. Chapter 8, *Ways to Spice up Our Lessons*, points out how necessary it is to "refresh attention spans, maintain interest levels, connect with a variety of learning styles and make the brain work in a diversified manner". The chapter provides interesting and very practical ways to begin a lesson, ways of grouping students, means of communication, and exercises.

Chapter 9, *How to Get Students to Motivate Themselves*, offers a wide variety of practical ways in which the teacher can serve as a role model ranging from making students accountable for their own motivation, to how to awaken intrinsic motivation. The tenth and final chapter, begins with the need for students to be well-prepared when they come to class and suggests how teachers can encourage students to engage in pre-class preparation. This book is an extremely useful compendium of tips, ideas, and suggestions. It will be great for beginning teachers and will enable experienced teachers to confirm and expand their own teaching knowledge and commitment.



**Nicola Simmons**

University of Waterloo

Raymond, D. (2008). *What is learning and what is teaching? A tandem in motion*. Montreal, PC: Association québécoise de pédagogie collégiale (AQPC). Trns: James Ross & Associates.

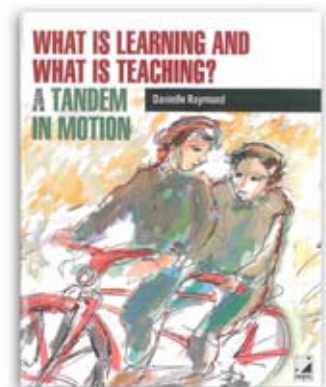
Raymond, D. (2008). *What is learning and what is teaching? A tandem in motion*. Montreal, PC: Association québécoise de pédagogie collégiale (AQPC). Trns: James Ross & Associates.

The premise of this book is that new conceptions of teaching require a shift from a traditional transmission approach towards social constructivism, which supports students in creating their own knowledge in interaction with others. The author offers guidance to post-secondary teachers on how to navigate this shift, discussing the difference between competencies (the particular set of skills and processes that allow a student to achieve a particular outcome/objective), and objectives as assessed in behaviorist programs. Summary charts and self-quizzes are included to support readers in constructing a view of this process.

I found much of the book lacking in clarity, possibly because it appears in translation from the original French. In the introductory chapter, for example, the author attempts to distinguish amongst behaviorism, humanism, and more current approaches such as cognitivism, constructivism, and socioconstructivism, but descriptions of these various perspectives are sometimes confusing.

A comparison chart is followed by a self-quiz: of the 25 "principles and premises of the different approaches" (p. 35), nine list two or three possible responses making the distinctions fuzzy.

The book encouraged me to think about the limitations of my knowledge of the literature. I was surprised to find few of the cognition references with which I am familiar, but instead French sources of which I had not heard. I found Diane Bateman's well-developed English bibliography to be a valuable addition to the book. It did make me wonder: in our allegedly global society, how much research never enters English language or western literature? In the end, I wondered how much of the book may have grown out of current trends in post-secondary teaching and learning and its assessment in Québec. While there were threads of this context, I'd be interested in more history for comparison to other provinces.



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