

2017 D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning Award Winners



Richard Ascough, Steven Bednarski, Maria Parappilly, Jesse Stewart, Joe Kim

Ottawa, ON – May 30 – The Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE), in partnership with D2L, are proud to present five outstanding post-secondary educators with the **2017 D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning**. Selected from applicants around the world, the award recognizes educators that are redefining the learning experience through innovative practices.

“By reimagining the classroom experience, the STLHE award winners have built programs that put the evolving learning styles of their students at the centre of the learning experience,” said STLHE President Robert Lapp. “As a result, their students are able to approach traditional subjects and solve complex problems in fresh and invigorating ways. We are proud to once again partner with D2L to recognize the achievements of these innovative leaders in post-secondary education.”

This year’s winners are at the forefront of innovation both within their academic institutions and higher education more broadly:

Richard Ascough, Queen’s University:

Dr. Ascough’s approach not only engages diverse learning styles among students, but also encourages students to make their own discoveries about course materials. Students are guided by specific prompts that leave space for the collaborative exploration of ancient texts, archaeological data, secondary sources and theoretical frameworks. Students have praised Dr. Ascough’s approach for enhancing the learning experience by allowing them to engage directly with real historical problems that face scholars of antiquity. Outside the classroom, Dr. Ascough’s contributions to the university include an impressive array of articles and presentations on pedagogy, with his work on learning outcomes cited as one of the more impressive analyses on teaching and learning at Queen’s.

Steven Bednarski, St. Jerome’s University in the University of Waterloo:

Dr. Bednarski is known as a passionate instructor dedicated to the development of programs that change how Waterloo students learn. He has developed a collaborative, cross-disciplinary, hands-on learning model and applied it to the implementation of a number of initiatives at Waterloo including [The Herstmonceux Experiential Learning Adventure](#) and the [Medieval](#)

[Digital Research Arts for Graphical and Environmental Networks](#) (D.R.A.G.E.N.) Lab. Students have remarked that Dr. Bednarski's course design is innovative and impactful, allowing them to study historical methods using a non-traditional approach. As a result, they realize that for learning to be successful and teaching to be effective, the learning environment needs to be positive, inclusive and learner-centered.

Maria Parappilly, Flinders University:

Physics is often considered one of the most challenging subjects to learn. By employing innovative instructional strategies including diagnostic tests, real-world examples, Team-Based Learning (TBL), Inquiry-Based Lab (IB Lab) and LEGO Physics (her own creation), Dr. Parappilly has had a positive impact on the retention, success and progression of physics students. Many have said that Dr. Parappilly can induce curiosity about physics in her students, and that her lectures are exciting, clear and concise, taking complexity out of the subject matter. A number of students have even changed their majors to physics as a result of taking her course.

Jesse Stewart, Carleton University:

Dr. Stewart, a Juno Award winner, is redefining music education at Carleton and across the academy. His courses challenge conventional notions concerning the autonomy of the composer and the ways in which we learn to compose music. He firmly believes that making music, like learning, does not take place in a vacuum. Both are co-creative acts in which all participants can learn from and with one another. Students consistently praise Dr. Stewart's innovative and passionate approach to teaching music, citing him as one of the most engaging professors on campus.

Joe Kim, McMaster University:

Dr. Kim coordinates the innovative McMaster Introductory Psychology program (macintropsych.com), which combines traditional lectures with interactive online resources and small group tutorials. Considered one of the largest and most pedagogically challenging courses at McMaster, Dr. Kim has built what is considered the leading program of its kind, and has been the topic of scholarly research, media interest and numerous consultations with colleagues, both internal and external to McMaster. His passion and commitment to his students and course design has made him one of the best and most innovative teachers at McMaster.

"Each of these remarkable educators inspires innovation and exceptional teaching every day, and we are honoured to present them with the D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning," said John Baker, president and CEO of D2L. "Their ability to harness their innovative spirit and bring it to life through today's advances in technology is precisely why we create the tools needed to develop impactful teaching and learning practices."

The STLHE award recipients will be recognized at the 2017 STLHE Annual Conference, June 20–23 in Halifax, and at FUSION, the Brightspace Global Conference, July 19–20 in Las Vegas. Each of the five winners will receive a two-year membership in STLHE as well as \$2,200 toward travel and registration costs for both STLHE's Annual Conference and FUSION.

About the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE)

STLHE strives to be the pre-eminent national voice and a world leader for enhancing teaching and learning in higher education. STLHE supports research, its dissemination, increased awareness and application of research through scholarly teaching and learning.

Visit www.stlhe.ca for more information.

About Brightspace

D2L's Brightspace is a learning management system (LMS) that helps schools and institutions deliver personalized learning in a classroom or online to people anywhere in the world. Created for the digital learner, Brightspace is [cloud-based](#), runs on [mobile devices](#) and offers [rich multimedia](#) to increase engagement, productivity and knowledge retention. The platform makes it easy to design courses, create content and grade assignments, giving instructors more time to focus on what's most important: greater teaching and learning. At the same time, [analytics reports](#) track and deliver insights into the performance levels of departments, courses or individuals.

Brightspace was recently named the [#1 LMS in Higher Ed](#) by Ovum Research and #1 in Adaptive Learning by *eLearning Magazine*. In addition, Aragon Research included Brightspace in its highly coveted [Hot Vendors In Learning list](#).

About D2L

D2L is the software leader that makes the learning experience better. The company's cloud-based platform is easier to use, more flexible and smart. With Brightspace, companies can personalize the experience for every learner to deliver real results. The company is a world leader in learning analytics: its platform predicts learner performance so that companies can take action in real-time to keep employees on track. Brightspace is used by learners in higher education, K-12, and the enterprise sector, including the Fortune 1000. D2L has operations in the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, Brazil and Singapore. www.D2L.com