

Teaching Commons News

Happy New Year!

Happy holidays to our readers! We hope the season has given you time for a break and some fun... and if you were thinking about work, perhaps for some reflection on your courses? The New Year is a time for celebration, but also for new beginnings and renewed resolution to get things done. Don't worry, we're not going to urge you to get into shape or become more philanthropic! However... should you be thinking that this year you'd really like to try some new approaches to teaching, exchange ideas with other faculty and perhaps even work toward a teaching award, the Teaching Commons is resolved to supporting your reaching your goals.

We will be kicking off 2014 with some innovations and exciting changes – some are included here but also watch the website, teachingcommons.yorku.ca for news and updates.



New Team Photo and Team News



Our team recently posed for a new photo - from left, Educational Developers, Ellen Sims and Yelin Su; Director, Celia Popovic; Research Assistant, Mandy Frake-Mistak; Research Associate, Robindra Sidhu; and Mary Lynn Belmonte, administrative assistant.

We congratulate Mandy on her recent successful PhD defense!

The Teaching Commons was recently featured in a YFile story about our accredited professional development courses, see <http://yfile.news.yorku.ca/2013/12/10/four-courses-offered-by-york-us-teaching-commons-earn-certification-from-uk-based-seda/> for the full story!

Instruction Skills Workshop (ISW) goes International!

The Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW) has taken off like wild fire here at York - we have successfully run five (5) ISWs for York faculty since July. The ISW is a 3-day intensive, peer-supported certificate program that uses an experiential learning approach through the giving and receiving of feedback on teaching strategies and techniques. ISW is a Canadian 'grassroots' approach to enhancing teaching through reflection and feedback. The Teaching Commons was approached by a group of scholars from the National University of Defense Technology based in Changsha, Hunan Province, China, specifically for the purpose of taking the ISW. Our time together was full of academic exchange as well as learning opportunities as they pertained to Canadian higher education.

New Space in the Teaching Commons

We are delighted to announce our new Teaching Commons Space in TEL 1050.

The newly refurbished area provides a space for all who teach at York to meet to share ideas, to discuss teaching related topics and to meet with like-minded individuals.

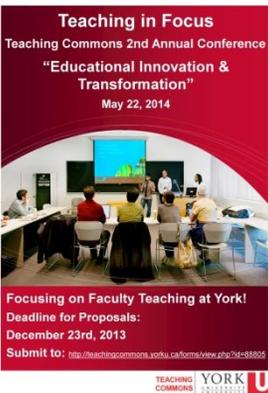
The Teaching Commons is an open area available for teachers (contract faculty, tenure stream faculty, TAs, new and experienced. We will be holding a series of events, but we are also encouraging you to suggest events and meetings you would like to host in the space.

Our first official event is the launch of our Journal Club on January 23rd from 12 till 1.30. We will be reading and discussing an article every month. We will be discussing how the group will run and taking suggestions for further readings. You are welcome to bring your lunch. We look forward to seeing you there! The first article we are reading is:

White, D. S. and Le Cornu, A. (2011). Visitors and Residents: A new typology for online engagement. *First Monday E-Journal*, [16\(9\)](#). Retrieved from <http://firstmonday.org/article/view/3171/3049#author>

Please register to attend this event at <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/forms/view.php?id=104959>

Questions for discussion will be posted prior to the meeting.



Teaching in Focus Conference – submission deadline extended!

York's 2nd Annual Teaching in Focus (TIF) Conference, *Educational Innovation & Transformation*, will be taking place on May 22, 2014. This peer reviewed event is for all who teach or support learning at York. The TIF conference is about celebrating teaching, community building, experience sharing, the scholarship of teaching and learning, and making connections with our colleagues. For details see <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/conferences-and-symposia/tif2014/>

Submissions from individuals or teams, including students, are welcome.

Proposal submission deadline extended to: January 10th, 2014. For details and form: <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/conferences-and-symposia/tif2014/>

Call for case studies on eLearning and teaching using digital resources

Are you teaching using web-enhanced, blended or fully online environments or resources? If so we would be delighted to have you write a brief case study (c250-500 words) describing an example of how you use digital tools and environments. It may be something happening in-class or online; it might be about creating or providing digital resources; a one-off experience or a series of activities - all examples welcome! We are interested in hearing about what works – and what perhaps hasn't.

For more information and the online template* see: <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/forms/view.php?id=102758>

*can also be submitted as an email or phone interview. Contact Ellen Sims, esims@yorku.ca

Spotlight on resources: Disability and Accessibility Resources for Faculty – AODA compliance starts now!

The Teaching Commons is very pleased to inform you of our collection of resources to support good practice in inclusive approaches to curriculum and teaching. AODA legislations goes into effect in January 2014, but there are plenty of other good reasons to remove any unnecessary barriers to learning that can benefit all students.



See: <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/resources/accessibility/>

Go directly to 'Tips' for accessible teaching:
<http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/resources/accessibility/#tips>

Teaching Commons Workshops in early 2014

As usual, we are running a series of workshops through the year. We are happy to facilitate sessions on request – for details see our website teachingcommons.yorku.ca/workshops

Experiential Education (EE) Boot Camp

This course is offered as a single day session with an optional follow-up 3 hour session. All the practical and pedagogical info you will need to get you started or continue using EE in your course. More information see: <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/ee-york-course/>

January 22nd, 10am - 3pm, TEL 1014. To register:
<http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/forms/view.php?id=105938>

Copyright

Due to popular demand, we will be running more workshops on Copyright and associated issues. There will be 2 formats: General information for teaching, and another specific to online environments.

Jan 13, 12.00-1.00, General copyright, to register:
<http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/forms/view.php?id=95784>

Jan 21, 3.00-4.00, eLearning Copyright, to register:
<http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/forms/view.php?id=96446>

Feb 13, 12-1.00, General copyright session, Feb 19th, 1.00 -2.00, Copyright: course materials

March 12, 2.00-3.00, General copyright session, March 25th, 12.00 -1.00, Copyright: eLearning

Further sessions scheduled in April and May.

Supervising Graduate Students @ York

This new course is for Faculty who supervise graduate students, whether they are experienced or novice supervisors. **When:** January 28th, February 25th, April 1st, 2014 (**NB** All 3 days must be attended) **Time:** 10am to 4pm **Location:** TEL 1014

For more information and to register : <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/supervising-graduate-students-york/>

Lunchtime learning - Developing Inclusive Teaching and Learning, January 16, 12 – 1.30 in TEL 1014.

This interactive session focuses on how lecturers engage with pedagogic practices as the student body becomes more diverse. What does inclusivity in the classroom and curriculum entail? Practical suggestions that can be put into place almost immediately and reflections on further innovations will be introduced, as well as recent legislature.

To register click here: <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/forms/view.php?id=69720>

Teaching Awards

Have you ever considered putting yourself forward for a teaching award?

You may not know this, but at York we are fortunate to have a range of awards available for different categories of experience and role. We publish a list of awards on our website at: <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/awards-grants/>

There are internal awards offered by most Faculties, as well as YUFA and CUPE, and a University wide award offered by the President. Many of these awards are aimed at Course Directors and Teaching Assistants.

The Teaching Commons can offer general advice if you are considering submitting an application or seeking nomination for any internal award, but in the interests of fairness cannot offer personalized support in creating a submission.

This is not the case with external awards. The TC would like to support strong candidates for any external teaching award.

There are also several external awards for teaching. The most prestigious of these is the **3M Teaching Fellowships** which honor exceptional contributions to teaching and learning at Canadian universities. Up to ten awards are presented each year to recognize teaching excellence as well as educational leadership, and are sponsored by 3M Canada, in collaboration with the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. More information is available on the 3M Teaching Fellowship Program website: <http://www.stlhe.ca/awards/3m-national-teaching-fellowships/>

The closing date for nominations is August 31st, but there is a considerable amount of work to be done to reach this stage. If you feel you meet the criteria (having reviewed the award website) and would like to be considered for nomination, please submit your name in confidence to Celia Popovic by the end of February. The Teaching Commons will work closely with colleagues considered to have the best chance of success to ensure a strong application.

Leadership in Faculty Teaching Award - The Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities offers this award. The Leadership in Faculty Teaching Award was developed to recognize and encourage teaching excellence at Ontario's colleges and universities. Up to 100 awards are given to faculty who influence, motivate and inspire students and demonstrate leadership in teaching methods for the diverse student body

in Ontario. Winners receive \$20,000 over two years to encourage continued excellence in the classroom setting. The award is closed for this year, but details can be found at <http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/facultyawards/facultyEligible.html>

The Alan Blizzard Award for Collaborative Projects that Improve Student Learning

is designed to stimulate and reward collaboration in teaching, and encourage and disseminate scholarship of teaching in post-secondary education. This award is unique in that it is aimed at teams of 2 or more, rather than being a reward for an individual. Nominations are required in mid-February. If you would like support from the Teaching Commons in putting together a nomination please contact Celia Popovic by the end of January at the very latest.

Details can be found at: <http://www.stlhe.ca/awards/alan-blizzard-award/>

OCUFA Teaching and Academic Librarianship Awards – Each year OCUFA recognizes outstanding teachers and academic librarians in Ontario universities through its Teaching and Academic Librarianship Awards. Since 1973 OCUFA has presented 383 awards. The recipients are selected by the OCUFA Teaching and Academic Librarianship Awards Committee. Approximately 7 awards are presented.

The TC is happy to assist nominators and nominees in honing their application to best represent the nominee's strengths – if you would like to avail yourself of this support please contact Celia Popovic. The closing date for nominations for this award is May 23rd.

Details are here: <http://ocufa.on.ca/ocufa-awards/teaching-and-academic-librarianship-awards/>

In addition to these general teaching awards, there are many discipline specific awards, and awards with a particular focus, such as the Sloan C Excellence in Online Teaching Award. Please visit the TC website for details – and if you know of an award that we've not included, please let us know.

New feature: Teaching Commons Partner's Pages

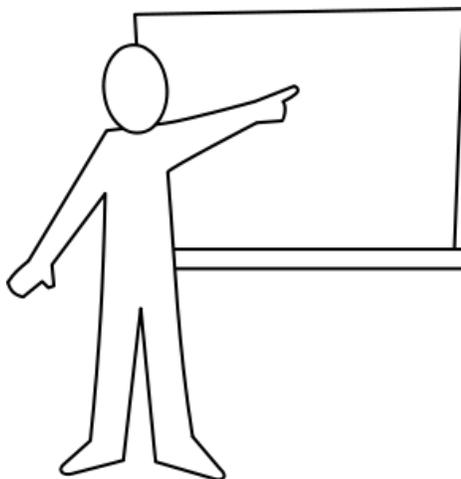
In this issue of our newsletter we introduce contributions and news from our collaborative partners in the Learning Technology Services (LTS) and the York University Libraries.

From LTS:

What's your resolution?

As we see a shift towards an increase in the consumption of content through end user mobile devices, it is important to take into consideration the size of files that you are creating. These files could potentially be a heavy burden on a user's mobile data plan if they need to view or download them from your course site.

Adding graphics to a Powerpoint presentation can be helpful to illustrate a point, breaking up content and engaging your audience but it's important to this can increase your file size! When you insert an image into Powerpoint it will likely default to 220 ppi (needed for print quality). Most graphics will be displayed well on a projector at a resolution of **150 ppi**, allowing you to reduce the file size for users. Make your resolution to create more mobile friendly presentations! Here's how you can reduce the file size of an image:-



Powerpoint 2010 (Windows):-

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-ca/powerpoint-help/reduce-the-file-size-of-a-picture-HA010355854.aspx> - BMdefaultpicres

Powerpoint 2013 (Windows):-

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-001/powerpoint-help/reduce-the-file-size-of-a-picture-HA102749391.aspx>

Powerpoint 2011 (Mac):-

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-ca/mac-powerpoint-help/reduce-your-file-size-HA102927385.aspx>

For more information please contact its@yorku.ca

LTS Classroom Learning Technologies Survey

Please tell us how we can better support your use of learning technologies by taking the Classroom and Learning Technologies survey before January 5th. You could win an iPad Mini. Access the survey at <http://www.yorku.ca/surveys/survey.php?sid=1388>

Classroom Technology Upgrades

We're pleased to announce that 188 new classroom spaces are now enabled for the upcoming Winter term. However, unlike our currently supported larger classrooms these new spaces do not have a microphone for sound amplification as part of the available room technology. Therefore, a microphone loan program is now available to support these additional rooms. To determine whether your room is now enabled for lecture recording, and whether a microphone loan will be required, please see <http://computing.yorku.ca/faculty-staff/teaching-research-computing/lecture-recording-york/camtasia-relay/camtasia-relay-enabled-rooms/>.

If you require the loan of a microphone you can find the request for at <https://its.apps01.yorku.ca/elearning/view.php?id=30>. The number of microphones available for loan is limited, so request yours now.

LTS: Our re-solution

Over the course of this coming calendar year, LTS will be working very closely with the Teaching Commons to redesign some of the sessions we have previously offered to provide some exciting new opportunities for you to learn about using technology in your courses. Watch this space!

New workshops coming soon – in the meantime, here are some Moodle Essentials Workshops:

Fri. January 3, 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Tue. January 7, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM
Thu. January 9, 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM
Tue. January 14, 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Link to register: <https://its.apps01.yorku.ca/workshops/index.php>



News from the Library

We are currently collaborating on a number of initiatives to support the enhancement of teaching and learning including resources and professional development, for example an online Library orientation for new faculty and workshops on digital literacy and teaching academic skills.

Undergraduate Research Fair

York University Libraries' second annual multidisciplinary **Undergraduate Research Fair**, co-sponsored by the Libraries and *VP Research & Innovation*, will take place on **Tuesday, Feb. 25th, 2014** in the Scott Library *Collaboratory*. Applicants write an abstract outlining their best research paper or project submitted for a York undergraduate course in the 2013 calendar year. Those whose submissions are accepted will then prepare a poster presentation. This year's Fair is open to undergrad students from all faculties on both York campuses. More information and a link for undergraduate students to submit an application are here:

undergradresearchfair.blog.yorku.ca. Deadline for submission is January 20th.

SPARK recognized for innovation, to be broadcast live to the Province!

A Webinar Series highlighting ground-breaking innovation in online learning at Ontario public colleges and universities has been announced by Contact North, Ontario's Distance Education network. The series will be launched in January, with the February 10th webinar featuring York's Virtual Learning Commons, SPARK (www.yorku.ca/spark). Complete details will be available in January at www.contactnorth.ca/pockets. While you are there, check out more than 90 case studies of innovations, plus the really useful 'tips and tools' section.

This newsletter is available as a .pdf at
<http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/tcnewsletter/>