

# Teaching Commons News

## Springing into Summer!

June marks the conclusion of a very busy spring. The Teaching Commons is still bustling with activity as we shift into planning and preparation for September. We are reviewing and revising our programs and preparing to launch brand new certificate programs for York. The Instructional Skills Workshop, is a Canadian grass-roots certificate program for example, and will be just one of the many new initiatives offered through the Teaching Commons in the approaching months.

In mid-June we held our first Teaching Commons Retreat. This provided us with a much needed opportunity to meet as a group and reflect on our accomplishments throughout the year. It also provided us with the opportunity to address some challenges and to articulate our aspirations to improve our support for teachers across the whole York campus.

Two members of our team, Ellen Sims and Yelin Su, presented their work on *Inter-professionalism for sustainability: Are collaborations across professional boundaries the future for teaching and learning?* at the Society of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE) in Cape Breton, NS. Their work was well received and will be shared with colleagues at York in the future.

With summer already here, the Teaching Commons offers many opportunities for you to get ready for September by sharing and developing your teaching practice with your colleagues through our various workshops, courses, blogs or videos. We have highlighted some of these offerings in this newsletter. We look forward to your participation. Join us!



## For New Faculty

### Welcome to York – and in some cases welcome back!

In addition to “Welcome to York” Day on August 27<sup>th</sup> (in the Underground, York Student Centre), new faculty are encouraged and expected to attend one of the “Teaching, Learning and Student Success Days” which will be held on July 9<sup>th</sup> and August 28<sup>th</sup> in 519 Kaneff Tower. We look forward to welcoming colleagues to York and to helping them in getting their teaching career at York and their student’s year off to a great start.

# Summer Workshops, Webinars & Course offerings

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## July 10, 2013 – One Day Workshop -- Course Design@York Boot Camp 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Get your course design skills in shape! You will be introduced to the basics of course design, taking you through the content, activity assessment and evaluation development processes. The workshop will be useful whether you want to re-design an existing course or session, or develop a new one. The focus will be on a practical approach based on sound theory and evidence. Register here at:

<http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/forms/view.php?id=38458>.



### *Praise for TC courses from former participants*

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*"I learned how to organize assessments and student group work."*

*"Will use some of the ideas when designing my blended learning course."*

*--eLearning@York Course*

## July 11, 2013 - One Day Workshop --York eLearning Boot Camp 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

This one day intensive course is designed to provide you with 'basic training' for getting started with eLearning. The focus will be on developing your course and the most effective approaches to achieving your learning and teaching goals. However, there will be plenty of hands-on work and the opportunity to try out various eLearning tools, including some clever ones in Moodle you may not know exist! Register here at:

<http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/forms/view.php?id=32389>



*"Ideas for promoting engagement and reflection."*

*"Great speakers, & very effective presentations on risk management and ethics."*

*--EE@York Course*

## Aug 30, 2013 – One Day Workshop – EE@York Bootcamp -- 10 AM to 3:30 pm.

This course is designed to support faculty who wish to incorporate "In-Course" or "Within - Community" Experiential Education into their teaching. The course is comprised of a single six hour session with supplemental online materials. Additionally there will be an optional follow-up for course directors to present their course plans for feedback with others in the group. The face to face sessions include seminars with peers and hands-on activities. Participants will have the opportunity to meet and work with EE Coordinators who can provide logistical support and work with participants in terms of developing community contacts. It is expected that participants will create a course outline that will include EE components. Register here at:

<http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/forms/view.php?id=37744>

# Do you have Teaching Assistants?

## TA Orientation Sessions

Will you be working with a Teaching Assistant in the Fall or Winter? Are you supervising a student who will be TAing? The Teaching Commons will be hosting a series of **TA Orientation Sessions** to assist in the professional development of new TAs at York University. All sessions will be held in TEL 1014 and the dates are as follows:

- August 29th 1:30pm to 4:30pm (\*Please note that this Orientation is for TAs from the Faculty of **LA&PS**)
- September 3rd 10am to 1pm or 2pm to 5pm (TAs from all Faculties are welcome at this and the following sessions)
- September 4th 2pm to 5pm
- September 5th 10am to 1pm or 2pm to 5pm

To register for any of the above sessions, please visit:

<http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/professional-development/ta-orientation/>.

## TA Certificate in Teaching

Registration for the **TACT** is now open! Please inform your graduate students that they may register for this SEDA Accredited course for either the fall or winter term. For more information and to register, please visit: <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/professional-development/teaching-assistant-certificate-in-teaching-tact/>.



### Focus on TC Staff: A month in the life of Ellen Sims

I am delighted to be working as an Educational Developer in the Teaching Commons here at York. A large part of my role is to contribute to the building of networks for sharing these excellent practices and providing professional development. It is important therefore for me to be involved in various committees and in June I worked with the Teaching Award Winner network, Access York, The Learning Commons Faculty Committee, the LA&PS Teaching Committee and the Quality Assurance Retreat and the YULink project, to name a few!

In a typical month I will plan and deliver several workshops, both in the TC and in faculties or departments. In June I co-delivered a series of workshops in LA&PS. The subjects were aspects of course design, experiential education and making lectures more engaging. I also co-led a 2-day Course Design workshop which was well attended and received good feedback. It was enjoyable to do! On June 26<sup>th</sup> I also co-facilitated the TC's first webinar, on active engagement in large classes. Much time has been spent planning upcoming workshops – we try to make these as engaging as possible as well as informative and practical.

# Upcoming Conferences

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If you are attending a Higher Education (HE) related conference – please consider submitting a summary of your experience, we would love to share this with the wider community via our website.

See our [conference page](#) accessible from our home page of our website for a list of forthcoming teaching related conferences, including a link to a full listing of all Higher Education Conferences Worldwide through [Conference Alerts](#).

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