

Teaching Commons News

York Celebrates Teaching and Learning!

This past May has been an exciting month in terms of showcasing and celebrating all things pertaining to Teaching and Learning! The 2012-13 President's University-Wide Teaching Awards were announced – with honours going to [Dawn Bazely](#), Department of Biology (Senior Full-Time Faculty category), [Peter Tsasis](#), jointly appointed to School of Health Policy & Management and the School of Administrative Studies (Full-Time Faculty category) and Annette Louise Bickford, Department of Sociology (Contract & Adjunct Faculty category). The Academic Initiative Fund ([AIF](#)) Teaching & Learning Celebration on May 9th showcased AIF sponsored projects on eLearning, Experiential Education and the First Year Experience. The Teaching Commons hosted two gatherings in May: The inaugural symposium *Supporting Teaching AT York (STAY)*, highlighting the work of senior teaching assistants; and the inaugural conference on teaching and learning, *Teaching in Focus (TIF)*, highlighting the pedagogical practices of those who teach at York (see details below). Additionally there were various other recognition events held within the Faculties for example both Health and Liberal Arts & Professional Studies each held their own events celebrating faculty, students and community partners who were involved in experiential education.



With summer on the horizon, the Teaching Commons offers many opportunities for you to share and develop 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!

TC hosts two T&L events in May

Inaugural STAY Symposium



The Teaching Commons hosted the first annual *STAY Symposium* - Supporting Teaching At York, on May 3rd. The symposium was designed to celebrate the efforts and the achievements of those who have completed the [Senior Teaching Assistant \(STA\) Program](#) as they showcased their dedication and contributions to enhance and enrich student learning. Over 80 participants were welcomed

by Sue Vail, AVP Teaching and Learning; Kate McPherson, Associate Dean of Students – Faculty of Graduate Studies; and Celia Popovic, Director of the Teaching Commons. The day was a tremendous success.

Inaugural Teaching in Focus Conference

In what promises to become a tradition at York University, the TC hosted the first annual Teaching in Focus conference on May 23. This peer reviewed conference serves as an opportunity for sharing innovative teaching practices and highlighting the various teaching and learning resources and supports that are available at York University. The format of the conference allowed for 20 minute presentations along with 40 minute workshops on various topics pertaining to the scholarship and practice of teaching & learning. Highlights of the conference included a keynote address by past President Lorna Marsden, who urged the audience to reflect on the needs of an increasingly diverse student body. Celia Popovic engaged the audience with her research on the preconceptions that instructors have about their students, and Sue Vail, Associate Vice President, Teaching and Learning provided the closing comments for the conference, congratulating all faculty, staff and graduate students for their part in making the day a rich and invigorating experience.



Working together to enhance teaching practice!

Get your story out there! Share your teaching practices! Teacher's Talk!

We are building a collection of video interviews with York teachers. Go online at <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/learner-engagement> to [view](#) some of the interviews



we have collected thus far! These stories can be also accessed by pressing the "Teacher's Talk" link on our home page. If you have an approach or strategy you would like to share, please contact Ellen Sims e.sims@yorku.ca

Contribute to the TC eLearning blog!

We have recently launched an eLearning blog. Each week we have a different blogger stimulating discussion and debate around eLearning. Please join us and feel to engage in the conversation!

If you would like to be a guest blogger contact Dr. Yelin Su ysu@yorku.ca for details. Visit <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/groups/> to read the blog.

TC works with you and your Faculty

Aside from our published workshops and courses, we work with groups within Faculties. Recently we have been working with colleagues in LA&PS, Schulich, Science, and Health (School of Nursing) in the development of their faculty and their programs.

Workshops in the Faculty of Education

In June, the Teaching Commons will be working with colleagues in the Faculty of Education. We will be providing workshops in teaching and supporting students online for TAs on a new blended eLearning course. The eLearning course has been created to replace two compulsory foundation courses within the Faculty's B.Ed

Did you know?

We have created an extensive [eLearning resource](#) on our website, which is designed to guide Course Directors through the options available, whether you are interested in web enhanced, blended learning or fully online courses.



Workshops in LA & PS

We also offer tailored workshops for specific groups. For example we have recently delivered four specially designed workshops for colleagues in LA&PS. These workshops focused on the first year experience, active learning in large classes, learning outcomes and experiential education. These [workshops](#) be delivered again in the summer and will be open to all faculty members -- full time and contract faculty. Members of other faculties are welcome. (See <http://www.yorku.ca/laps/teaching/workshops.html> for more information).

Focus on TC Staff: A month in the life of Mandy Frake –Mistak



My role in the Teaching Commons allows me to work closely with graduate students who are passionate about teaching and learning in higher education. I work with graduate students who are Teaching Assistants, Graduate Assistants, and Research Assistants. This May has been particularly busy beginning with the final sessions of the TA Certificate in Teaching. Over 60 graduate students have participated in this course which has been in addition to their teaching and research responsibilities. As you may have read above, the Teaching Commons held its first annual *STAY Symposium – Supporting Teaching At York* - on May 3rd. This exciting event hosted graduate students from York and Ryerson as they engaged in professional development workshops related to teaching and learning in higher education. I spent a week at the University of Waterloo doing the Facilitator Development Workshop which is step 2 of a 3 step certification process. The Teaching Commons is seeking to offer the Instructional Skills Workshop as part of its repertoire to raise the profile of teaching and learning at York of which I am now a certified facilitator. From Waterloo I headed west to Simon Fraser University for a conference. The Teaching Graduate Students to Teach conference was a two-day event where I participated in workshops, presentations, discussions, and a writing workshop. Celia Popovic and I wrote a paper on the multi-level model of pedagogical and professional development that we offer graduate students through the Teaching Commons. Since being back at York I presented a session and poster “Being TACTful in our Teaching” at TIF – Teaching In Focus. It has been a productive, although busy, May but I am energized and ready to surge ahead with our summer programming at the Teaching Commons! Details for upcoming TA programming will be posted on our calendar of events accessible from our home page. (<http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/>)

Praise for STAY, Supporting Teaching At York, from Senior TAs in the program

“Until this course I was not aware of the number of resources dedicated to TA support.”

“I am now more aware of the pedagogical research that exists.”

“Learned so much from colleagues and the organizers.”

Did You Know?

This year approximately 600 TAs took part in events and courses organized by the TC.

Summer Workshops, Webinars & Course offerings

These offerings are open to all York contract, adjunct and full-time faculty. For any inquiries about Teaching Commons courses or workshops please email teaching@yorku.ca

June 17, 2013– One Day Workshop – Teaching Listening Skills -- 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Led by leading international experts in the area of listening research, this workshop will deepen your understanding of the role of listening and of how to develop strategies to teach listening appropriate to your disciplinary context. This workshop will be useful for faculty and teaching assistants across a wide range of disciplines. All are welcome.

Register here at: <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/forms/view.php?id=36251>

June 18, 2013 – Brown Bag Lunch Workshop – Building Experiential Education (EE) Into The Curriculum – 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm



What is experiential education, and what are its constituent elements? What options do I have as a course director for incorporating EE into my course? This workshop is an introductory orientation to the world of EE at York University and provides a starting point for individuals who are new to EE.

Register here at: <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/forms/view.php?id=35719>

June 26, 2013 – Teaching Commons Webinar -- Engage Active Learning in Large Classes – 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm – URL to be announced

This webinar will discuss the challenges of engaging students in large classes. It aims to provide practical and adaptable suggestions and strategies for making students active participants and encourage deeper engagement and learning. The webinar is also an opportunity for exchanging ideas and experiences on how to teach and promote student learning in a large class. Faculty with all levels of experience in teaching are welcome to join the session. Register here at:

http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/active_learning_large_classes/

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 workshops from former participants

“So many great resources for further insight.”

--BBL Workshop: Fostering Your students ‘critical skill’

“Pedagogical practices that work.”

--BBL Workshop: Developing Inclusive Teaching & Learning Methods for Diverse Students in Higher Education

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>



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>

Upcoming Conferences

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](#).

Here is a selection of Higher Education related Conferences

The **Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario -- HEQCO's** conference will explore {the buzz} in higher education – minus {the buzzwords}

- November 7-8, 2013, Sheraton Centre Toronto
- Call for submission by Friday, June 14, 2013
<http://www.heqco.ca/rethinkinghighereducation/en/index.htm>

Praise for TC courses from former participants

"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

"Ideas for promoting engagement and reflection."

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

--EE@York Course



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