**2nd Annual Teaching Retreat – Tuesday, August 30, 2016**

**Opening Address: Kent MacDonald**

Teaching is our Legacy

The type of student that comes to university today has changed … 1 million attending universities today.

The practice of teaching – how it occurs influences rates of graduation.

How do we change the rate of men entering higher education?

Students have different challenges today … especially those who are poorer.

Our students:

* Multitask
* Want learning in a variety of ways
* Technologically astute
* Do not necessarily have or want access to campus
* Use search technologies & library
* Want experiential learning, prepared for employment
* Any space a potential learning space

Who believes higher education will look the same in 10 years?

Look on our campus, look left and right, break down barriers – we can help one another teach to today’s students.

Deeper waters … reflect on where we are at … from the port to deeper waters

Matt Hartley video … GSE …

From Teaching to Learning: A new paradigm for undergraduate education. Barn and Task 1996

Consider: Teaching Students … reflect ... names changed … but these are students coming to StFX

* Alan international student, minority community, leadership camp, private school
* Bridget Western Canada, varsity athlete, lonely, parent inspired
* Carley Rural Atlantic Canada, LGBTQ community, academically strong, socially conscience, parents worried
* David Western Canada 97+average, varsity athlete, changed commitment
* Frank Atlantic Canada, legacy family, Fit – Residence Life, last minute 2nd year transfer
* Greg academically underprepared, homeless,

Only 71% will graduate – though they all come to StFX with the intent to stay!

**Furious Five …**

**Joseph Khoury** … 5 items that have worked for him

1. Share ourselves with our students – not private lives
2. Passion for what we do and what know – essential for teaching
3. Model our ideas … show how we love learning for the sake of learning
4. Higher expectations for students
5. Be present to our students

**Lori Graham**

Does not teach first years distracted by technology; but rather those that engage in a cost benefit analysis … an hour in class or studying?!

Engage students by making material relevant to them and provide context.

**Alicia Silliker -** 2nd year Bed program

In first year, Alicia chose to focus more in classes where professors were passionate about the subject and when the professor respected her.

Imagine being told your answer was wrong in class … this actually happened to her

The ones that made her feel respected but responsible for her own learning – are the teaches who helped her to excel.

Set high expectations and be open when we have life challenges.

**Dave Risk – the Front Facing Student**

Facilitates engagement with students and industry partners … b/c Dave pushes students out to be directly involved

Introduces students as soon as they get into the lab with a researcher/service learning student

Communications skills – how to talk, what volume (in terms of how much is shared); what is good for email and when to pick up the phone.

**Patrick Withey – most number of students at SRD**

Todays students are the only students he knows … started in 2012 ☺

Involves students with research …. Follows his personal experience with PhD …. Requires incentive ($$ when possible … therefore he chases money for his research).

Not one model for including them in research … depends on student and their abilities. Students he sees every day, others every couple months.

High expectations.

**Margie MacKinnon – Mental Health and Today’s Students**

Mental health vs. mental illness …mental health is part of overall health; no good health without mental health.

Reducing stigma … students know more about their mental illnesses …. More students coming to university – StFX – with mental illness … students amongst us are challenged by their mental illness ED, bi-polar, other mood disorders, etc.

Documented learning disability obtain assistance … these students also did not come to university before

Technology and the astuteness of students with it has led to problems that did not exist in the past … addictions to on-line gaming, porn, gambling. Others.

Many students have been protected from various stresses (helicopter parents) – problem solving, responsibility, accountability …. Students need to learn how to manage these stresses … stress without distress

Avoidable vs. Unavoidable stressors …. Building resilience … learning to not be afraid of stress, how do we respond to it (vs. reacting to it); making changes in our lives when we can

PERMA

Communicating and Listening Non-Judgementally

**Need Help?**

Self Referral – intake nurse (1-2 day wait) – Nurse (1-2 day wait) – Doctor (1-2 week wait), Counsellor (1-2 week wait)

Notes from Small Group Discussions (from the discussion notes <where available> and then what was shared at the retreat)

1. How to productively manage students’ competing attentions and in particular personal electronics in the classroom?

How to manage students - competing attentions and uses of personal technology?

* quality of life statement --> role of engagement clause
* put students on spot if engaging in appropriate activities
* tech police vs education
* allowing students to disadvantage themselves
* education vs entertainment
* implications:
  + tech. breaks
  + tech. rows
  + video taped learning vs teacher entrapment
* shared understanding of professionalism - growing gap

**Summary:** Students have competing attentions – keep in mind that we look at these (smart phones, ipads, etc.) ourselves … Mark asked who sent an email or text while here? Consider personal availability and let students know your availability. Inappropriate use … put students on the spot? Is our role to be tech police in the classroom? or educators? Allow students to disadvantage themselves? Have a tech break? Create a tech space in class? Is it our role though to better educate students about multi-tasking? Growing gap in our comfort with using technology in the classroom and students need to use? Personal preferences among professors dictate allowance in class.

1. How can we create a team approach in supporting students with learning disabilities?

\* get (ask for) students permission (agreement) to work with others

\* give students learning points to work on with tutors

\* the prof working with you - ex. if need more time - if prof is on your side decrease anxiety

\*offer help - what do you need?

\* normal vs. swd

* 1. inclusive learning needed to benefit all students
  2. oral, written, visual - asses for outcomes

\* 140 students - scene based - no time for one/one within constraints you can work 1 hr

\* visual, oral, written notes - typing lecture - just talk and talk with graphics

\* mix up combo

* 1. ppt, writing on board, discussion, lecture, engage in labs, mini tutorials, moodle (notes)

\* important for swd to take control

* 1. strategies: walk out and stretch, podcast in ear to eliminate distraction, they need their learning plan

\* LAB:

* 1. no notes from the tremble room
  2. very difficult
  3. more resources made visible
  4. esp. for labs

\* most front line don't get info they need

\* LAB hands on/group work

* 1. How do I maintain privacy?
  2. focus on reaching learning outcomes in a variety of ways
  3. Practical adaptation so student can show they have met course requirements
  4. privacy issue: we are \_\_\_\_\_ by need for

\* enhance combination between student and prof

\* integration of info for student accustomed ability to all instruction

**Summary:** Students with disabilities do not always want to be identified; some may also not know what their need is or how it can be met? Time needed to help each student learn how they can best learn in our individual classrooms.

1. How do we motivate students regarding their learning, particularly regarding the basics – what they ought to do/ought to know, not just in preparing for exams?

* application-based questions to challenge approach to learning early on \*incentive, motivated by fear or failure (may be 1st exposed to it)
* conversation with students in private --> about why they may be struggling
* intro vs. upper year courses
  + how to close the cap, completely different ways to motivate
* Why we motivate? --> to learn? to pass? to retain students/pull them in? (esp. arts courses with decreased enrolment)
* students do things based on incentives not what we tell them they should do
* be as clear as possible with expectations (essays, exams etc.), highlight the difference between high school expectations and yours
* required courses: "you're here for a reason" stepping stone to upper level courses, drive home main points
  + self excitement, hands on, own enthusiasm. basic interest already exists

**Summary: c**onversation drifted from the question …. Mostly discussed motivation. Tell the students what is in it for them. Why this class? Why is it part of their program. Clear expectations. Clear results from a midterm. What do we expect them to do and what should they come out with. Participation … engage them … incentivize with grades, marks for reviewing exam. Not all students are motivated.

1. How do we address the apparent change in high school students’ preparation for university such as fewer/less basic study skills, poorer quality of writing and research skills, etc.

* university 101
* introduce course in smaller chunks
* know resources on campus to refer
* work with high schools
* time management/study skills - install: should come from RAs
* being available for students (office hours)
* giving message to 1st years about expectation and difficulty

**Summary:** Increased gap between high school and university … maybe a university 101; course in smaller junks, time management, more workshops in residences, greater availability regarding

1. How do we handle issues students have in understanding copyrights and plagiarism?

Plagiarism/Copy right

* problem: copy from website: easy to do
* upfront information in class
* nursing care plans (individual) - copying writing - pasting from previous plans
* definitions? copying vs plagiarism
* problem: unfamiliarity with use of referencing; citations, limits to use of source materials
* tell students to go to writing centre or library
* library gets lots of inquirers
* problem: instructors have different standards, even in departments - students get confused
* common policies on campus to distinguish ignorance from knowing plagiarism
* students borrow others works as a aid and end up copying
* problem: how much do we serve as role models? - instructors may sometimes copy or borrow ideas (mental and content)
* problem: internet - lot of it appear to be unowned, copyright free.
* So what is copyright from a students view??

**Summary:** Students are so used to accessing information so freely; therefore not accustomed to acknowledge someone else. Therefore we need to teach them how to cite their work, or send them where they can learn more.

We also need to acknowledge when we are using resources as well.

Students are confused … don’t know how to cite or reference … lack of uniformity from one instructor to the next as to how they expect students to cite work … also lack of uniformity when plagiarism occurs.

1. How do we make classrooms that are safer and positive environments for learning to engage all learners?

Safer and Positive

* All 85-90-95%
* Do you know who is in the room?
* ASK ME (great video - LGBTQ) - introduce self
* sharing self personal - introduce sharing stories, the unclear path, self declare
* learning profile card
* names (small groups) (source of equality) --> cooperative learning
* Brain can’t learn if unsafe
* Ground Rules:
  + we are here to be challenged
  + challenge respectively
  + right to pass
  + we are fully here
  + language matters
  + equalize, democratize (make comfortable place for uncomfortable place)
  + teach social skills

**Summary:** – safety matters – b/c when unsafe, our ability to learn shuts down, and we are not able to learn from those people. Learner profiles … how do differentiate learners. Preferred pronoun. What do you know about how you learn? Why are you taking this course? What do you do outside of school? What helps you when are in situations of stress. Something you should know about me this term is … Let students introduce themselves … then we know what name a student prefers. Sharing of self – even vulnerabilities. Set ground rules in a classroom. good conversation that does not shut down learning. Group work – such difficulties for international students to get picked. Learn names. Cooperative learning … structure. Democratize the classroom.

1. How do we best support international students in the classroom? What are their unique needs? How can we ensure they have an opportunity to contribute to classroom learning?

\* How can we be supportive without singling a student out?

* Can profs get info about international stuns (Who, country) in their class - confidentiality vs. support
* international faculty - have specified knowledge and skills
* faculty involvement with international events (time permuting and with advanced notice)
* introduce/explain different teaching methods
* celebrate the value and interest of having international students
* how can we better involve international students in teaching and departmental affairs to supporting programs where they have personal knowledge and experience
* list of resources for international students
* celebration of different cultures throughout the year
* first class ask everyone where they are from
* adapt/increase examples used in class to include international examples
* in language classes, international students are often more advanced
* group work - choose 1 student you know and one you don't
* teaching styles are different in north america

**Summary:** International students – how do we identify international students without signalling them out. Ask everyone where they are from? Culture for living … Culture for teaching … ask questions? Use of first names? Introduce students to the environment we have here. Involve IS to share their experiences … for example in Modern Languages, students from Spain or Latin America can contribute considerably to classes. Celebrate IS and I Professors …more IP than students here.

1. How we can work towards cultural safety, cultural diversity and global preparedness in classrooms?

How to work towards cultural diversity and global preparedness in the classroom

Cultural safety

* safety in the CR
  + to express who you are
  + not judged
  + valued

Teach

* How to we work together? (ex. in groups)
* assign
* separate and collective marks
* do self/group evaluation/reflection

Continual education for professors

* anti-oppression/racism practises
* diversified literature (frame the atmosphere of the classroom)
* personal relevance
* encourages practising "cultural humanity"
  + reserving judgement
* exposing students for diversity
* challenge perspectives and ask questions
* promote constructive debate (ground rules. idea vs individual)
* western privilege should be explored ex. what constitutes research

**Summary:** Let students be who they are …. Be careful of students and group work … language barriers often result in some students not being chosen. Profs need to learn about anti-racism; anti- … so that everyone’s perspective can be included. Course content has to include relevance for each student …. History course of Canada that does not include a black perspective. Expose students to diversity. Challenge students regarding diversity … challenge ideas not people. Explore Western privilege.

**Kevin Wamsley – Afternoon Keynote Address**

Do as I say, not as I do … self-proclaimed workaholic. Loves his job, loves academia. Learn from his mistakes vs. survive like a workaholic. Boundaries

Create an environment for the best possible learning experiences. Think about your own experiences … great professors, not so good professors. Great learning environments and not so good environments.

Most of us want to be great professors and to make a difference in students’ lives.

Perform in the classroom. to get tenure, you need to teach.

Popular with the students vs. teaching effectively.

Looking after ourselves ….

Student evaluations …. Throw out the hurtful evaluations and the excessively laudable ones … focus on those in the middle.

The importance of learning how to say no. Perhaps we need to – so we can give time to students who need it.

Boundaries … set ground rules for yourself, your students, your colleagues. Boundaries on emails. Email hours? Be clear. Tell students. 10 times. Boundaries for office hours. Divide time between students. Boundaries on assignments … manageable, best feedback for your students.

Perspective … understand cycle of life, cycle of career … annual cycle. There are times when other things need more. Annual cycle … 11 months … see it as 8 months when students come and go … do not let pressure get to them ….. Take holidays each year …

Take time to eat.

Don’t eat alone.

Don’t only eat with colleagues.

Shift conversation away from work.

Exercise every day …. In ways that you enjoy, and that work for you.

Sleep … without sleep, everything else suffers.

Listen to your students and your colleagues. Your students will let you know how you are doing. Your colleagues have great ideas, strategies, who can better understand you?

**Notes from Small Group Discussions** (from the discussion notes <where available> and then what was shared at the retreat)

1. How do we manage expectations around immediacy? E.g. the expectation to respond to email right away?

Immediacy

* Emails
  + constantly - how many hours/days
  + weekends?
* Be assertive and inform students about expectations - be clear from the beginning
* automatic replies around exam time
* remind students to check syllabus
* scheduling responses
* block time to answer emails
* mass email if common question

Etiquette

* Social Media
* Office availability
  + post office hours
* Grades/Papers
  + warn about delays
* Respect your boundaries

**Summary:** Always checking email … how else to manage inbox? Set boundaries regarding email. Stick to the boundaries. Talk the talk; walk the walk. Perhaps work with ‘tools’ that allow you to send messages within your boundaries. Use automatic replies for reasons other than being on holidays. Remind students to check the syllabus. When lots of emails regarding one concern – answer in class or send a block email. Email etiquette – appropriate and professional. Office hours … stick to boundaries. Let students know when to expect papers and exams.

1. How do we find a comfortable rhythm in work/life? How can we be productive without eating too much of personal/family time? What is an appropriate level of service? Internal? External?

**Summary:** Affected by position (faculty, contract, lab instructor) and where you are at in life (starting vs. mid vs. late career). Do something for ourselves on a regular basis. Be prepared to let some things go … it may be time to let it go …. A particular role/committee …. Make things in your personal life a priority. Work after life/family obligations … put family/life first. Plan for your personal/take care of yourself things first. Service … how to limit yet contribute meaningfully. Service that is meaningful is easier to do.

1. What are early signs of burnout? How can we prevent it?

* varieties of burnout
* disengagement
* fatigue (physical and emotional)
* irritability
* take personal time
* ask for help
* overcoming stigma
* setting boundaries
* accepting diversity in work habits
* more flexible work arrangements

**Summary:** First there are varieties of burnout – individually experienced; potential signs – disengagement, avoiding office hours, avoiding colleagues, physical and mental fatigue, irritability. What to do? Ask for help. Introverts – take time for oneself; Extroverts – seek social time. Recognizing stigma of burnout … where you are at; where others are at. Setting boundaries. Accept diversity of others’ work habits – be careful of trying to do things in the same way as others. Having more flexible work arrangements … 5 classes to teach how can they be best spread out?

1. How can we build more collaborative working relationships – within and across departments – regarding course content, delivery, and service?

\* Guest lectures - X-dept - C in dept

* Team teaching - problem? - credit
* sharing student supervision HuNu/Bus. (Product development --> marketing)
* problem - awareness teaching/research capabilities
  + create opportunity, meet/network, make connections
* problem - lack - social interactions
* synchronize course content across disciplines (service courses - reschedule/organize information)
* communicating - streams for courses
* problem - X-listed courses, lack of dept credit for course (teaching)
* common faculty area (informal meetings)

**Summary:** Noted successes first … colloquia, team teaching, visiting others classes. Problems in 3 areas. First, registrarial … assigning credit … team teaching? Students for departmental credit? Second, problem of awareness of what we are doing, what are our colleagues doing outside our department? Inside our department. Third – and fundamentally, - a decline in the social culture at this university. WE used to meet often and regularly for coffee and lunch, there used to be a Friday bar … every couple weeks … without social engagements hard to make connections. What is a good space for a faculty lounge.

1. What do we do and how do we take care of ourselves when students divulge ‘heavy’ issues?

**Summary:** – be careful to not give advice … be careful with terms … ‘you should’ ‘you should not’ navigate options available. What about liability? Do we know how to navigate resources? Students feel safe divulging to some faculty. How and when do we set boundaries? Grey area … discussing with students regarding their options; recognize cultural and religious differences as well; recognizing and preventing boundary crossing with our work and students – physical boundary (desk), what about letters on exams? How do we protect ourselves? What is a boundary crossing? Students and teachers can cross the boundaries. What to say when a student says ‘can I talk to you about something confidential?’. What if you have similar experiences … mother died of cancer; family member … do you share? Is that burdening the student? Don’t forget about mental health first aid course.

How to take care of us? students crying, sharing … it can be difficult to listen to. How long can we listen? Define limits (good armour and protection). Learn more about boundaries. Share with a peer – when possible (careful of confidentiality). When do we become traumatized about issues that affected others?

1. How do we recognize teaching AND learning in our classrooms? How do we create environments that facilitate teaching and learning?
2. How do we create more interactive and engaged classrooms without losing content?

(6 & 7 combined to form one group)

* Use of youtube
* TED tracks
* Evaluating what content is critical
* seeking unknown topics (research presentations) = choice
* challenge by choice
* community building is not time wasted - curriculum
* reflect teaching philo pedagogical
* being yourself
* experimental learning
* responsibility on students to - background reading prior to class
* peer help
* creating curiosity
* class size and space concerns

**Summary:** Variety (youtube, Tedtalks); what content is critical for the class; challenge by choice – different responses to a question; community building is not time wasted, reflect on teaching philosophy/pedagogical approach, experiential learning, make students responsible (when readings need to be done), creating curiosity in students. Engagement is dependent upon class size … some sizes/spaces do not allow for all interactive techniques.

**Closure:** Each person was asked to share a word that reflected their thoughts of the day:

Higher education not PSE

Informative

Boundaries

Expectations

Enlightening

Revealing

Hopeful

Hopeful

Perspective

Elaboration

Beneficial

Sharing

Community

Challenging

Reflective

Supportive

Fun

Touching

Challenging

Refreshing

Cultural humility

Insightful

Connecting

Continuous learning

Recharging my teaching batteries

Diverse

Inspiration

Love what you do

Learning more than teaching

What a ride!

Rejuvenating

Be present

Expectations

Collaborative

Thirsty

Appreciating our students

Profs

Trust

Context

Collegial

Rhythm

Quality of life

Perspective

Passion with boundaries

Enthusiasm

Personal perspectives and context

I’m never ready, but here we go

Dialogue

Cycle