



Faculty Learning Communities 2016 - 2017

Topic: In Search of the Slow Professor
Contact: Jay Bloom & Chris Paskewich

The personal education that Centre provides depends in part upon an attentiveness, focus, and commitment to the thorough exploration of ideas on the part of its faculty. The deep and varied connections we make with students require time and energy to cultivate, as does all the supportive service work needed to maintain our College. Providing that personal education becomes challenging as we face a growing, occasionally even overwhelming list of priorities and responsibilities that can make us feel harried and distracted in our jobs, perhaps unable to manage the pace. How might the faculty, as a collective, attempt to practically address the frantic pressures of our professional and personal lives? Can we develop strategies for editing or revising our responsibilities and expectations that redound to the benefit of our teaching, our scholarship, and our lives? As a means to start this conversation, this Faculty Learning Community proposes to read and discuss *The Slow Professor* (Maggie Berg and Barbara K. Seeber, University of Toronto Press, 2016) with the ambition of tailoring the arguments and proposals explored therein to our own community here at Centre.

Topic: Inclusive Pedagogy
Contact: Eva Cadavid & Maria Apostolova

This FLC will have two aims. The first is to explore and better understand how implicit biases* and microaggressions** affect the dynamics in the classroom. The second is to explore ways to best manage hot moments in the classroom to foster a safe yet challenging environment where all of our students can flourish.

*the bias in judgment and/or behavior that results from subtle cognitive processes (e.g., implicit attitudes and implicit stereotypes) that often operate at a level below conscious awareness and without intentional control.

**brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial, gender, sexual orientation and religious slights and insults to the target person or group.



Topic: Creativity

Contact: Jennifer Muzkya

The purpose of this learning community is to better understand creativity, in general, and how to enhance and assess it in our classes. There will be meetings every week, cycling through three topics: enhancing creativity, based on Elizabeth Gilbert's book, *Big Magic*; assessing creativity, based on a book, *Essentials of Creativity Assessment*; and creativity, in general, based on a selection of book chapters and journal articles. Meetings are scheduled every week, but this FLC is designed to be flexible, and interested colleagues are welcome to attend only the meetings that work with your schedule. A schedule of the meetings can be found here: <http://web.centre.edu/muzyka/CreativeCircleSchedule.html>

Topic: Foucault

Contact: Christian Haskett

Michel Foucault (1926-84) may well be the most influential theorist of the 20th century. His ideas about discourse, knowledge, and power, and the extension of those by his heirs, have had an impact on virtually every field of study, even the STEM fields. While Foucault's work is routinely invoked, it is also often misunderstood in its subtleties, nuances, allusions, contexts, and so on. Perhaps this is because Foucault is at once accessible and enjoyable, while also often hopelessly dense and tortuous. All of this begs a learning community.

While the contents and direction of the FLC would, of course, benefit from the input of all involved, I propose the following as a starting point. The community would focus on improving and expanding our own understanding of Michel Foucault's work, as well as learning from a range of examples of how it has been applied in different disciplines. I also hope we would consider the possible impact of Foucault's thought on our classrooms, asking both how Foucault's theories on education, the constitution of the subject, and discourse *inter alia* ought to inform the ways we teach, as well as how best to teach Foucault to undergraduate students.

Topic: How Students Learn

Contact: Sarah Lashley

The purpose of this learning community is to read and discuss current scholarship on how students learn, and then translate that scholarship into learning-driven teaching practices. As instructors, we often focus on developing effective teaching practices. However, we often do so without really understanding how students learn and why a particular practice may be more or less effective. Knowing how students learn can help educators develop class meetings and assignments that meet students where they are developmentally.