



Teaching Matters

NEWSLETTER



Vice President's Excellence in Teaching Committee
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Experiential Education

Sarah King, Director, Experiential Education

It's a great privilege to introduce myself to some of you as the new Director of Experiential Education here at UNB. But, I know that for most of you, I am not a new face. I've been part of the UNB community for a long time, and I've worn a lot of different hats. Since 2003, I've been involved with four different faculties, I've been an undergraduate student (BPhil '06), a graduate student (PhD '18), a staff member in the Faculty of Computer Science and the College of Extended

Learning, and a contract instructor at Renaissance College, each of which helped me learn about how experiential education impacts students, educators, and communities. Having all of these experiences has taught me a lot about the strong history UNB has with experiential education, and has made me excited to continue to strengthen and grow our commitments in this area.



I completed my PhD from UNB's Faculty of Education in January of this year, and worked with some fantastic educators and students at three Atlantic Canadian universities to understand more about how universities help educate students to be civic agents in their communities. One of the key findings of that research is the impact experiential education has on students' civic learning, development, and action.

One of my research participants believed that “it takes a whole university to educate a student” and I am really excited that my new role as Director of Experiential Education allows me to help bring the university together and create really exciting opportunities for our students, our institution, and our communities.

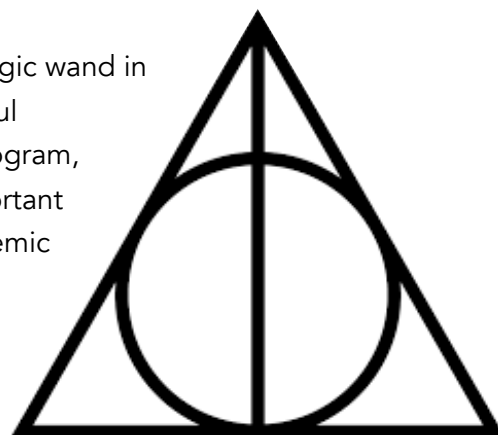
One of the questions I get when I visit faculties and departments is “what is experiential education?” and what makes it different from hands-on learning, community-engaged learning, authentic learning, and other pedagogical ‘buzzwords’. Experiential education is a pedagogical philosophy and approach with a long and rich history – John Dewey and David Kolb are perhaps its most ‘famous’ proponents and scholars in the field. Both believed that experiential education is key to educating students and citizens to participate in democracy. Perhaps those lessons are even more important now than ever!

One of the things you’ll learn about me is that I love books, and young adult books in particular. My mom was a children’s librarian and I come by that love honestly. So, to get to the pragmatics of experiential education, I like to use a metaphor from my very favourite young adult series, Harry Potter. I use the analogy of the Deathly Hallows to explain the three basic components of experiential education: academics, experience, and reflection.

In the Harry Potter series, the Deathly Hallows is an example of wizarding lore that (spoilers!) turns out to be true. The image represents three magical objects, which I think have parallels for experiential education.

The centre line represents the Elder Wand, the most powerful magic wand in the Wizarding World. In experiential education, that most powerful component is students’ academic work – their discipline, their program, the content they’re learning in their studies. This is the most important element of experiential education, that students bring their academic learning into their experiences.

The circle in the Deathly Hallows represents the Resurrection Stone, a stone that can show the holder a loved one who has died. In our experiential education metaphor, the resurrection stone represents the experiences students have – whether those are partnerships with community organizations, work placements with industry partners, or engagement with real-world problems and solutions in course work – that bring life to students’ academic learning.



In Harry Potter, perhaps the most powerful magical object is the Cloak of Invisibility, represented in the Deathly Hallows image by the triangle that encompasses the Elder Wand

and the Resurrection Stone. For experiential education, that invisible but powerful force is reflection. Teaching students critical reflexive skills helps them to connect their experiences with their academic learning and to explore the skills they are developing to help them identify and meet personal, professional, and civic challenges.

I am so excited for the opportunity to work with each of you to help build a university that values, supports, and centers student learning. By bringing our students and faculty together with community and industry partners we can create a New Brunswick population of engaged, active, and intelligent citizens who are ready to tackle the complex, important, and essential problems necessary to create a province we can all be proud to call home. Thankfully, the New Brunswick provincial government shares that excitement and have committed \$18.4 million in funding over the next three years to help support experiential education in our province. Most of that funding is earmarked to help students access new opportunities and eliminate barriers to participation in experiential education. This funding can help us all work together as a university to create opportunities and strengthen our already strong history of excellence in experiential education. Please feel free to get in touch with me and share your ideas – I can't wait to see where we can go in the next three years.

Empowering Students through Partnering for Patti: An Expanding Interprofessional Health Education

Meaghan Smith, Nursing and Health Sciences

Partnering for Patti is an expanding multi-disciplinary learning opportunity that was developed by faculty within Dalhousie Medicine New Brunswick, NBCC's Respiratory Therapy and Practical Nursing Programs, and UNB Saint John's Bachelor of Nursing within the Department of Nursing and Health Sciences. As Interprofessional Health Education (IPHE) is a growing component of undergraduate curricula in health-related disciplines, we recognized a need to better prepare learners for collaborative practice. The experience we developed allows students of respective disciplines to work collaboratively while providing care to a simulated patient and family member. This learning activity uses high fidelity simulation to mimic the reality of a clinical environment, and is designed to foster critical thinking. The aim of our event is to facilitate

learning with, from, and about other health professions to improve collaboration. In March 2018, we proudly marked the fourth iteration of Partnering for Patti, and added NBCC's Pharmacy Technician program as our newest interdisciplinary partner.

This event was comprised of six phases. Phase one involved a study guide detailing learning objectives and events of the simulation. Phase two was the completion of an Interdisciplinary Education Perception Scale (IEPS) to evaluate students' perceptions of collaborative learning, which measured competencies important to interdisciplinary settings such as professional competency and autonomy, perceived needs for professional cooperation, perceptions of actual cooperation and resource sharing within and across professions, and understanding the value and contributions of other professionals/professions. Phase three and four were a short briefing and the simulation activity. Phase five included a faculty led debriefing of the simulation using the Advocacy-Inquiry Debriefing Model; students were also asked to complete a second IEPS to capture changes in perception related to IPHE. Lastly, students completed an evaluation of this learning experience based on the six Canadian Interprofessional Health Collaborative (CIHC) domains for IPHE: Role Clarification, Interprofessional Conflict Resolution, Team Functioning, Collaborative Leadership, Patient/Client/Family/Community-Centred Care, and Interprofessional Communication.

The experience was completed with a discipline-specific reflection assignment that addressed program curricula outcomes.

Our Partnering for Patti team took advantage of this initiative to further develop excellence in simulation, interdisciplinary education and enhance our scholarship of discovery. Through this we have collaboratively presented at several conferences across Canada and have published work with the Canadian Journal of Respiratory Therapy. Feedback from student participants has been incredibly positive. Numerous students described having an increased awareness of collaboration, professional roles and teamwork. Through this experience, we are confident our learners are better prepared to work side-by-side with their future health care colleagues.



Full-text article available:

Gordon, R., Flecknell, M., Fournier, T., Dupont, D., Gowlett, K., & Furlong, K. E. (2017). Partnering for Patti: Shaping future healthcare teams through simulation-enhanced

interprofessional education. Canadian Journal of Respiratory Therapy, 53(4), 81–87. Retrieved from <https://login.proxy.hil.unb.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=c8h&AN=130789417&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

Partnering for Patti Student Reflections

What part of this simulation experience was most helpful to your learning?

- Seeing real “simulation” events that can help prepare us for what it will be like to have proper communication among healthcare workers
- Learning that anyone can take charge of the team and that roles can shift as time goes on
- Seeing the team in action
- Seeing the importance of a leader and providing clear roles
- Working with other professions was EXTREMELY helpful
- Debriefing was very helpful to reflect about the scenario that just happened. It was also helpful to gain perspectives from other health professionals and how they view your role as a profession

Describe how this learning activity assisted you in developing new ideas and/or approaches to incorporate interprofessional communication concepts into your practice.

- It certainly developed an understanding of roles and helped in my approach to communication
- Seeing other professions deal with emergent situations was helpful in developing roles and respect
- This has helped me become more comfortable communicating with other professions and relying on them to provide insights into patient care
- Making sure to speak up even when I’m not the team lead because each person’s knowledge is valuable
- Just to remember we are all in this for a common end goal to help the pt. we all need to work together as a team

Experiential Learning and Shakespeare

Sandra Bell, Humanities and Languages

Experiential learning is a way for me to get my students more involved in my material, to make it relevant to them, and to reflect on the process of learning and the skills learned. I teach 400-year old fiction, and I sometimes wonder how to make my material relevant to my students' lives. "Why do we still study Shakespeare?" is a question I hear even from students who have chosen to take one of my Shakespeare courses. Luckily, while some of Shakespeare's situations seem distant and the language can be a struggle, the revelation of character is where my students can find themselves in the text; none of them (that I know of) is a murderous king, but the emotions of uncertainty, confusion, hope, and desire we all understand at an embodied level. I've developed two courses to deepen the 'embodied' experience of learning Shakespeare.

Shakespeare's work is meant to be performed, of course, and so one of my courses—ENGL 3801 Script into Performance—provides my students with the opportunity to connect themselves to the material in meaningful ways. UNB Saint John does not have a theatre space, however; fortunately, I have strong ties to the Saint John Theatre Company (where I am currently Vice President). Our Script into Performance classroom is at the theatre; immediately, students understand the difference between sitting at desks and standing in the black-box space ready to move, to tell each other stories, to become the characters. Our final project is the performance of scenes and monologues—in high school classrooms, and for the public in the theatre space.

Providing students with a performance opportunity connects them not just rationally but viscerally with the material, and knowing that the final project in the course is public presentation makes it immediately relevant. But my students aren't just learning about Shakespeare; they are learning a variety of transferable skills that will be useful in other courses and in their life



beyond the university. We take the time in this course to reflect on those skills: teamwork and collaboration, critical (and quick) thinking, creative problem solving, and all types of communication skills. Students gain confidence, become more adaptable and flexible, and learn to work under pressure. Studying Shakespeare becomes as much about them as it does 400-year old fiction.

Another course which provides students with this “performance opportunity” is my ENGL 3104 Shakespeare and Pedagogy. We study two plays frequently taught at the high school level, and after two practice sessions in the university classroom, at the end of term students teach an element of a Shakespeare play in a local high school. This class requires a lot of coordinating on my part—especially when arranging student visits—and a lot of formative feedback to ensure my students are as comfortable as they can be not only with the material, but with the idea of engaging high school students in the learning of Shakespeare. Students leave this course with a deeper understanding of the material because they’ve had to approach it with the idea of sharing their knowledge in a meaningful way.

These experiential approaches and assignments encourage my students to become more involved in the material, more creative in their presentations, and more responsive to their audiences. In figuring out how to explain the material and engage others, they become more engaged themselves, and learn not only about Shakespeare’s plays, but also about their own skills in clarity of organization and communication. They learn about the importance of flexibility, of thinking on one’s feet, of careful listening, of confidence, of trust in oneself. These are all highly important, useful in other classes and beyond university—at work and in daily life.

Not every class can reach outwards like these do, but in every class I’m much more committed to giving my students the opportunities to grapple with the material in a variety of ways, and especially to requiring students to teach their own understandings with others through presentations. Presentations take away time usually spent on content coverage, but at this point in my career, I’m less worried about teaching all the texts I feel are important, and more concerned that my students understand the material we do cover more thoroughly, and that they learn about themselves and their own abilities in the process.

UNB Saint John Faculty of Business Co-op

Alex Goudreau, Teaching Matters Co-Editor

Students at UNB Saint John have the option to participate in co-op programs in Business, Arts, and Computer Science. The Business Co-op Program is most established and integrated into the students' academic program. UNB Saint John's Co-op Program works to develop students as a whole, and offers exclusive professional development seminars throughout. To make the process as real world as possible, the students are responsible for applying and interviewing for the co-op positions; the Co-op Office coordinates this process. The Co-op Office offers students the opportunity to practice interviews and work with the Writing Centre to improve their resume writing skills. Typically, student placements are local, either in Saint John or elsewhere in New Brunswick, and students are encouraged to return to the same employer multiple times for experience in different roles. Students complete project based and/or reflective work term reports after each placement and excerpts from two students are included below.

Erin Gillespie and Stacey Cool, Co-op Coordinators, when asked about faculty feedback indicated it is quite positive, faculty notice students have more confidence and contribute more in class due to their work term experiences and because everything is more relatable. Students also benefit from their co-op experiences by gaining one full year of relevant experience, by seeing their networks develop and expand, and most co-op students secure full-time jobs in their field before they graduate.

Reflection on your development as a Student

The Co-op program has allowed me to gain first-hand knowledge and experience in business areas I could one day be working full time. My experiences on my work terms have provided me with real world examples that relate to the classroom and have allowed me to better understand course material. Being in the Co-op program has also grown my confidence in the classroom whether it be presentation skills, offering ideas and suggestions, or simply meeting with professors. Being in the Co-op program has proven to me the importance of good time management skills, it has developed my study habits and has pushed me to be more social, confident and competent. During my first year at UNB, I struggled to obtain the grades that I did during High School. The Co-op program introduced me to many students and faculty who became great resources. By connecting with other students in my Co-op class, we were able to form study groups and develop study habits that worked best for us. Throughout my time at UNB I have improved my GPA greatly from my first year of study. Before the Co-op program, I feared public speaking as well as lacked the confidence to share my ideas in a group. After

working in three professional environments and relating these skills to the classroom, my confidence in all my abilities have improved immensely.

Since joining the Co-op program, it has allowed me to gain not only valuable working experience but also allowed me to use things I have learned in the classroom and apply them to real life situations. Not only have my studies helped me at work, but also my work experience has helped me in the classroom, it has shown me different ways to look at class material that I have never noticed before. The Co-op program has given me confidence to not be afraid to make mistakes as well as not fearing speaking up in larger groups. Also, through this program my networking has expanded more than I ever thought it would, I now have references that I can use for major companies which will be great for me upon graduation. I have grown very close with my co-op class and we have become resources for one another. I will continue my relationships with my fellow classmates, as I know they have similar goals to myself and have the same drive to be successful.

Brief Reflections on the Atlantic Universities' Teaching Showcase 2018 at Dalhousie University Agricultural Campus

Alex Goudreau, Science & Health Sciences Librarian

As a new teacher, I've been on the lookout for interesting and practical professional development opportunities. I'll admit this year's Showcase drew me in with its keynote speaker, Dr. Pat Maher, and his keynote title "[Experiential], you keep using that word. I do not think it means what you think it means": Exploring the tensions of experiential learning in higher education through the lens of *The Princess Bride*. Dr. Maher's talk was great, as were the other sessions I attended throughout the day. Many people spoke about reflection as a key part of experiential learning, and that resonated with me. When I look back over my notebook, the session notes blend together with scribbles of future teaching ideas, and reveal reflections on things I tried this past semester and how I could make changes for next time. Attending this showcase has reinforced to me how necessary it is to be more reflective in my own practice, and how I need to give myself permission to spend time on this practice. The different sessions have also inspired me and sparked new ideas of how to incorporate reflection and other experiential learning into the classroom.

Library Resources on Experiential Education

Books

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