



TEACHING MATTERS

newsletter

UNB Saint John

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THE DIPLOMA IN UNIVERSITY TEACHING MARGARET ANNE SMITH

Facilitating the Diploma in University Teaching (DUT) at UNB Saint John is one of the highlights of my year in the Teaching and Learning Centre. Over the past three years, the DUT has drawn a wide variety of participants from our campus, and a few from DalMedNB and NBCC. Most are instructors and others are staff who work closely with students; all have benefited from a broader understanding of the variety of work that instructors do in classrooms and labs. Teaching can be lonely work; out of all the hours we dedicate to good teaching, preparation and marking are the most time-consuming, and this work is typically done in isolation. The DUT brings people together to share ideas, resources and experiences—but also creates a collaborative community in Tucker Park. Facilitators bring best practices, and participants bring experience and questions, but all bring a passion for learning and teaching, and a desire to teach our students more effectively. Whether you are a new instructor, a graduate student or staff member, we all need renewal, collegiality, and fresh ideas. Dedicating six days to exploring teaching issues and techniques can be a powerful way to inspire and energize our teaching—and our university community.



“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.” (Attributed to Plutarch)

TEACHING AT UNB

ENHANCING TEACHING AND LEARNING

DIPLOMA IN UNIVERSITY TEACHING

The Diploma in University Teaching (DUT) provides opportunities for participants to develop and/or enhance knowledge and skills related to teaching and learning practices.

ELIGIBILITY

The DUT is specifically developed for new faculty members, contract academic instructors and graduate student teaching assistants. Other members of the UNB Saint John teaching community as well as educators from the Tucker Park Collaborative are also invited to participate.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes for the DUT will be met through active participation in workshops, self study, micro-teaching presentations (or teaching observations) and learning assignments tailored to meet the needs of individual participants.



AS A PARTICIPANT IN THE DUT YOU WILL:

- ◆ Work individually and/or collaboratively to design or re-design a course (syllabus, learning objectives, instructional methods and materials and lesson plan);
- ◆ Demonstrate teaching strategies relevant to large or small classes including the effective use of educational technologies;
- ◆ Address practical issues related to assessment of learning including reliable Classroom Assessment Techniques [CATS];
- ◆ Engage in reflective teaching practice by constructing a teaching philosophy statement and developing a teaching dossier;
- ◆ Give feedback that is critical to the ongoing development of teaching practice to DUT participants and receive feedback of the same nature from DUT participants.

Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher

Parker Palmer

TEACHING MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME

The Kate Frego Teaching Mentorship Programme was designed to support the on-going professional development of university teachers during the early years of their careers. Early career teachers are connected with more experienced colleagues who assist them in gaining confidence and skill in their new role. .

In the programme, the mentees are connected with mentors who are outside of their department and, often, outside of their faculty. This frees both partners to be open about the issues they might have without the awkwardness that might result from being paired with members of the same department. The programme only officially lasts for a short time, but the relationships that are developed often last for years.

The best teachers often try to create what we have come to call a 'natural critical learning environment' ... in which learners feel a sense of control over their education; work collaboratively with others; believe that their work will be considered fairly and honestly; and try, fail, and receive feedback from expert learners in advance of and separate from any summative judgement of their effort

Bain, What the Best College Teachers Do, 18.

THE PURPOSE OF THE CENTRE IS TO FOSTER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING CULTURE ON THIS CAMPUS. THE TLC WILL REALIZE THIS GOAL BY PROVIDING SUPPORT, MENTORING, RESOURCES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

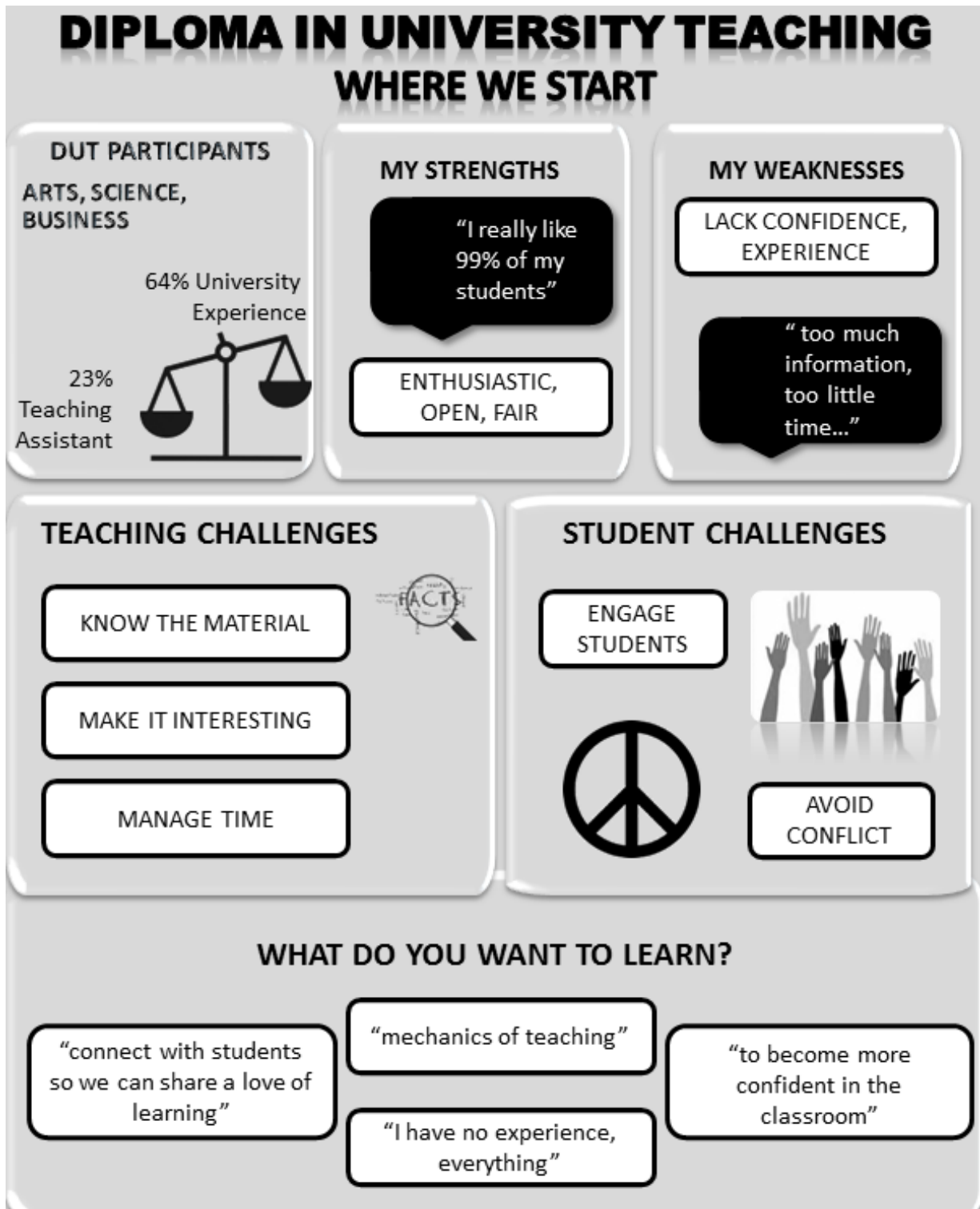
CONSULTATIONS

The coordinator of the TLC is available to meet with university teachers (including graduate students) to offer one-on-one expert advice on a range of teaching-related topics. These individual sessions can be scheduled quickly to help address issues as they arise during the term. The consultations can be very specific or more general – they can involve a short discussion or can require multiple meetings.

A few of the consultations that have been provided recently include:

- ◆ Team-based learning
- ◆ Syllabi review – including writing clear learning outcomes
- ◆ Dealing with difficult classroom issues
- ◆ Developing teaching dossiers
- ◆ Developing teaching philosophy statements
- ◆ Classroom observations

In 2016, we asked UNBSJ DUT students to complete two brief questionnaires focused on their experiences in university teaching. We asked their greatest teaching challenges (student and content related), what they wanted to learn during the DUT, and what they considered their greatest strengths and weaknesses as teachers. The participants were asked to complete the questionnaire twice – on the first and last day of classes.



IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE EXPERIENCE

I have learnt a lot from the DUT. There were so many tips about effective lectures, students' engagement, and learning styles.

For me, some of the most useful learnings were:

- ⇒ How to make sure to capture and maintain students' involvement and attention through change of pace and alternating activities. (it was great learning from each other and best practices)
- ⇒ How each lecturer can be a great presenter when utilizing own skills and capabilities, there is no right way of doing it (this was demonstrated clearly by seeing numerous lecturers throughout the DUT)

The DUT course was a highly rewarding and engaging experience. I learned many useful strategies that I believe will enhance my teaching and better engage students .

I learnt so many things in the DUT this past Summer. This was a great learning experience. Currently, I am utilizing team work, collaboration, and think-pair in my classes.

In order to build resilient learners, teaching cannot be reduced to "good technique"! it is an art and requires active participation from both lecturers and students.

DIPLOMA IN UNIVERSITY TEACHING AT THE END

MY STRENGTHS

Passion and
Enthusiasm

Fair and adaptable

I care about my
students

MY WEAKNESSES

Lack of confidence

Dealing with conflict

Student engagement

TEACHING CHALLENGES

USING DIFFERENT
METHODS

MAKING MATERIAL
"FUN"

RELATING TO **ALL**
STUDENTS



STUDENT CHALLENGES

ADDRESSING
DIVERSITY



AVOID
CONFLICT

ACADEMIC
OFFENSES

MOST IMPORTANT TAKE-AWAY POINT

"applying different
strategies for all types of
learners"

"I'm not as bad at this
than I thought!"

"student needs are
similar in all disciplines"

"use active learning in
ALL teaching settings"

ONE YEAR LATER

WHAT I HAVE GAINED BY TAKING THE DUT

BRADY QUINN

I took the Diploma in University Teaching (DUT) after having just finished a contract as an instructor for a UNB Biology course, which had been my first experience organizing and running a class as a teacher rather than helping as a teaching assistant. This term as an instructor was an interesting, educational, and mostly positive experience for me, but at the same time presented me with a number of challenges, some of which left me feeling discouraged and unsure whether I was really capable of continuing work in teaching. Taking the DUT at this point was a huge help to me in this period of personal uncertainty. The DUT provided valuable guidance on practical matters such as constructing a course syllabus, giving a good lecture, techniques to improve student engagement and learning, and putting together a teaching dossier, many of which I felt encouraged to apply to future teaching efforts. It also provided a forum for discussion of issues and experiences among participants, during which I was able to hear the experiences of others both early and advanced in their teaching careers that really put my own experience into perspective. I saw that the challenges I had encountered were not unique, but rather were shared by most other teachers and always pose some barriers to teaching efforts. During the DUT I recovered my confidence and gained perspective and tools with which to, I hope, improve my performance as a teacher in the future.

GOLDEN APPLE AWARD

Golden Apple Awards are given to those who work towards improving teaching and learning on the UNB campus. Individuals and groups can be nominated by a current or retired member of the UNB community.

If you are interested in nominating a colleague/ professor, contact Margaret Anne Smith in the Teaching & Learning Centre at msmith@unb.ca for more information.



THE RIGHT TOOL FOR THE JOB ISN'T ALWAYS A LECTURE?!

MOIRA LAW

As a student, I always loved lectures. They were predictable, information-packed and private in a strange sort of way; almost like settling in for a good movie minus the popcorn. Truth be told, I still love lectures now that I am the one giving them but after taking the Diploma in University Teaching (DUT) my singular love affair with the lecture has wavered.

At DUT, I was offered the proverbial super-sonic-fully-loaded-toolbox after I had been getting the job done for years with my handy, dependable, all-in-one tool; the lecture. I've often had a vague niggling there were other tools out there but honestly they smacked of chaos, unproductive busy work and unnecessary pandering. However, after the master craftsmen at DUT conducted demonstrations, shared their experiences and laid out the mounting evidence-base in favour of their resources, I found myself wavering; even considering the scarier power tools like group work, classroom clickers and problem-based learning. What I liked best about DUT was that the tools were simply being offered, with no pushy sales pitch, expectation or judgement...no coercion, no future classroom visits or tests. In fact, they even cautioned us against trying too many new tools at once. I left the course feeling deeply encouraged; not just to try new things in my classroom but to gracefully expect and accept that everything will not go according to plan and that's okay because that's part of my learning

DEPARTMENTAL AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE (DATE)

Nursing

Rose McCloskey

Math & Statistics

Thana Kamel

Computer Science

Jeff McNally

Engineering

Stephen Perry

Biology

Raouf Kilada

Psychology

Enrico DiTommaso

Humanities & Languages

Sarah Maier

Social Sciences/Education

Wade Nelson

History & Politics

Hepzibah Munoz-Martinez

WHAT HAVE I GAINED BY TAKING THE DIPLOMA OF UNIVERSITY TEACHING?

RENEE GORDON

As an instructor new to university teaching I was offered a piece of advice by someone much wiser than I, “never do anything just once”. I was told that even if what you design is a flop, you should modify it and try again before going back to the drawing board. When I signed up for the Diploma of University Teaching (DUT), I felt armed with this advice. I had recently taught a new classroom course, and although it went well overall; there was room for improvement.

When I entered the DUT my goal was to take what I learned and use it within my course to address three things that I felt could improve student engagement: 1. Increase class attendance, 2. Decrease distractions (i.e. chatter, computers, and phones), 3. Have all students come to class prepared. During the DUT I learned about various teaching techniques and classroom management strategies, and saw examples of how other faculty from across campus were incorporating these into their courses. I was able to borrow from ideas presented throughout the week to restructure aspects of my course.

I used case studies and an interactive audience response system (Poll Everywhere) to modify my content delivery while keeping the course content and assessment similar to the previous iteration. I developed a case study for each class which was threaded throughout the lecture and highlighted key concepts being covered. Each case study was introduced with the associated readings one week prior to class. Students were asked to review the case ahead of time and consider how the readings could be applied. When students came to class each week they brought their electronic device (phone, laptop, or tablet), and used it to answer application level questions that were incorporated into the lecture in the context of the case study. A small portion of each student’s grade came from their case study participation. In order to achieve the grade, students had to 1. Attend class and 2. Actively participate by answering all of the questions presented by way of the audience response system (students did not have to answer correctly to obtain the participation grade).

These changes had an astounding impact. Not only was there 100% classroom attendance, but students were no longer distracted by their laptops and smart phones. They were now using their electronic devices for learning. Students came to class prepared and were engaged for the entire lecture period! Student feedback at the end of the term confirmed that they loved the interactive nature of the class. Students also commented that they appreciated the opportunity to apply and discuss new concepts in real time which helped to inform and shape their thinking; translating into a deeper understanding of the content and an improvement in learning outcomes.

From my perspective what I gained by taking the DUT has been invaluable as it inspired a few small changes that led to a richer and more engaging opportunity for student learning.

**The Vice-President's Excellence
in Teaching Committee
welcomes new and returning
faculty and instructors
as we usher in a new academic
year.**

