

# CTL NEWSLETTER

May, 2018, Issue 3

## CTL 5th Annual Teaching and Learning Symposium

Angela Waigand and Raigne Symes



Hosted by UCQ's Centre for Teaching and Learning, the 5th Annual Teaching and Learning Symposium took place on April 7th. The theme of the event was Teaching Perspectives in Post-Secondary Healthcare Education.

Dr. Sandra Goldsworthy, Associate Dean of Teaching, Learning and Technology and Associate Professor in the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Calgary, delivered the keynote speech, entitled Simulation in Healthcare Education: What Does the Next 10 Years Hold?

Following the keynote, fourteen other sessions were offered throughout the day. A variety of topics were presented from best practices in nursing to information literacy to educational technology. Several UCQ faculty, staff, and students presented their innovative educational ideas and research. Other presenters were from Weil Cornell – Qatar, Qatar University, and CNAQ. Approximately 80 educators from a variety of institutions attended the event, with UCQ particularly well represented.

The co-chairs of this event would like to thank all attendants for supporting the enhancement of quality education at UCQ, the members of the UCQ community who made this event happen, and the presenters of the excellent sessions.

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## STRATEGIES FOR MAKING LECTURES MORE ACTIVE

Dr. Frances Kalu

*"We might be too busy trying to cover content with our students that we miss the chance to uncover content with them"*  
Dawkins

Lectures and active learning might not seem to go hand-in-hand, but do they?

When we think of active learning, we imagine learner-centered learning spaces, students in groups huddled over moveable tables, chairs on wheels, smartboards, electronic display carts, whiteboards, and a myriad of activities. On the other hand, lectures might connote visions of students sitting in rows facing the instructor delivering a Lecture.



As the thinking around teaching and learning in higher education moves towards active learning, there remains a place for all teaching methodologies including lectures. Lectures are a means of directly delivering information to learners. This is usually effective when a large amount of content is to be delivered and is used in a majority of adult education classrooms. On the downside, lecturing is seen to promote passive learning as learners do not participating actively in the learning process. Citing different researchers, Meyers & Jones (1993, p. 14 -15) note disadvantages of lectures as including the fact that students do not pay attention 40% of the time during lectures, a loss of interest and inability to retain information as the lecture progresses, and the fact that students do not engage in higher order thinking. The authors also put forward arguments from proponents of lectures who wonder how students can delve into actively learning about a topic that they do not know enough about. Another point of view was the worry that without the use of lectures to deliver content, copious amount of content would not be covered.

On the other hand, learning is not a spectator sport and students have to take part in their learning to create meaning (Chickering & Gamson, 1987). Educators have used strategies such as questioning to engage students actively in the classroom. However, in recent times, there has been more emphasis on active learning and it has become a buzzword as educators delve more deeply into the process of learning in higher education. In their definition of active learning, Scott Freeman, et al (2014) reiterate the dichotomy between active and passive learning by defining active learning as the process through which students acquire new knowledge in the classroom through activities or conversations that aid learning, in contrast to acquiring knowledge without any or little involvement in the process. They also emphasize that this engagement in the learning process, promotes higher-order thinking. Principles of active learning originate from the constructivist belief that learners actively construct meaning by building on prior knowledge and experiences. By creating active learning environments in the classroom, the educator creates a space in which students can construct their own knowledge. On the flip side, proponents mention the lack of time to implementing active learning strategies in the classroom and the misconception that it must involve group work or technology.

In a bid to merge the use of lectures and active learning, Meixun Zheng in a Magna Online Webinar on Active Learning identified various ideas that educators can apply to make lectures more active. These include the use of:

1. **Skeleton handout** – Instead of providing students with the full presentation slides, delete some words and let the students actively fill in the gaps during the lecture. They can compare with each other as a paired activity.
2. **Physical movement by the educator** – Using movement to maintain a presence while lecturing. Students direct their attention at the educator as they move and this creates a break in the lecture pattern.
3. **Pause and Chunk** – Stop at intervals during the lecture to check in with the students, give some mini activities, ask for questions or pose questions. Plan this to coincide with periods within the lecture that you would like students to engage in deep learning, as students will have the opportunity to think more deeply about what is being taught.
4. **Questioning** – Using questioning as a technique to engage students and make them think critically. Various techniques include using open-ended questions, giving wait-time (second-language speakers might need more time), and asking follow-up questions for example do you agree with this or that.
5. **Small Group Activities** – Using small group activities to keep students engaged in the lecture. This could include the use of peer questioning, note comparisons, think-pair-share, think-write-pair-share (great for second language speakers as they can write down their ideas in their first language if they wish), and buzz groups where small groups discuss a certain question or perspective and share with the others.
6. **Writing** – Harnessing the power of writing could be a way to make lectures more active and a great formative assessment strategy. Examples include the one-minute paper where student can capture their ideas based on a question from the educator. This could be submitted or shared with whole group by volunteers. 3-2-1 strategy where students note for example 3- most important things they learned today, 2- new things they want to try, or 2- connections they made today, 1 – question they still have. The educator could use a google form to collect the information for formative assessment.

The University of Calgary in Qatar has a one-year subscription to the Magna webinar - Strategies for Making Lectures More Active, Engaging, and Meaningful. Do click on this link on-demand seminar recording link - <http://seminars.magnaonlinemedia.com/strategies-for-making-lectures-more-active-engaging-and-meaningful/> (password – **engaging89**) to learn more about non-technological and low-technological strategies to make lectures active.

If you would like to know more or discuss this or related topics with us? Come on over to CTL for a chat or contact us for a meeting (Dr. Frances Kalu, [fukalu@ucalgary.edu.qa](mailto:fukalu@ucalgary.edu.qa); Dr. Gilles Doiron, [jagilles.doiron@ucalgary.edu.qa](mailto:jagilles.doiron@ucalgary.edu.qa)).

## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN THE CLASSROOM

Dr. Frances Kalu and Patrick Kelly (Manager of Learning & Instructional Design, Taylor Institute)



The term student engagement describes participation in activities that lead to high-quality learning (Weimer, 2012). Studies demonstrate that when students are engaged in their learning, they show sustained behavioral involvement in the learning process (Zepke & Leach, 2010). As educators in higher education, we can use a variety of methods to foster student engagement both in and outside of our classrooms. To explore this idea further, we hosted an unconference session on student engagement at the University of Calgary 5th annual Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching, May 2017. An unconference session provides participants an opportunity to discuss and learn more about a particular topic without being restricted by a set structure. We used a ‘world-café’ approach, where participants moved around in small groups at set times, discussed questions and shared insights with the larger group. Specifically, participants rotated in small groups to discuss the following three predetermined questions:

1. What does student engagement mean to you in your course?
2. How do you foster student engagement?
3. What have your challenges and successes been?

Three themes on student engagement emerged from the discussion: having a sense of belonging to a community, active learning strategies or activities with which both instructors and students engage, and students having transformative experiences. A commonality among these themes is that both the instructor and the student play essential roles. Additionally, the themes from our unconference session align with learner-centered principles identified in research on higher education (Kenny, 2014).

These themes are discussed in more detail below:

### **Community:** *Fostering a community that encourages student engagement*

Participants saw the process of building a community within the classroom as a great strategy for student engagement. They identified the merits of other processes, such as building safe and collaborative learning environments, acknowledging different experiences, including students in discussion about expectations, and connecting with students by using their names. Participants mentioned other strategies for building communities, including being explicit with students about the importance of being engaged, facilitating classroom discussions about engagement, demonstrating enthusiasm as an instructor and supporting students in the learning process. In return, participants believe that in order to be engaged in the classroom, students need to be motivated, active learners, and to have enthusiasm for their own learning.

### **Strategies and Activities:** *Engaging students in the classroom using active learning strategies*

For participants in our session, getting students engaged in classrooms involved the use of various strategies and activities. Examples of strategies included using hooks (teaching strategy used to engage students at the start of a lesson) to captivate students and increase curiosity in learning; providing clear explanations of intended learning outcomes; and giving students feedback on their learning. Another example was connecting student learning to real-world contexts so that students can see the relevance of their learning (for example,

using authentic case studies in small groups, assigning roles to students for structure during analysis, and inviting students to present on current issues related to learning). Other strategies include using in-class activities such as interactive questions, TopHat (audience response system) for immediate feedback and discussion prompts, peer instruction such as jigsaw (students hold discussions on a section of a topic, then form new groups with each individual relating their section of a topic to the group), competitions and the use of creative projects.

### **Transformative:** *Making learning a transformative experience*

Transformative learning experiences occur when students experience fundamental shifts in their thinking, when their thinking becomes broader, more reflective and inclusive (Henderson, 2012; Brock, 2009). Participants in the unconference described transformational changes in student attitudes toward learning. These changes included increased confidence in student engagements, both with one another and toward the material. Students were also more likely to ask questions, demonstrate interest in content beyond the assessments, and exhibit receptive behavior to new or differing ideas. Student transformation also included critical and creative thinking, challenging concepts, and having a passion for learning. One participant summarized the notion of transformative learning with the following description: “students are not the same people by the end of the course or even a class.” Some practical strategies to encourage such transformation included the use of reflective questions or other reflective exercises, and challenging students to make connections to other course content or experiences.

While reflecting on our un-conference experience, it became apparent that student engagement means different things to different people across diverse contexts. However, we found a common thread woven into participants’ discussions: the strategies that educators use to promote good learning also promote student engagement. Conversely, student engagement is about both the instructor and students being engaged.

\* Adapted from a previous publication in the TI Connections Newsletter, March 22, 2018 edition

## AN INTRODUCTION TO UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING (UDL)

Dr. J. A. Gilles Doiron

Based on universal design principles for designing user-friendly buildings and ergonomic manufactured goods, UDL was created to address the design of social interactions such as human learning environments. Anne Meyer, David Rose and their colleagues at the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) developed the three-part UDL framework in the 1990s and the UDL movement has since gained momentum in the USA through the National Universal Design for Learning Taskforce.

The UDL framework is grounded on the contemporary constructivist approach to teaching and learning and is aimed at providing learners with multiple means of “Engagement” - ways of tapping into learners' interests and motivating them to learn; “Representation”

ways of acquiring information and knowledge; and “Action &

Expression” - ways of demonstrating what they know. The goal of UDL is to develop learners who are purposeful and motivated, resourceful and knowledgeable, and strategic and goal-directed.

CAST guidelines for the implementation of UDL focus on the “Why”, “What” and “How” of learning.

The “Why” of learning (“Engagement”) should provide options for optimizing individual choice and autonomy, and offer relevance, value, and authenticity while minimizing threats and distractions. It should look to sustaining effort and persistence by providing periodic or persistent “reminders” of both the goal and its value, a variety of demands and

resources to optimize the challenge, opportunities that foster collaboration and community, and abundant mastery-oriented feedback. Learners should also be provided with opportunities that promote self-regulation, optimize motivation, facilitate personal coping skills and strategies, and develop self-assessment and reflection.

The “What” of learning (“Representation”) should provide options for optimizing what is to be learned. This can be done by offering ways of customizing the display of information and allowing for auditory and visual learning preferences (using multiple media). Language issues such as second language concerns and clarifying vocabulary, symbols, syntax and structure, as well as the decoding of text, mathematical notation and symbols need to be addressed. Learners should be provided with options for understanding what they are learning by having access to pre-requisite background knowledge, key features, big ideas, and relationships, support for information processing and visualization, and appropriate strategies to

maximize transfer of knowledge and generalization.

The “How” of learning (“Action & Expression”) should not only provide options for optimizing actions, expressions and communications, but also include assistance in setting long-term goals and effective planning strategies for reaching those goals, monitoring progress, and modifying strategies as needed. Learners should have access to tools with various means of response and when needed, appropriate assistive technologies. They should be provided with multiple media options for communication, various tools for construction and composition, and extensive scaffolding designed to support practice and develop independence.

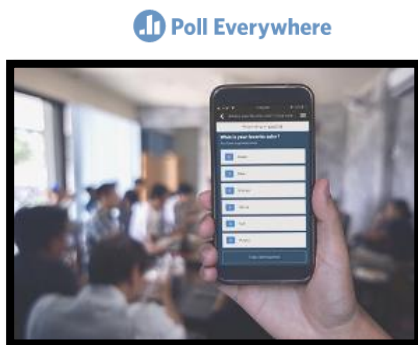
According to CAST, the UDL guidelines “offer a set of concrete suggestions that can be applied to any discipline or domain to ensure that all learners can access and participate in meaningful, challenging learning opportunities”. Sounds interesting? You can access more complete information on UDL at <http://udlguidelines.cast.org/> and on CAST at <http://www.cast.org/>.

If you would like to know more or discuss this or related topics with us? Come on over to CTL for a chat or contact us for a meeting (Dr. Frances Kalu, [fukalu@ucalgary.edu.qa](mailto:fukalu@ucalgary.edu.qa); Dr. Gilles Doiron, [jagilles.doiron@ucalgary.edu.qa](mailto:jagilles.doiron@ucalgary.edu.qa)).



## TRANSFORM ACTIVE LEARNING IN THE CLASSROOM: USING POLL EVERYWHERE

Amber Smith



In my experience, getting the attention of students or any audience can be a lot of fun in the classroom, especially through the use of Audience Response Systems (ARS). The use of ARS has gained popularity in nursing education primarily for its dynamic approach to active learning. By asking for a response to a question or even a case study, the audience can actively participate. Active learning has been acknowledged for its student-centered learning ability, contributing to better retention and higher order thinking (Mareno, Bremner & Emerson, 2010). The use of ARS as an active learning method also has been praised for enhancing the classroom environment positively (Firsing et al, 2018).

There are many types of ARS available for free for faculty to use. I have used ARS in the classroom (theory and clinical) and professional presentations. I have experimented mostly with 2 types: Socrative and Poll Everywhere. In my experience so far, Poll Everywhere is more enjoyable for two noteworthy features:

1. poll activities go beyond traditional polls and
2. polls can be inserted directly into PowerPoint slides.

In terms of poll activities, you can choose from a variety of polls activities such as colorful word clouds, clickable images, and ranking in order of priority just to mention a few. The latter feature of inserting polls into PowerPoint slides is the primary reason I highly recommend this software over other audience response systems. I can easily create and insert a poll directly into my presentation. Inserting polls into PowerPoint also helps me avoid the hassle of opening another web browser. In the past when switching screens to Socrative, I feel I lose students focus, waste time, and increase the risk of technical issues. Furthermore, the poll also opens for responses as you advance to the actual poll slide.

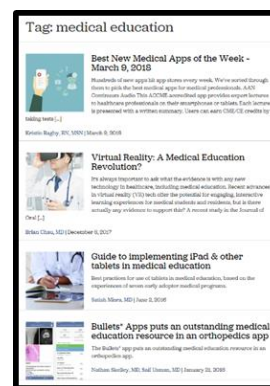
As student's responses to the polls starts coming in, the responses are animated and displayed on your slide during presenter mode. It is a surreal moment that is magical as it creates knowledge. Personally although I use it primarily to get opinions and assess learning based on consensus from the classroom, the process of getting to the consensus is admirable. This opinion is based on the fact that during the poll, learners are captivated and engaged by seeing the responses fluctuate as individual students respond. Meaning is created as students discuss and argue about the results as it is graphically displayed on the screen. For example, at first 100% of the votes may agree on Option A, but in a split second Option A may fall to 25%, as the number of votes are compiled and students respond with differing opinions for instance choosing Option B.

## Tips for use:

I recommend participating in a presentation using Poll Everywhere to get a feel for how it works. There is a bit of a learning curve but don't despair. The website has many instructional videos and ideas for use. Before using it, you do have to create an account. In addition, be sure to download the add-on Poll Everywhere for PowerPoint on the computer you are using. I forgot to do this my initial use on the classroom computer. With a Google search of "Poll Everywhere Presenter", you will be able to find the download and install within minutes. Once downloaded you will need to sign-in. For Microsoft users, open your PowerPoint presentation and you will see in the upper right tool bar "pollev add-on". Mac users it looks slightly different. From here, you will be able to add existing questions or create new ones. I often utilize the available UCQ iPads for the classroom, which all have the Poll Everywhere App installed. This increases ease of use, where students simply enter your assigned username. Recently, Poll Everywhere reduced their free version to 25 persons and cannot create a pdf report. Alternatively, another ARS like Socrative may be a better option since reports can be created for test results for free. With the rapid growth in ARS, many are updating their services and although Poll Everywhere is only free for 25 persons it is definitely worth a try for captivating attention and active learning in the classroom

## iMedicalApps

Simon Heslup



New healthcare-related apps become available every day. Most are intended for use by healthcare providers or patients. However, many of these apps can also be useful in education contexts. In the classroom, instructors can integrate apps into lessons to support active learning (Brooks, 2016). Outside of the classroom, apps can foster independent learning (Ting, 2015). But if new healthcare apps become available every day, how are busy instructors to keep up to date?

At iMedicalApps ([www.imedicalapps.com](http://www.imedicalapps.com)), founded in 2009 by a medical student, contributors introduce and review various healthcare-related digital tools. Some of these apps are intended for healthcare providers, some for patients, some for educators, and some for students. The site is extremely user friendly, and new content is added every week. Users can search for apps by medical specialty, by device/platform, or by keyword. The reviews, which include the price of the app and information about where to download it, often include commentary based on the reviewer's (usually a doctor or a nurse) personal experience with the app.

The site is free to use and registration is optional. According to the site, registration allows users to access how-to videos, to post in the forums section (users can read posts without registering), and to receive the site newsletter. Although the site does contain advertising, it does not detract from the user's experience. The contributors associated with the site do not create apps themselves, and the site claims to enforce a strict conflict of interest policy writing.



## SPRING TERM CTL EVENTS

**Be on the lookout for CTL emails on the events below!**

**Check the SharePoint site for current dates, location and times -**

**<https://intranet.ucalgary.edu.qa/sites/ucq/default.aspx>**

### **Teaching Fellows – Community of Practice**

The main objective of the group will be to put together a dossier for the University of Calgary Teaching and Learning awards - <http://www.ucalgary.ca/taylorinstitute/awards-grants/teaching-awards>. These competitive awards celebrate excellence in teaching, leadership, team teaching, curriculum development amongst others. The Teaching Fellows group will be working towards putting together individual packages for submission in January 2019. Developing a dossier is also important to capture all that we do over time, for future growth and development. During the Teaching Fellow sessions, we will work through the various aspects of preparing for the nomination including articulation of a teaching philosophy statement, understanding what counts as evidence, how to collect, represent and align evidence, soliciting for support letters and putting it all together as a dossier. It is our hope that members of the group will become future ambassadors for teaching and learning.

This group is open to everyone interested in developing their teaching philosophy statement and dossier even if you are not applying for the awards.

***Facilitated by Dr. Frances Kalu***

### **Teaching During Ramadan**

Teaching during Ramadan may seem like a mystery at best or intimidating at worst. Faculty both new and seasoned may find it confusing to navigate the nuances of teaching at a time when opening hours are flipped and students only attend classes 5-6 hours per day. Grab a lunch and come chat with Haneen and Zohra to learn some general facts about what the holy month of Ramadan is, what it isn't, and what impact it has on teaching at UCQ. The presenters are by no means experts on the subject. However, having had many years of living, working and even studying in the region, they will share some of their experiences. Other experienced faculty interested in coming to share their experience are also encouraged and welcome to attend.

***Facilitated by Hanin Omar and Zohra Hasnani-Samnani***

### **Spring Writing Group Session – Community of Practice**

Are you working on an article, your thesis or dissertation? A writing group is a great opportunity to create time in your schedule for writing. This community of practice would have a 15 -20 minutes presentation and discussion, after which we will set SMART writing goals for the session and then WRITE. To register for the session, click on the link below: <https://goo.gl/forms/aDn9dAPXVhmg90yH2>.

***Facilitated by Dr.Frances Kalu and Carolyn Wolsey. Frances Kalu***

### **Book Club - Creative Teaching Strategies for the Nurse Educator**

We will make the most of our time together to focus on aspects of the book that are significant to us, create our own learning, share experiences and perspectives, and co-construct knowledge. Lunch will be served.

***Facilitated by Dr. Frances Kalu, Amber Smith and Raigne Symes***

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## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The purpose of *CTL Newsletter* is to share research, ideas, and insights into teaching and to build a community of educators.

The CTL extends a special thank you to the authors of this edition.

If you are interested in writing for the next edition, we are looking for contributors who have:

- successfully tried a new teaching idea in class
- observed a class that used a great teaching strategy
- tested a new assessment strategy that was successful
- attended a workshop at UCQ or elsewhere that others might find useful
- read an article about teaching that others should know about
- conducted research on their teaching that they would like to share.

### Submission guidelines

- All articles must be related to teaching, the scholarship of teaching and learning, or education and they must be relevant to the UCQ context.
- If citations are used, they must be formatted according to APA style.
- All articles submitted are subject to editorial review.
- The deadline for submission for the next edition is Oct. 1, 2018.

If you would like more information, want to discuss your ideas, or are interested in becoming part of the editorial board for the newsletter, please contact Dr. Frances Kalu, [fukalu@ucalgary.edu.qa](mailto:fukalu@ucalgary.edu.qa), Dr. Gilles Doiron, [jagilles.doiron@ucalgary.edu.qa](mailto:jagilles.doiron@ucalgary.edu.qa) or Angela Waigand, [auwaigan@ucalgary.edu.qa](mailto:auwaigan@ucalgary.edu.qa).