



**Curiosity and Inquiry Based Learning
in Higher Education: A Working
Conference**



Tues. Oct. 10, 2017
University of Calgary
Taylor Institute for Teaching &
Learning, University of Calgary

Agenda

Inside Back Cover
Inside Front Cover

8:30-9:00	Registration	
9:00-9:10	Welcome	Opening Remarks
	Beth Archer-Kuhn, FSW, UCalgary, Stacey MacKinnon, Curiosity Project, UPEI, Natasha Kenny, PhD, Taylor Institute	
9:10 - 9:40	Keynote Speaker	
	Dr. Stacey MacKinnon, UPEI	
9:40 - 10:10	Presentation #2	
	Kim Grant, PhD student, Werklund School of Education, UCalgary, Jeff Turner, PhD student, Werklund School of Education, UCalgary	
10:10 - 10:20	Break	Refreshments
10:20 - 10:40	Presentation #3	
	Yeonjung Lee, PhD, FSW, UCalgary, Beth Archer-Kuhn, PhD, FSW, UCalgary, Jacky Liu, MSW student, UCalgary	
10:40 - 11:10	Presentation #4	
	Sarah-Lynn Boyle University of Guelph, MA Clinical Psychology: Applied Developmental Emphasis	
11:10 - 11:55	Presentation #5	
	Olivia Cullen, PhD student, FSW, UCalgary, Jeff Halvorsen, PhD student, FSW, UCalgary, Quan Nguyen, PhD student, FSW, UCalgary, Natalie St-Denis, PhD student, FSW, UCalgary, Christine Walsh, PhD, FSW, UCalgary	
12:00 -1:00	Lunch	
1:00 - 2:00	Workshops	
	Presentations #6, #7, #8	
	Robin Mueller, PhD, Taylor Institute, UCalgary, Stacey MacKinnon, PhD, UPEI, Beth Archer-Kuhn, PhD, UCalgary	
2:00 - 2:15	Break	Refreshments
2:15-2:45	Facilitated Discussion Re: Interest Groups Virtual Learning Sites,	Stacey MacKinnon, PhD, UPEI
2:45-3:30	Interest Group Discussions	All participants
3:30-3:45	Large Group	Beth Archer-Kuhn, PhD, UCalgary
3:45-4:00	Closing Remarks	
Evaluation	Robin Mueller, PhD, Taylor Institute, UCalgary	

Keynote Speaker:

Stacey Mackinnon, PhD

Stacey MacKinnon, PhD, (Associate Professor of Psychology and Coordinator of First Year Inquiry Studies at UPEI) will share her research and observations of over eight years of “The Curiosity Project” from both the professor and students’ perspectives. This will include a discussion of the a) assumptions educators make regarding students’ beliefs about inquiry and the development of First Year Inquiry Studies at UPEI, b) the importance of approaching inquiry as a learner mindset, not just a set of skills and its relation to knowledge transfer across time and content areas, and c) the challenges faced by instructors in higher education who want to inspire greater inquiry in their classrooms.

Presentation #2 Getting started with Inquiry Based Learning: Multiple entry points from an instructor’s perspective.

Kim Grant, Jeff Turner: Inquiry Based Learning (IBL) is both a practice and a stance. In this presentation, two experienced educators will position IBL within Dewey’s tenet of discovery learning, describe a pedagogical stance outlined by Parker Palmer that supports IBL, and outline multiple entry points into using IBL with students. Throughout, they will share stories of their own experiences as instructors.

Presentation #3 Exploring Inquiry-Based Learning in Social Work Education: Learnings on campus and abroad

Yeonjung Lee, Beth Archer-Kuhn, Jacky Liu: Studies on Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) in post-secondary education is limited, and is mostly absent in the literature on social work education. This presentation explores inquiry-based learning through a mixed methods study with undergraduate and graduate students in varied settings; on a group study program to the UK, and on Canadian campuses. We will provide a context to the pedagogical approach by reviewing specific teaching and learning strategies, and then provide the preliminary findings from our study. We conclude with our learnings from our exploration.

Presentation #4 Examining skill transference in the Curiosity Project

Sarah-Lynn Boyle: While curiosity has been associated with increased ability to think innovatively, find purpose and meaning in life, and improved physical and mental health, many of the traditional academic settings are not fostering or encouraging its development in students. In response to this, many dedicated and diligent instructors have made attempts to remedy this issue. For example, MacKinnon has worked to create a classroom environment and course structure that provides students with the space and the permission to be curious. She did so through the introduction of the Curiosity Project—a project in which students are instructed to select any topic of interest and explore it over the course of the semester. In response to students love and engagement with this first project, MacKinnon created a 400-level seminar course entitled “Curiosity: Theory and Practice,” students’ experiences of this second project will be the focus of this presentation. While participant’s first experience of the project were unanimously successful and positive, the experience of the second varied greatly. The purpose of this presentation is to discuss the factors that influenced participants’ experiences and more specifically consider the

participants’ experiences and more specifically consider the differences between those who had positive and negative perceptions of their Curiosity Projects. With this in mind, we will focus on students’ abilities or lack thereof to demonstrate skill transference between the two projects and how the experience of these differed between individuals.

Presentation #5 Indigenizing inquiry-based learning: Advancing and integrating Indigenous perspectives in social work education

Olivia Cullen, Jeff Halvorsen, Quan Nguyen, Natalie St-Denis, Christine Walsh: Inquiry-based learning (IBL) is a pedagogical approach used in higher education across disciplines to foster deep learning through student-centered, self-directed exploration of new knowledge by engaging students in critical thinking, reflection and collaborative work (Aditomo, Goodyear, Bliuc, & Ellis, 2013). Various IBL frameworks are currently being developed and assessed through the “examination of students’ experiences of IBL” and “impact on student learning outcomes” (Aditomo et al., p. 1239). IBL has shown promise in improving students’ knowledge and understanding within their area, as well as enhancing “critical thinking skills in order to better function in today’s working environment” (Friedman et al., 2010, p. 780). In response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action (TRC, 2015), the University of Calgary (2017) and others across Canada are exploring ways to decolonize and indigenize the delivery of their curriculum (Pete, 2016). Further, the Faculty of Social Work is in the process of developing an Indigenous Strategy (Walsh, Van Paten, St-Denis & Jerome, 2017) in the recognition of the professions’ historical and ongoing role in the oppression of Indigenous Peoples (Sinclair, Hart & Bruyere, 2009). It now has the responsibility to decolonize its curriculum to advance and integrate Indigenous worldviews for reconciliation and to respectfully support the healing journey of Indigenous Peoples. It is within this context that we are interested in determining if IBL can be usefully employed to integrate Indigenous worldviews and content in social work education. Indigenous epistemology embodies principles grounded in the relational, reciprocal, reflexive, and collective meaning-making within the constructs of our self-location, and self-in-relation (Kovach, 2009). Our inquiry seeks to determine if IBL can assist in engaging students to reflect, discuss, and develop a deeper understanding of Indigenous perspectives. It may be that integrating Indigenous perspectives within an IBL framework can provide a rich platform for social work students to both locate themselves and interrogate their role in decolonizing their professional practice. In this presentation, we introduce a critical analysis of the IBL approach and outline the foundations of Indigenous ways of knowing. We offer a case example of how IBL can be used to teach Indigenous worldviews in the social work classroom. Participants are then invited to consider how a similar approach can be used within their own settings. In small groups, workshop participants will work collaboratively to suggest opportunities for using IBL as a method for indigenizing curriculum within their own settings and disciplines. Each group will then be invited to share their findings to the larger group. Subsequent large-group discussions and reflections will be used to develop guidelines for this work.

Presentation #6 Facilitating Skill Development in Questioning through the Question Formulation Technique

Robin Alison Mueller: Regardless of the format that inquiry-based learning takes, it is enacted through developing questions that compel curiosity and critical examination. However, in practice students often struggle to develop effective inquiry questions, which poses a challenge for instructors who are attempting to get inquiry-based learning processes up and running in their classrooms. This challenge can be resolved by offering students skill building opportunities with respect to questioning so that they are better prepared to create excellent inquiry questions in alignment with their own intrinsic interests and curiosities. The Question Formulation Technique is a facilitation method that leads small groups of students through a semi-structured process to learn about questioning and to engage them in a process that they can use independently to develop effective questions. Participants in this workshop will learn about the origins and foundations of the Question Formulation Technique, and get first-hand experience as the presenter leads them through the process of engaging in the technique. By the end of this session, participants will be able to: (a) explain the role and significance of questioning in inquiry-based learning, (b) experience the Question Formulation Technique, and (c) facilitate the Question Formulation Technique with their own students.

Presentation #7 Getting Creative with Inquiry: What do you do when you can't do it the way it "should" be done?

Stacey MacKinnon: Many of the challenges faced by educators who want to incorporate more inquiry into their classrooms are grounded in infrastructure restrictions both in terms of classroom arrangement, personnel shortages, and attitudes of colleagues/administrators. In this workshop, participants will discuss the challenges they face to practicing and researching inquiry-based learning and possible solutions to them by thinking outside the traditional university structure and dynamic. A great choice for those who are newly entering or struggling with finding ways to incorporate more inquiry into their classes and research programs.

Presentation #8 Getting Started with Structured Controversy: A Springboard to Inquiry

Beth Archer-Kuhn: This experiential workshop provides participants an opportunity to experience the inquiry process as the students may experience it. Based on her writing, Structured Controversy. Inquiry-Based Learning in Place of Traditional Group Presentations, Dr. Archer-Kuhn will facilitate a brief overview of inquiry-based learning and the relevance for today's higher education classrooms. Next, participants will experience a shortened version of the structured controversy process. Finally, we will discuss the application of structured controversy to various disciplines, with next steps to supporting students in the inquiry process for your course.

Inside Back Cover