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# Fostering Deep Learning, Engagement, and Critical Thinking

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# DESIGN FOR LEARNING

FOSTERING  
DEEP LEARNING  
ENGAGEMENT  
AND CRITICAL  
THINKING

## 2015 Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching: Student/Faculty Panel Presentation

Design for Learning: Fostering Deep Learning, Engagement, and Critical Thinking.

Date: Wednesday May 13, 2015

Time: 9 am to 10:15 am

Location: MacEwan Ballroom, University of Calgary

Three student-faculty teams will share their perspectives, and experiences that address the components of the conference theme: fostering deep learning, engagement, and critical thinking.

<b>Student/Faculty Perspectives</b> <b>Design for Learning: Fostering Deep Learning, Engagement, and Critical Thinking. Panel Presentation 9 am-10:15 am</b>			
<b>CHAIR:</b> Cheryl Jeffs, EdD	Welcome & Introductions Q & A		
<b>FACULTY/DEPT</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Student</b>
Faculty of Science	<b>FOSTERING DEEP LEARNING</b>	Wendy Benoit, PhD	Megan Mah
Cumming School of Medicine	<b>ENGAGEMENT</b>	Ebba Kurz, PhD	Taylor Kemp
Faculty of Arts	<b>CRITICAL THINKING</b>	Patrick Finn, PhD	Anton de Groot

**DESIGN FOR LEARNING: FOSTERING DEEP LEARNING TEAM**  
**Wendy Benoit, PhD, Department of Chemistry and Natural Sciences, and Megan Mah, Biological Sciences student, Faculty of Science, University of Calgary**

**Description**

Reflective practices lead us to recognize our own deep learning experiences. We can then foster such experiences in our students by examining what we find to be most meaningful, and then using ongoing communication to know how students view and use these ideas. Our team will discuss strategies for fostering deep learning in a second-year organic chemistry course: scaffolding class content around student work, and using worksheets to frame a cycle of practice and feedback.

**Faculty**

**Wendy Benoit, PhD** is an Instructor in the Department of Chemistry and the Natural Sciences Program at the University of Calgary. She routinely teaches courses in organic chemistry as well as multidisciplinary courses on communicating science and approaching scientific problems. She is interested in building classroom experiences that connect students' current understandings with course content and provide multi-faceted avenues for feedback and reflection. Wendy is a recent recipient of a Students' Union Teaching Excellence Award.

**Student**

**Megan Mah** is a second-year student in Biological Sciences at the University of Calgary, majoring in Zoology. Megan's recent experiences during the Winter 2015 semester have deepened her approach toward her education. These experiences included active participation as a student in an organic chemistry course, as well as involvement as a curricular peer mentor for a biology course. In the future, Megan hopes to pursue a career in veterinary medicine or wildlife conservation.

## DESIGN FOR LEARNING: ENGAGEMENT TEAM

**Ebba Kurz, PhD, Bachelor of Health Sciences Program, and Taylor Kemp, Biomedical Sciences student, Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary**

### Description

Six “high-impact” practices have been defined and positively linked with student learning, retention and engagement. These include learning within a community of learners, engaging in research with faculty mentors, international experiences and culminating capstone experiences. Our team will discuss how these ‘high-impact’ practices have been integrated within and facilitated by the Bachelor of Health Sciences program and share their impact from the student perspective. We will also suggest ways in which these approaches can be incorporated across a diverse array of disciplines.

### Faculty

**Ebba Kurz, PhD** is the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Health and Science Education and Director of the O’Brien Centre for the Bachelor of Health Sciences Program in the Cumming School of Medicine. A cancer researcher in her ‘spare’ time, Ebba is a passionate educator and educational leader. She focuses her teaching and program development on providing and expanding opportunities for students to engage in high-impact practices, particularly in the domain of health research.

### Student

**Taylor Kemp** just completed her four-year Honours BHSc degree majoring in Biomedical Sciences and participated in many of the inquiry and research-based courses available in the program. She has worked with Dr. Faisal Khan in the field of clinical immunology since 2012 and was awarded summer studentships from Markin USRP in Health & Wellness, Calgary Laboratory Services, and the O’Brien Program for her research. In April, she successfully defended her undergraduate honours thesis.

## DESIGN FOR LEARNING: CRITICAL THINKING TEAM

**Patrick Finn, MFA, PhD, and Anton de Groot, MFA student,  
Faculty of Arts, School for Creative and Performing Arts, University  
of Calgary**

### Description

What exactly *is* critical thinking? Universities uniformly promote the idea that they must turn students into “critical thinkers.” What does that mean? Are we currently experiencing a shortage of critical thinkers that we must address? Are governments, not-for-profits and businesses clamoring for more critical thinkers? Do parents dream of raising critical thinkers? This session explores the value of critical thinking and asks how best to address its position in academic pedagogy.

### Faculty

**Patrick Finn, MFA, PhD** is an Associate Professor in the School of Creative and Performing Arts. His research focuses on the intersection of performance and technology where technology can be anything from alphabets to computer code. Finn divides his time between artistic practice and academic work. He is the artistic director of the Theatre Lab Performance Institute. His most recent book is *Critical Condition: Replacing Critical Thinking with Creativity* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2015).

### Student

**Anton de Groot** MFA student, is an award winning designer and creator based in Calgary. Select design credits include: Charlotte’s Web, Becky’s New Car (ATP); Travels With My Aunt (Vertigo Theatre); In the Wake, Good Fences, Sequence (Downstage); Mary Poppins (Theatre Calgary). He is also a co-producer of The Deep Field Podcast. Anton received his BFA from the University of Calgary in 2004 and will receive his MFA in Design and Technical Theatre in late 2015.