Everyone in the CAE wishes all of you a Happy and Healthy New Year. Stay safe!

CAE – 2020
Dan Rorai, Executive Director, CAE

Welcome to the Centre for Academic Excellence Newsletter! There's not much to write about 2020 and the protracted pandemic response, which has disrupted our work in a way none of us has ever experienced, that hasn't already been written, texted, emailed, or spoken with muffled voices through layers of mask. It's been a challenge to say the least. But you've risen to the challenge. On behalf of the CAE staff, thank you for all your efforts to maintain curriculum, push through program review activities, and attend PD sessions all while adapting to virtual delivery challenges.

It's certainly been a year of change for everyone, including the CAE. This September, the Finance Department's gain was the CAE's loss as Corey Pyne joined the Finance Team as Manager, Institutional Data and Enterprise Analysis. Along with his new role in Finance, Corey retains responsibility for IFS and KPI (now called Student Experience Survey or SES). We are sad to lose a wonderful colleague like Corey from our office, but we are also pleased that he has moved to a great team and will continue to make important contributions to the College in his new role. Best wishes Corey!

Also, this fall, the Marketing Department gained a valuable staff member when Ayla Kalayci moved from the CAE to her new position as Recruitment Officer in the Marketing Department. In addition to being a wonderful CAE team member, Ayla provided exceptional support to the CAE. Best wishes in your new role Ayla!

I am excited to welcome four new people to the CAE.

Lori Lanno joined the CAE as our Administrative Assistant replacing a parental leave in October. Lori is providing exceptional support to the CAE. Welcome Lori!

Laura Lucier has worked for the CAE in a variety of capacities since February. In September, Laura accepted the role of Curriculum Coordinator and is working with the School of Media Art and Design, School of Nursing, and School of Health Sciences. Laura has a Master of Library Science, exceptional experience in employment services, and is a current member of Council for the Town of Kingsville.

Crystal Kotow is currently working in the CAE for two days per week. She begins full-time hours in January when she will be working with the School of Engineering Technologies, School of Skilled Trades, and School of Academic Studies. Crystal has a Ph.D. from York University, and worked in curriculum development at George Brown College for over eight years.

Sandra Blais has worked in education for many years and was a program manager for the Greater Essex County District School Board for more than nine years. Sandra is working three days per week as our new Curriculum Administrator. In her role, Sandra will support program reviews through tracking and assist in keeping them on schedule. She will also facilitate and provide oversite for new program development. Sandra's role is an important piece in helping us prepare for the coming CQAAP audit.

Finally, the next exciting chapter for the CAE begins when Lindi Prendi takes over the role of Executive Director in January. Lindi brings a wealth of knowledge and skill to the role, having been a member of the CAE for over six years. She started her career with the College in the School of Engineering before coming to the CAE. Since arriving in the CAE, she has been a major architect of the Centre's processes and quality assurance efforts. Lindi's extensive experience with Curriculum Centres including work at the University of Windsor's Centre for Teaching and Learning allows me to leave the CAE with the confidence that it will have fantastic leadership for years to come. Congratulations Lindi!

I finish my role in the CAE at the end of this semester, but I will be at the college one day per week in January assisting with CQAAP. It's been such an honour and privilege to work in the CAE, and it feels impossible to adequately thank the multitude of people who supported me and made it all worthwhile. Thanks to all of you for the years of patience and support. I can't end this final contribution without again expressing the deepest gratitude for the special people that nominated me for the Administrative Excellence Award in 2018. It was truly a career highlight and a moment I'll never forget.

Happy Holidays everyone!

Dan Rorai

News From the QA Front
Lindi Prendi

This past year has been a busy and exciting year in the QA Front. The CAE has worked closely with the academic sector and other areas at the college in a number of quality assurance processes.

Cyclical Reviews - Cyclical reviews are a significant component of our quality assurance processes. Slowly they have become part of our institutional culture. Some statistics:

- 2020/2021 academic year: Cyclical Review Launch meetings for each Academic School were held in September/October. There were **23** programs scheduled for Cyclical Review this academic year, but **1** program was deferred to next year, so currently there are 22 programs undergoing review. The first cycle was completed for the majority of these programs in the 2015/2016 academic year. However, there are 4 new programs that are undergoing review for the first time.
- 2019/2020 academic year: **17** programs worked on the second cycle of the 5-year cyclical review. The first cycle was completed for the majority of these programs in the 2014/2015 academic year. Out of these programs **12** completed the review in June/September/October 2020 while **4** are close to completion of various phases and will soon enter the Final Report and Action Plan stage, and **1** was deferred to 2020/2021 review cycle.

Program Standards - Ministry (MTCU) directed changes include program standards updates. Some statistics:

- New standards are released for:
  - o Occupational Therapist Assistant / Physiotherapist Assistant
  - o Event Management
  - o Fitness and Health Promotion
  - o Web Development and Internet Applications

The new VLOs can be found on the program's website.

- Currently MCU has embarked on Standards Review/Update for:
  - o Child and Youth Care
  - o Interior Design
  - o Personal Support Worker

Program Charts - Feedback from all our quality assurance processes (Cyclical Review, Annual Review, PAC) often leads to curriculum changes. There were over **48** programs that underwent program chart changes for the 2020/2021 academic year. The new curriculum has been posted on the program's website and the program chart emailed to the academic department.

Reminder: the deadline for program chart changes for 2021/2022 academic year is First Week of January, 2021*.*

Course Outlines - Edits to course outlines are part of our continuous efforts to keep a program's curriculum up to date. Outlines for the new academic year rolled over in May 2020. Edits to course outlines are processed before classes start. After the course has run in the fall, winter or spring semesters, no edits to current version of the outlines will be processed until they rollover for the next academic year.

Reminder: the deadlines for submitting edits to existing outlines or new outlines created as part of new program chart changes are as follows:

a. Courses offered in Spring 2021 – Due date is 26 March 2021
b. Courses offered in Fall 2021 – Due date is 14 May 2021

Winter Start-Up PD
Neil Pettit

The Winter semester is almost here! The CAE is happy to host another round of professional development workshops during the start-up period. Although the focus of PD will be on online teaching, the CAE will be offering different streams of workshops in order to help align faculty expectations, various skill sets, and busy schedules.

Pedagogy. This stream will be made up of longer PD sessions (~90min) that will focus on theory of teaching & learning, but with practical elements as well.

Sprint. These sessions will consist of short demonstrations (~30min) and an optional question and answer period at the end of the session. Perfect for busy schedules!

Technology Showcase. These sessions will consist of a ~30min demonstration of a helpful technology followed by a guided sandbox where participants can test out the technology. Have you used a helpful technology this past semester? Do you wish to share with colleagues? Reach out if interested (npettit@stclaircollege.ca, ext 2999).

Asynchronous. There are many helpful videos posted on the SCC Training Centre and many more will be posted over the Winter Start-up period. You can view these sessions at your leisure.

Additionally, the CAE is teaming up with the University of Windsor's Centre for Teaching and Learning to deliver a workshop on the *Flipped Online Classroom.* More details to come; we are excited for this one!

If you have any questions, concerns, or feedback related to professional development that you would like to share, do not hesitate to shoot me an email (npettit@stclaircollege.ca) or phone call (ext. 2999).

A "Requisite" Project
Laura Lucier

Many of you will be aware that all Pre- and Co-Requisite Courses will soon be available on the public-facing website. This will be particularly helpful to current and future students as they navigate their path through a program. It also means that there will likely be more attention to, and possibly more scrutiny of, these courses.

In order to ensure the most accurate and up-to-date information is available, a college-wide review of requisites for all programs was completed this fall. I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who, in the midst of what may have been the busiest semester ever, took the time to assist with this major undertaking. Thank you! As a newer member of the CAE, I had very little experience with requisites prior to this project, but I can say with confidence that I now know more than I ever thought there was to know about pre- and co-requisites and I'd like to share a few things I learned:

1. Less is more. Requisites should not be designated unless absolutely necessary. The more requisites are identified, the more complicated it becomes for students and faculty.
2. Just because a course is a continuation of another course, doesn't mean the content of the first part is mandatory for success in the second part.
3. Links to CLO's are the best way to establish strong rationales but can be confusing. It's important to clearly identify the link from the requisite course to the identified course but also helpful to use words to describe the connection as well. Here's an example:

In MTH143 CLO2, students learn to solve linear equations necessary for MTH243 CLO1.

So, the good news is that all of the requisites currently identified in your program should be accurate. The other good news is that I have been designated as your go-to person for all things Requisite! I look forward to working with you and wish you all the best as you wrap up this crazy semester!

Dear Miss Fairness
Jill Jones
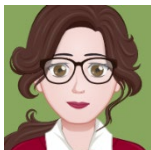
Dear Miss Fairness,
Three days ago, I discovered that my student copied portions of her research essay directly from internet sources. I emailed her immediately and asked her to explain what happened. I haven't heard back from her. I just want this dealt with and off my desk. What do I do?
~Frustrated in the Ford Centre
Dear Frustrated,
The College Policy says that faculty members have 10 days to notify the student of an academic misconduct penalty and that they should speak with the student before making a final determination. The professor could email the student, explaining the finding of plagiarism and give a deadline for responding, noting that if no response is received the incident will be recorded in the College Database. Or, perhaps, rather than emailing the question, the professor could send a meeting request for a specific time and date, explaining the need to speak with the student about their assignment, and including a line that says something like: *Failure to attend this meeting may impact the grade you receive for Assignment X*. Miss Fairness tries to remember that students are not skilled in prioritizing tasks and they may not appreciate the urgency of the situation. Having said all that, if the student fails to respond to the professor, the Policy clearly states that the professor can move forward with a penalty.

Dear Miss Fairness,
For the second semester in a row, I have had several incidents of cheating on the mid-term test. I don't want to deal with this all the time. How do I get students to stop cheating?
~Exhausted Educator
Dear Exhausted Educator,
Unfortunately, Miss Fairness doesn't think there is a way to stop cheating altogether; for as long as there has been formalized education, there has been cheating behaviour. There are a couple of ways to reflect on this situation. Students often focus on getting a good grade or on the earning the course credit, rather than learning. Connecting the content of the course directly to the industry, within which the students want to work, will help them to value the things they are learning; hopefully, they will come to understand the impact of not knowing the content upon graduation. For instance, Miss Fairness doesn't care to imagine what would happen if students who graduate from the Pharmacy Technician program cannot accurately calculate dosages of medication. Nor does Miss Fairness care to imagine her home being designed by an architectural technology graduate who is not knowledgeable in Ontario's Building Code. From another perspective, perhaps moving away from a traditional test and designing a project-based assignment will allow students to engage with material in a meaningful way. Miss Fairness's friends in the CAE can help with this.

Dear Miss Fairness,
Every time my family orders pizza, the only topping my children will eat is pepperoni. How is this fair to the parents in the family?
~ Pepperoni Pizza Parent
Dear Pepperoni,
Your question made Miss Fairness laugh; she wants to know who told you anything about parenting is fair? Miss Fairness suggests making individual pizzas at home; this way, everyone can make one with their favourite toppings. When time doesn't permit, Miss Fairness orders two medium pizzas, instead of one large: one for the adults, one for the pepperoni-loving children.

Do you have a question for Miss Fairness? Contact her here.
Confidentiality ensured.

Yikes! Group Work!
Linda Hill

There can be many benefits of assigning group work, including the opportunity to achieve more as a group than by working independently. Hypothetically, group work *could* also reduce one's marking load, depending on how the assignment is structured. More often than not, faculty spend a considerable amount of time supporting conflict resolution between group members, addressing the unequal distribution of work, and coaching students struggling with strong personalities in their group. It doesn't take long to realize that many college students are not yet equipped with the group skills employers seek. While we might be tempted to abandon group work altogether, The Framework for Programs of Instruction, the Minister's Binding Policy Directive, lists group skills as an essential skill that college students must achieve to qualify for graduation (p.5).   Group skills must be taught and assessed until students can reliably demonstrate them. Feedback is essential to the development of this skillset. In this issue, I'm sharing a non-exhaustive list of group skills for consideration and encouraging my colleagues to collaborate in the determination of where group skills fit in their program. Please note that some group skills are better suited than others, given the assessment strategies selected for the course. For your convenience, the skills have been written as EKS statements.

- Listen actively while other group members are speaking.
- Ask questions to clarify ideas contributed by others in the group.
- Paraphrase what was said to check understanding with members of the group.
- Collaborate to determine which form of communication the members of the team will use.
- Select and use exercises designed to build cohesiveness within the group.
- Use digital icebreakers to help members of virtual teams get to know each other.
- Document the use of the Six-Step Approach to Conflict Resolution when resolving disputes among the team.
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of individual team members through critical self-reflection of incidents or by using self and peer assessment tools.
- Develop a team charter that defines group objectives, roles, and standards for quality of work.
- Use the group charter to promote accountability and direction.
- Assign various roles to group members, such as Belbin's Team Roles
- Analyze group cohesiveness using the five stages within Tuckman's Model of Group Development.
- Examine strategies for working through the Storming Stage.
- Critically reflect upon the values and beliefs related to teamwork held by various members of the group.
- Compare and contrast cultural differences in demonstrations of respect.
- Discuss cultural differences in time management and how these might impact workflow.
- Collaborate to determine which tasks each member will adopt.
- Assign tasks that build upon strengths and develop weaknesses of group members.
- Use apps to organize tasks and to-do lists such as Asana, Basecamp, Trello or Planner within Office 365.
- Employ a model to guide groups in collaborative decision making
- Provide constructive feedback to peers about group skills to promote the development of the skillset.

Recommending Reading: How to Structure and Implement Group Work in Individual Courses.

Kappel, C. (2019). How to spark joy in the Groan Zone of collaboration. National Centre for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis.

Millis, B. (2014). Using cooperative structures to promote deep learning. Journal of Excellence in College Teaching, 25(3&4), 139-148.

Oakley, B., Felder, R. M., Brent, R., & Elhaji, I. (2004). Turning student groups into effective teams. Journal of Student-Centred Learning, 2(1), 9-34.

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