

Seneca | Academic Newsletter

 June 2018

From Laurel's Desk

Convocation season will arrive in three weeks. Once again, we will be celebrating the achievements of our newest alumni, the Class of 2018.

While much will be remembered about the 2017-18 academic year, and some of those memories are very difficult, I would like to focus on the resilience and accomplishments of our students and employees.

Individual students, student teams, and faculty were recipients of a number of awards and recognition at the provincial, national, and international levels. Student teams made an impact within their local communities through programs, such as Seneca360.

We continue to develop opportunities for our students to experience other cultures through a variety of means, including travel abroad for competitions, short courses or full semester study abroad, international pathways upon graduation, and, for those who are unable to travel, connecting with international partners using technology. In this issue, Professor Holly Cybulski (on page 4) writes about how she and a colleague at Artevelde University College in Ghent, Belgium designed an experience for their students to learn together without getting on a plane.

At the provincial level, we are working with Canadore, Cambrian, Lambton, and Fleming Colleges to design flexible learning opportunities that will enable students to complete programs where there are challenges with critical mass or accessing new pathways. Closer to home, we have entered into an agreement with Humber that signals a new way of working together to further polytechnic education in Ontario. All of these partnerships, which are based on the principle of collaboration over competition, will present new opportunities.

The Academic College Council (ACC) played an important role in the significant policy work we have undertaken this past year. ACC members have participated in working groups to review and revise policy and procedures. All members have participated in the discussion of new or revised draft policies as we move these through the approval process. ACC agendas, minutes and meeting documents, including the aforementioned policies, are posted on the [ACC website](#).

We have launched new programs, developed more that will be launched over the next year, and have more under consideration. We are in the final stages of drafting our Digital Learning Strategy, which will guide our approach to the development and support of high-quality technology-enhanced learning experiences for our students.



Photo credit: Jordann Rae, student in the Independent Digital Photography Program

Seneca

While these initiatives help to contribute to the vibrancy of Seneca, they pale in comparison to the work that is done by faculty and staff each and every day. You model professionalism, creativity, and resilience, and serve as mentors that our students and graduates will remember for years to come.

Thank you for your contribution to the Class of 2018!

Laurel

In this Newsletter

International Partnership Creates Global Classroom

Professor Holly Cybulski describes her pilot project from Fall 2017 where she and a professor from Artevelde University College in Belgium designed a transatlantic collaborative project for their students.

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Academic College Council Update

ACC Chair, JoAnn Purcell, provides an update on the policy work the Council has undertaken this year. There is also a call for new members.

[Read more](#)

Academic Policy Revisions and Development

This article gives more details on the policy being done in ACC this year: see the new and revised policies, and learn more about the process.

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New Communications Course

Learn more about the new communications course, COM101: Communicating across Contexts, and the research behind its development.

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Pina Marinelli-Henriques highlights the updates to Riipen since it was introduced, including placement on My.Seneca, as well as some upcoming informational webinars.

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My.Seneca Upgrade

We upgraded to a new version of My.Seneca in early May. Here is an overview of the changes and new features.

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Removing Barriers to Employment

Seneca is partnering with Specialisterne and SenseAbility to reduce the barriers that traditional recruitment and hiring processes may create for some individuals.

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Meet the Career Development Team

Susan Thomas introduces the Career Development Team, highlights the great work they have done this year, and discusses how they will continue to support students in the year ahead.

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Accessibility Program Sponsorship

Seneca recently received an accessibility program sponsorship commitment from CIBC. Daniel Fok provides a few examples of how Counselling and Accessibility Services, through this fund, can build on the accessibility offerings for our students.

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The Collaborative Inquiry Journey

Collaborative Inquiry is a structure for professional learning where educators come together to collaboratively investigate a focused aspect of their teaching practice.

[Read more](#)

Core Literacies Puzzle Solution and Winner

The March 2018 issue of the Academic Newsletter included a Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Puzzle. Find out who won and where everyone was located in the parking lot.

[Read more](#)

Academic Forum

Review the highlights from Academic Forum (held on April 30, 2018), watch videos from the keynote presentation and student panel, and access resources from the presenters.

[Read more](#)

Oral Communication Task

Are you ready for the Oral Communication task? We can't wait to "hear" from you!

[Read more](#)

Hybrid Course Design

Teaching & Learning has some resources to help you if you're thinking about hybrid course design.

[Read more](#)

Beyond Borders: International Partnership Creates Global Classroom

Holly Cybulski

With the rapid advancement of technology and the opportunities afforded with digital tools to expand communication channels, corporations are facing new challenges. Given differing time zones, language barriers, or cultural norms, the importance of strong internal communication channels and consistency in the organizational culture is a lifeline to institutional success. In response to the changing professional landscape, I saw an opportunity for student collaboration on a global scale (capitalizing on the academic partnership between Seneca and Belgium's Artevelde University College). I worked with Artevelde Professor Els Van Betsbrugge to design a transatlantic collaborative pilot project that offered real-life experience by integrating students from each institution to complete course deliverables.

For over a decade, Seneca and Artevelde University College have worked in partnership, offering international exchange opportunities for students. Expanding on the partnership, Professor Van Betsbrugge and I launched the pilot project in the Fall of 2017. The joint project allowed an entire class of Seneca post-graduate Corporate Communications students to work together with Belgian partners for one semester, while remaining in their home country.

One Belgian student was "thrilled to work with people on the other side of the world. Just to see a glimpse of the people from Canada (who are very warm) was a wonderful experience. It made me value the whole project more because we also had to provide the Canadian students with information to succeed."

The success of the project was in the simplicity of the assignment design. It allowed students to lead task completion and put the theory of internal communications into professional best practice. Studying internal communications and forming five teams per institution, each Seneca student group joined forces with an assigned Artevelde University College student group to create one singular team. Each international joint team worked together to meet course deliverables and study an external corporation, such as Weber Shandwick or Universal Music Group. The primary goal of the course deliverables was research to compare and contrast the professional internal communications in each office (Belgian versus Canadian) of an assigned international company. In addition to encouraging academic excellence, this international project offered students a competitive professional advantage on a global scale.

One participating Seneca student believed "gaining experience that I can put on my resume – saying that I was able to work with international counterparts – is a big deal with entry-level positions."

Throughout the semester, the students worked together as a unified single entity. In an effort to diversify the student skill set, Professor Van Betsbrugge and I set up the project with varied assignment deliverables; these included both academic skills and professional tactics that the students can include in their portfolios. To determine standards of conduct and method of communication to maximize interaction and productivity, student tasks also incorporated the

development of an internal communication policy. The learning outcomes were equally diversified to include understanding the function of internal communications within an organization.

The student enthusiasm was palpable, expressing a mixture of both excitement and trepidation to embark on a global project. Following the conclusion of the project, many students demonstrated an inspiring commitment to task completion, independently working with partners above and beyond the course requirements. In fact, some participants expressed great pride in the project completion and were moved by what they had accomplished. Professor Van Betsbrugge and I hope to continue utilizing technology in an effort to create a global classroom and expand this project in the Fall of 2018.

Academic College Council Update

JoAnn Purcell

What a year it has been! With the summer semester underway, I think we can finally say we are back on track, at least in terms of the academic schedule.

Last September, Academic College Council (ACC) began with the lofty goal of reviewing and revising all the academic policies by the end of the school year in June. This monumental task has been diligently chipped away at by Council with working groups, discussions, and consultations with best practice. Some policies have garnered unexpected discussions; for example, the Promotion Committee policy. Like most policies with a level of complexity, an ACC working group was struck to look at the language to bring it up-to-date. Since the implementation of i3, with its new processing capabilities, the end-of-semester promotion committee has evolved in a myriad of ways across the college. When the working group brought their revisions back to ACC, there was considerable discussion around the composition and value of the promotion committee with suggestions for possible directions going forward. This discussion highlighted that practice often evolves outside of prescriptive policies and only when it is re-presented to a diverse group, such as ACC members, does the wide range of practices become evident. The key point in the revision of this policy was to leave the language open enough to allow for the differences, but still capture the essence of the policy and include an approved name change to 'Promotion Process.'

With one more meeting in June before the summer break, a few more policies will likely receive endorsement at ACC, after which they will be sent to the next administrative level for final approval, then included in the new policy portal, expected to launch at the end of July, and published for implementation at the beginning of the school year in September. As policy changes can only be published once a year, anything that doesn't get wrapped up and approved will continue to be worked on and fleshed out for implementation the following year. For example, the work to completely overhaul of the Academic Honesty policy has begun. That sub-committee presented some foundational changes at the May meeting, beginning with the policy name change to 'Academic

Integrity’ reflecting the philosophical shift. This policy will require the investment of more time to create a guide that is in line with current scholarship and best practices.

In closing, I’d like to again refer back to the foundations of academic policies in the *Basic Documents relating to Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology* written in June 1967 – 51 years ago – with a phrase that seems even more true today: “The world in which we live and must make our way is one which demands an ever-changing pattern of occupations and rising levels of skills.” As such, the work of revising and updating the academic policies will never be done in a dynamic and responsive institution like Seneca.

Wishing you all the very best for the summer, wherever it takes you!

Attention faculty from Seneca Business: there is one (1) vacancy on Academic College Council for the 2018-2019 academic year.

Attention faculty from the Faculty of Communication, Art and Design: there is one (1) vacancy on Academic College Council for the 2018-2019 academic year.

If you are interested in representing your faculty area on Academic College Council, please visit the [Academic College Council website](#) for the terms of reference, schematic, and other relevant information, and email Cristina Arlia (Cristina.Arlia@senecacollege.ca) and JoAnn Purcell (JoAnn.Purcell@senecacollege.ca).

Academic Policy Revisions and Development

One of the key projects for Academic College Council (ACC) over the 2017-2018 academic year has been revising the existing academic policies and developing new policies to fill gaps.

Seneca’s current Academic Policy document has developed over several decades. Our approach in the past was to have it in one comprehensive document (now existing only as a web-based document) consisting of both policy and procedural elements and a number of appendices. Over the years, changes to the policy document have been driven by changes to systems, issues identified by various groups, or issues identified by regulatory requirements, to name a few.

The recent College Quality Assurance Audit Process (CQAAP) audit identified policy review and audit trail, as well as gaps in policy, as areas for improvement. Since then, Seneca has moved to transferring all college policies to a new policy template. This new template ensures that we have a revision history, a review timeline, definitions, and a clear separation of policy and procedure for each policy. ACC discussed the current academic policy document and recommended that Seneca begin the process of uncoupling the academic policy document into several distinct policies with associated procedures.

It started with an environmental scan and analysis to benchmark Seneca's existing policy elements against a selection of colleges and universities for the purposes of identifying similarities, differences, and gaps. ACC then began its comprehensive review of the academic policy document. They examined each element of the document and determined which ones were policies and should be converted to the policy template. The review revealed that many of the articles in the current academic policy document are informational or procedural pieces that belong in other documents. Once the policies were separated and put into the policy template, ACC could better identify which policies needed to be revised and which new policies needed to be developed.

The following sections of academic policy were revised as individual policies:

- Admissions
- Transfer Credit
- Prior Learning Assessment Recognition
- Course Outlines
- Residency Requirement
- Libraries
- Copyright
- Full Disclosure on Transcripts

A few policies are still being revised: Attendance and Participation, Academic Integrity, Academic Appeals, and Grades and Examinations.

And two policies have been developed to fill a gap identified in the CQAAP audit: the Employee Academic and Professional Credential policy, and the Student Assessment policy.

These new and revised policies will be available when Seneca's new policy portal launches (end of July 2018) and will be effective September 2018. In the meantime, these policies are posted on the [Academic College Council website](#).

One of the new policies developed this year is the Student Assessment policy. The CQAAP audit panel recommended Seneca develop an institution-wide student assessment policy that outlines the expectations of assessment practices for:

- Relative weighting of assessments
- Adequate assessment and feedback by certain points of the course (e.g., before the withdrawal deadline)
- Variety of assessment methods
- Promptness of communicating assessment marks
- Provision of constructive, developmental feedback

This policy provides a framework for student assessment and supports consistent assessment and evaluation practices across Seneca.

New Communications Course

Jean Choi, John Stilla, Maxine Britto, Kiley Bolton, Jamie Zeppa

As of Fall 2018, Seneca will be implementing a new communications course, **COM101: Communicating across Contexts**, for students enrolled in certificate, diploma, and advanced diploma programs. The new course will replace the EAC150 course. The course was designed by the Communications Working Group, comprising faculty and administrators from the English and Liberal Studies (ELS) schools serving all campuses and programs. The course focuses on a skills-based approach to writing emphasizing transferability (e.g., [Tinberg, 2017](#); [Yancy, Robertson & Taczak, 2012](#)). The group received input and feedback from the ELS faculty and the program areas, and this has informed the development of the course.

Why a new course? There are many factors contributing to the review and renewal of the course. As many of you are aware, the current EAC150 has hundreds of sections that are offered across Seneca, and greater consistency of the course content is needed. This review and renewal process also provides the opportunity to use current research to inform the design of a new course that will help students become better communicators.

What does the research show? Numerous studies have shown that if we want students to carry writing skills beyond the one-semester boundary of our courses, we need to explicitly teach for transfer. Three approaches have been found to facilitate this transfer of skills:

- helping students develop meta-cognition around writing and language (for example, knowing which questions to ask when they are faced with a new writing task and being able to reflect on their own writing choices) ([Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010](#); [Clark & Hernandez, 2012](#); [Devitt, 2014](#); [WPA 2011](#))
- providing better revision opportunities ([Anson, 2014](#); [Sommers & Saltz, 2004](#))
- engaging students in more authentic forms of writing (for example, giving them the chance to practice a range of writing strategies, rather than just analyzing how other writers use those strategies) ([Fleming, 2014](#); [Graff, 2010](#); [Jackson, 2010](#))

As of Fall 2018, all first-semester students enrolled in certificate, diploma, and advanced diploma programs who meet the threshold score in the post-admissions skills assessment test will be enrolled into COM101. A reading bank, assessment bank, and faculty guide are being developed for all faculty who will be teaching the course. The Communications Working Group will continue to meet and consult with faculty and program chairs as the criteria for the course is finalized. The main communications of the development process are posted on the [ELS site](#) (you must be signed into My.Seneca to access the site).

Helping Students Navigate College Administration

Sharon Kinasz

As another academic year comes to a close, I thought it might be a good time to reflect on some of the milestones and system changes we have undertaken over the year to support the student experience and provide a seamless transition between administration and academics.

Our front-line services have moved to a more complete first-stop service model where we attempt to have the majority of a student's questions answered on their first visit with a staff member at the Registrar's Office. Our enrolment services representatives can answer general questions related to admissions, registration, and financial aid, so the student only has to speak to one person, not three. We have also changed our phone system within the Registrar's Office to ensure students have direct access to the areas they need to connect with without going through five other options.

Several new features have also been added to the online student centre to support a more self-serve approach where students are able to access the information they need when it is most convenient for them to do so. Applicants can track their admissions status to Seneca as soon as they receive their application acknowledgement. Applicants can now apply for awards and scholarships prior to being accepted and know before attending the amount of financial support they are likely to receive should they choose to attend. We have also implemented a new process to track a student's leave of absence and intent to enroll, providing better planning data for enrolment purposes.

At the end of the last semester, students were able to access their academic standing and advising comments as soon as their final grades were released without having to run an advising transcript. A more detailed billing statement will also be available at the end of August to detail how much funding a student is receiving relative to their tuition and program fees.

Plans are currently underway to implement an online enrolment verification letter and a new online registration process that will allow students to confirm their own registration and enrolment for RESPs and third-party scholarships. The Registrar's Office supports the academic operation of the college and tries to ensure students can focus on their academic responsibilities without being challenged by administrative detail.

If you have suggestions on improvements, we have an operational and academic support group that manages system and processes improvements and works with ITS to implement them. I would be happy to receive your input to add to the list of initiatives we have collected to date. Please forward your suggestions to Sharon.Kinasz@senecacollege.ca.

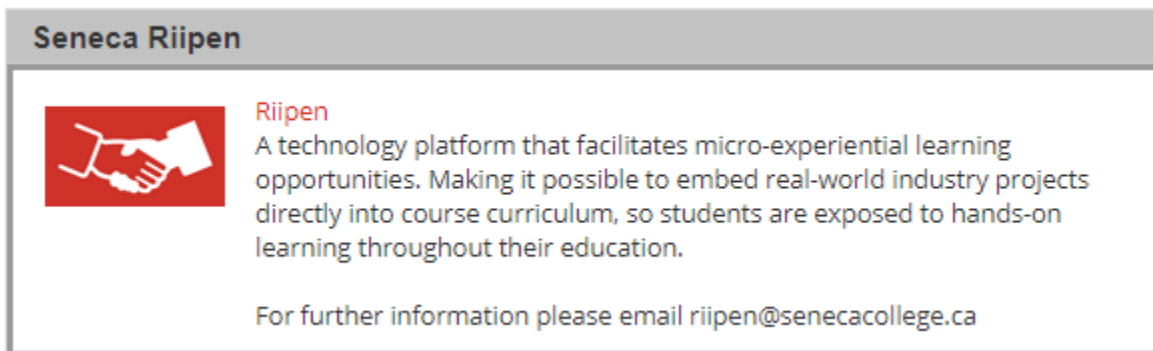
Experiential Learning: Riipen Update

Pina Marinelli-Henriques

In February 2018, Riipen was introduced to Seneca with the goal of creating opportunities for students to benefit from working on real-world challenges with a wide range of industry partners. These micro-experiences allow students to apply what they are learning and develop career networks

and employability skills. Several Seneca faculty are developing in-class projects and assignments. Take a look at the Seneca projects that have already been posted and create your own account through the [Seneca-Riipen portal](#). For inspiration, you can also explore examples of [in-class projects](#) and [assignments](#) in the Riipen library.

Currently, Riipen can be accessed through a link on the Employees landing page on My.Seneca:



The Seneca-Riipen portal in My.Seneca

In collaboration with ITS, Riipen will soon be integrated with My.Seneca courses. Some of the enhanced features will include a single sign-on, reducing the number of accounts on multiple platforms, and pass back of final grades from industry partners into My.Seneca's Grade Centre.

Employers in the following areas have recently approached the Seneca-Riipen team seeking opportunities to partner on an in-class assignment: Web Development, Market Research, Social Media, and Digital Media. If you are interested in participating or developing an in-class assignment in one of above industries, please email Pina Marinelli-Henriques (Pina.Marinelli-Henriques@senecacollege.ca).

Plans to engage students are underway. Our first interactive presentation during the new student orientation was extremely well attended and will continue to be offered. On **June 6, 2018**, Riipen will be at the Newnham Campus holding a student webinar series for international students. Students are introduced to the many options on Riipen, including open competitions, hackathons, and case competitions offered by industry partners. Students are also encouraged to develop their own challenges.

Register for upcoming webinars by clicking on the links below:

Riipen + Seneca: Experiential Learning Partnership – Tuesday, July 17, 2018 at 12:00 p.m.

Registration URL: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/db1383f9b72f47b77510d14dfea9e911>

Riipen + Seneca: Experiential Learning Partnership – Thursday, July 19, 2018 at 1:00 p.m.

Registration URL: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/05797b7e793b42197c24e00bf0acd2b8>

For more information about Riipen or support to set up an experiential learning opportunity, please email Pina Marinelli-Henriques (Pina.Marinelli-Henriques@senecacollege.ca).

My.Seneca got an Upgrade!

Andres Quintero

My.Seneca was successfully updated in early May. We are now using version Q4 2017 of Blackboard. In addition to bug fixes and enhancements, here are the new features and improvements:

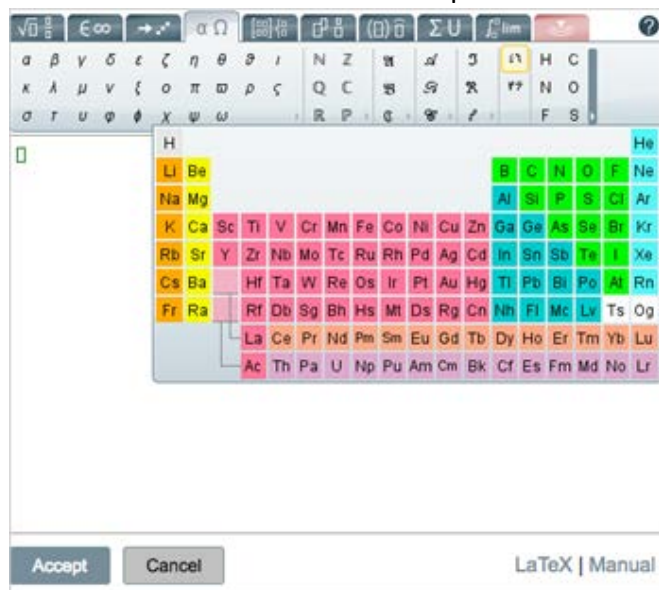
Submission Receipts: Students can receive a notification email for each assignment attempt with submission information (including the attached file); they can also access their submission receipts at any time on the My Grades page in the submissions filter area.

Support of Blackboard Ally

Learn 2016 Theme Improvements: For pages with tables, the course menu and My.Seneca pages are better optimized for hand-held devices that are not using the existing Blackboard mobile app.

Improved Grading with Rubrics: When grading with rubrics, we can now save our feedback and the content will remain saved when changing the rubric's view from in-line to full screen.

Chemistry Notation Support: The math editor in the Content Editor has been updated to a newer version of WIRIS. This version adds tools specific to chemistry including an embedded periodic table of elements.



Course Availability Status: We can see the availability of the course and can change the availability from the main course view.

SCORM Engine Update: The integrated SCORM player has been updated to a newer version that improves playback of responsive content and better supports SCORM packages in right-to-left languages such as Arabic.

Collaborate Ultra Support for Groups: Collaborate Ultra can now be used for synchronous meetings by Groups within a course.

Grade Display Standardization: All grade centre columns (online and downloads) and My Grades support up to five decimal points, are not rounded, and are consistent for all display types (score, percentage, letter grade).

Grade Center Clean Up: Multiple columns can be deleted at once from within the "Manage/ Column Organization" area. Columns created manually can be deleted. Columns associated with gradable items (Journals, Assignments, Wikis, Blogs, Tests, etc.) can be cleared of grade data but remain in the Grade Center (those can only be removed by removing the gradable item).

Blogs and Journals: Blogs and Journals have been optimized for use on mobile devices. Posts and comments composed with responsive content will render on smaller devices. Options for filtering posts or navigating groups or users will appear below currently viewed posts.

Discussion Board "Replies to Me": Keeping up with large Discussion Board forums is easier as participants can now view a count and can filter to just view any new replies.

If you have any questions, please email Seneca Blackboard Support (bbsupport@senecacollege.ca) and/or create a ticket with the Service Desk (servicedesk@senecacollege.ca or extension 22129).

Removing Barriers to Employment: Specialisterne and SenseAbility

Jennifer Graham

The Career Development and Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) teams have partnered with [Specialisterne](#) in order to provide options to students and recent graduates that identify with being on the autism spectrum or are living with other neurodiversities*. The goal of the partnership is to combine and leverage resources to reduce the barriers that the traditional recruitment and hiring process may create for some individuals.

Students and recent graduates that self-identify will be provided with the opportunity to participate in a workshop that helps to identify their strengths. Please watch the [Specialisterne Canada: Employ Different Thinking video](#) to see this in action. Engagement in pre-work preparation sessions followed by one-on-one on-site coaching will support a successful transition into the work place.

With support from Specialisterne, we are simultaneously engaging our key industry partners to assist them to access this talent pool. An employer education event is planned for June 5, 2018.

We are currently developing an additional partnership with [SenseAbility](#) with the goal of replicating this process for students and recent graduates that self identify with other diverse abilities.

These new programs will not only provide our current WIL students with quality WIL experiences, but also attract students who may not have previously applied to optional WIL streams.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please email Jennifer Graham (Jennifer.Graham@senecacollege.ca).

*For the purposes of this program, neurodiversity can be defined to include but not be limited to conditions such as Autism, ADHD/ADD, PDD-NOS, OCD, Anxiety diagnoses, and similar ways of being.

Meet the Career Development Team

Susan Thomas

This year, Career Services changed its name to **Career Development** to better reflect our belief that career success is a developmental journey rather than a service delivered in a single appointment or workshop. With many staff changes, we are pleased to announce our new roster of career coordinators:

Newnham Campus

Hana El Kaissi (ext. 26098)

Felisha Ali (ext. 22932)

Juliet Kaye (ext. 77193)

Richard Lue (ext. 22934)

Seneca@York Campus

Chris Magos (ext. 33124)

Richard Lue (ext. 22934)

King Campus

Beverley Stevens (ext. 55007)

Markham Campus

Juliet Kaye (ext. 77193)

For a complete list of the programs each coordinator supports, please see the [Career Development Coordinators Program List](#).

In the year ahead, we will continue to offer classroom support for faculty in workshops and online resources focusing on career strategies for students. Both customized and standard workshops can be delivered on topics such as resumes and cover letters, job search strategies, interviewing, LinkedIn and social media networking, and on-the-job communication skills. Call your Career Development Coordinator directly to arrange an in-class session to meet your needs. Watch for new tip sheets and materials on our [Faculty Resources website](#).

Many thanks to the faculty who partnered with us in 2017/18 to host and facilitate a range of workshops and events. Successful collaborations included the Employer Interview Days. Events in Engineering, Finance, Information Technology, and Transportation and Customs resulted in over 50 employers hosting over 500 student interviews on campus. Employer and student feedback has been tremendous and we intend to expand this model of on-campus recruitment allowing students to see the employers of their choice and for employers to meet, interview, and potentially hire on the spot. If your area is interested in hosting something similar, please contact your Career Development Coordinator to begin the planning process.

Continue to refer your employer contacts to Seneca's online job posting site [SenecaWorks](#), where more than 7,000 jobs are posted annually and students and Alumni can easily access and apply to relevant postings.

Just a few of our positive student outcomes:

"Seneca's Career Development office was extremely helpful throughout my journey right from the resume critique to my selection into a leading organization in my field. I am thankful to all of you for your guidance and support."
—2017 Supply Chain Management Graduate

"I got a job offer from a company that I had an interview with on ICT Interview day. I would like to thank you and the Seneca Career Development team for providing this great opportunity. Again, thank you so much 😊."
—2018 Computer Networking and Technical Support Graduate

CIBC – Accessibility Program Sponsorship

Daniel Fok

We wanted to take the opportunity to let you know that Seneca has recently received a generous Accessibility Program sponsorship commitment of \$200,000 from Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC).

Through this sponsorship, Counselling and Accessibility Services (CnAS) and college partners will be able to make more resources available for students with disabilities, raise awareness about accessibility, and support the development of innovative solutions for accessibility challenges through entrepreneurship. This fund will help CnAS and college partners to continue to provide and build on successful accessibility offerings to students for the next four years. Examples of initiatives that will be made possible by this fund include:

- **Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD):** GAAD is an annual event that happens mid-May (globalaccessibilityawarenessday.org). CnAS has participated in GAAD for the past four years. Our focus has been to raise awareness about accessibility, and counselling and accessibility services at the college. We engage with students through face-to-face interactions (event tables), social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram take-over), and surveys. A good example of a program that has been developed as a result of our engagement with students during GAAD is our popular Apps Workshops. Check out [#SenecaCnAS](https://twitter.com/SenecaCnAS) on Twitter to learn more about our participation in GAAD!
- **Apps Workshops:** These workshops introduce and provide students with mobile device apps that can support their academic success. In these Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) workshops, we work with students to install and explore apps based on a ‘topic of the week,’ such as time management, note-taking, distraction blockers, better reading and writing, mind mapping, stress/anxiety management, and much more.
- **Video Project:** We will create a number of videos that will be posted online to cover topics about our services, events/workshops/groups, as well as instructional “how to” guides to set up assistive technology, access academic accommodations, and much more. Here is sneak peak of a video introducing Counselling and Accessibility Services: bit.ly/SenecaCnAS
- **Innovators Fund:** The fund will support students with their own original business concepts, or who are collaborating with industry, in applied research projects focused on accessibility. They would apply for development funding for their project, and a vetting process would be put in place to ensure that the project or business concept aligns with the mandate of the fund. The **CIBC Innovators Fund** will be available through Seneca’s Office of Applied Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

Special thanks to Joy Gooding and the fund development team for their support in making this sponsorship a reality. Stay tuned for more exciting information!

The Collaborative Inquiry Journey

Amy Lin

What is Collaborative Inquiry?

Collaborative inquiry (CI) is a structure for professional learning where educators come together to collaboratively investigate a focused aspect of their teaching practice. At the heart of this professional learning model is the focus on improving learning outcomes for students. This model is developed using evidence about the most effective forms of professional collaboration and appropriate research methods. An inquiry question is developed, data collected and analysed, action steps determined, and results are shared with further recommendations for the next learning cycle.

Why Collaborative Inquiry?

CI reinforces how thoughtful action-based on careful examination of evidence can make an impact on learners. Without this impact, working together collaboratively may result in nothing more than an enjoyable and engaging experience. John Hattie (2009) completed a meta-analysis of the more effective teaching approaches and concluded that when teachers work together in collaborative teams to better understand what students must learn, gather evidence of student learning, and identify and implement the most powerful teaching strategies to address gaps in student learning, the impact can be significant. The CI process embodies all of these elements in the learning cycle. Leaders in educational change have embraced collaborative inquiries as a strategy that challenges thinking and practices through collective learning (Katz, Earl, and Jaafar, 2009; Stoll, 2010).

“Collaborative inquiry holds potential for deep and significant changes in education. Bringing educators together in inquiry sustains attention to goals over time, fosters teachers’ learning and practice development, and results in gains for students.”

– Canadian Education Association, 2014

The Five Stages of a Collaborative Inquiry

There are five stages in a CI cycle:



The first stage is framing the problem. This stage is where the team identifies student learning needs, determines a shared vision, develops an inquiry question, and formulates a theory of action. Choosing a focus and inquiry question can be achieved by examining current student learning needs and the evidence that verifies the need. The concerns that have been identified need to be authentic and relevant as well as a concern that is within your sphere of influence.

Team members develop a shared vision by describing what success looks and sounds like and what is the most desirable outcome. From this framed problem and shared vision, an inquiry question is formulated.

Here is an example of what this may look like:

Student Learning Need: Students have difficulty with the transfer of knowledge learned in the classroom and applying it in their work term.

Problem Framed: Students fail to see the relevance or purpose of the content being presented in the classroom.

Purpose Statement: The purpose of their inquiry is to discover how to establish relevance and purpose so that students can make better connections of what they learned in their classroom to their responsibilities in the workplace.

From the inquiry question, theories of action can be formulated. These can be in the form of “if-then” statements and will connect your team’s vision with the more specific strategies used to improve teaching and learning. The theories of action for the above-framed problem and inquiry could be:

- If the instructor used case studies in the course, then students will be familiar with the real-world contexts and to be more successful at transferring knowledge and skills in their work term.
- If the students engage in role-playing activities, then the students will be more prepared for their work term settings.

“Collaborative cultures, which by definition have close relationships, are indeed powerful, but unless they focus on the right things, they may end up being powerfully wrong.”

– Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012

Once the inquiry question has been defined, the team can move to the second stage of the CI cycle and consider what types of data to collect to answer it. The main purpose of this stage is to test new pedagogical approaches and collect feedback on the effectiveness of these approaches from various perspectives. Data collection methods should actually collect what they are intending to collect and be designed to answer the questions being asked. The team must ensure that the evidence is triangulated when considering the sources of data collected that will inform the team’s inquiry. Triangulation is the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals, types of data, or methods of data collection. How many different viewpoints have been considered when measuring impact?

In the third stage, data is analyzed, which includes organizing, reading, describing, classifying, and interpreting. Inevitably, a great deal of data and material will be generated by the group members. The challenge is to make sense of what has been collected. The team must synthesize the organized data into general written conclusions or understandings.

The final two stages are about celebrating their learning and sharing the knowledge and insights with colleagues. Next steps and recommendations are made. How can we apply what we have learned to further actions? What is the next step in the CI cycle? What do we still need to find out?

In summary, participating in a collaborative inquiry enables one to work with colleagues to determine the why and what of their professional learning and to learn in the context of their own teaching environment. Researchers have learned from educators that collaborative inquiry is not a 'project,' an 'initiative,' or an 'innovation,' but a professional way of being (Kaser & Halbert, 2014). Embarking on this CI journey will engage educators as researchers to explore questions about their practices and assumptions with a shared commitment to better understand how to achieve excellence in teaching and enhance student learning.

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From the Previous Issue...

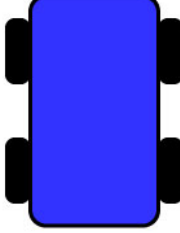
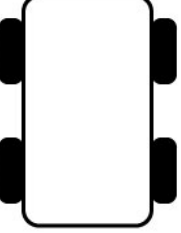
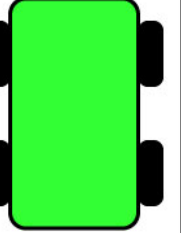
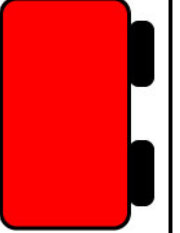

Core Literacies Puzzle Solution

The Teaching & Learning Team

Our last core literacies puzzle ([Academic Newsletter](#), March 2018, [page 19](#)) was a variation on "Einstein's Riddle," although there is no evidence that he actually wrote it.

The key to solving the puzzle is to enter the information given into a 5 x 5 matrix, with each column referring to a different person and each row a different attribute (campus, vehicle type, drink, teaching method, and subject). Start with the obvious entries and use logic to continue filling the table, one clue at a time.

For instance, we know that the first parking spot must be occupied by the faculty member with an office at King (clue #10), and that this person also parks next to the SUV (clue #14), so the SUV must be in the second spot. The third (centre) spot is occupied by the faculty member who uses a face-to-face teaching method (clue #8) and drives either a hatchback or a sedan (the truck is eliminated as it must be immediately to the right of the sedan as explained in clue #4)...You get the idea.

King	Markham	Newnham	S@Y	Jane
Convertible	SUV	Hatchback	Sedan	Truck
				
Latte Experiential Gen. Ed.	Double-Double Flipped Math	Tea Face-2-Face Humanities	Espresso Online English	Capuccino Hybrid Engineering

Eventually, one arrives at the follow set of variables: the person who teaches **English** has an office at Seneca@York, drives a sedan, drinks espresso, and teaches online.

Kudos to all who submitted correct answers.

The [Name Picker Ninja](#) has chosen **Karen Craigs** as the winner!



Academic Forum

The Teaching & Learning Team

Teaching & Learning's Academic Forum was held on April 30 at Newnham Campus. Over 100 Seneca employees attended, including two guests from York University. Jean Choi, Dean of Academic Quality, welcomed everyone and introduced the morning wellness activity.



The keynote speaker was Kristen Clarke, Instructional Coordinator for Assessment in the Peel District School Board. She spoke about “How to Make Assessment Work for You and Your Students.”

Kristen also moderated the panel of four students in the afternoon who discussed assessment and feedback.

Videos of the keynote and the student panel are available on the [Academic Forum website](#).

The break-out sessions in the morning included workshops on International Academic Integrity, an eCampusOntario research project, Library tools, digital assignments, decolonization, preventing burnout, research ethics, and mental health and wellness.

The afternoon break-out sessions showcased some faculty best-practices: mastery learning, collaborative tools, project-based learning, online peer review, active learning, and problem-based learning.

Presentation materials are being uploaded to the [Academic Forum website](#) as we receive them.

Thank you to Seneca Business and Seneca International for donating cool prizes and takeaways. Thank you to Clare Voza and the Leadership and Employee Development team for helping to organize the event and assisting throughout the day.

Up Next

The next Teaching & Learning event is a Teaching & Learning Conference on August 23 and 24 at Newnham Campus. Look for more information on the [Teaching & Learning website](#) closer to the event date.

Oral Communication Task

Oral Communication is a critical skills and is one of Seneca's Core Literacies. It is defined as the ability to "participate verbally in discussions and conversations, exchange thoughts and information, make clear presentations, and interact with a variety of audiences."

Your task: create a one-minute podcast outlining your best advice for student success at Seneca.



You can use whatever device and application that you wish. It must be one minute in length or less, saved in .mp3 format, and include only copyright-free assets.

Send your podcast to Academic.Newsletter@senecacollege.ca.

All submissions will be carefully considered using our extensive evaluation rubric. The winner will receive an awesome prize and their picture will appear in the next issue of the Academic Newsletter.

Suggestion: Google "one minute podcasts" and see what others have done; there is lots of helpful information out there.

Be creative and have fun!

Disclaimer: by submitting, you consent to having your podcast posted to the Teaching & Learning website for the Seneca community to share in your sage advice.

Hybrid Course Design

The Teaching & Learning Team

Hybrid course design involves a thoughtful mix of in-class and out-of-class/online activities that result in flexible learning options for students. A course is generally considered to be hybrid when 30 to 70 per cent of course delivery occurs online. The goal of hybrid teaching and learning is to achieve optimal learning by combining the best and most relevant in-class and online teaching methodology and tools.

Redesigning a course for hybrid delivery takes into account integrating online activities with face-to-face meetings, managing online and in-class course content, and preparing students to learn in a hybrid format. In addition, traditional methods of assessing student work are re-examined to take into account the expanded learning environment.

Visit the [Teaching & Learning website](#) for resources to help with hybrid course design. You'll find templates for planning and redesign your course(s), resources to guide you, ideas for class activities, and tools in and outside of My.Seneca you could use in class.

Our Next Issue

The next Academic Newsletter will be published in the Welcome Back Week (end of August 2018); submissions are due by **Friday, August 10, 2018**.

We need your contributions. Please submit your article ideas to Ashley.Ribbel@senecacollege.ca.