CI Newsletter: April 22-26, 2024

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Hello everyone!

Check out some exciting resources, developments and events below.

Curriculum Integration Project

Caption: Curriculum Integration logo. Source: Teaching & Learning Centre.

W2024 Curriculum Project Deliverable Deadline

For all Winter 2024 CI faculty champions, note that it's time to finalize your CI deliverables as the deadline is on **Friday April 26 at 5 p.m.** Check out the resources on Blackboard for more information. If you have any questions and/or roadblocks, ask for advice from your fellow faculty members, or reach out to the Teaching & Learning team. We are more than happy to answer your questions.

Event Recap: Hiren Mistry Workshop

On March 25th and 26th, 2024, special guest speaker Hiren Mistry joined the Curriculum Integration sessions to explore a question that intersects all three priority areas: **How might we be more Culturally Responsive when planning curriculum and working with students in the classroom?** Currently serving as Vice Principal at White Oaks Secondary School in the Halton District School Board, Hiren has dedicated most of his career to developing teaching and assessment strategies to meet the needs of diverse students.

To well-attended sessions both online and in person, Hiren began by taking a moment to reflect on the Seneca student body, and how much we know about the diverse composition, needs and interests of our learners. We are here, he reminded us, to teach the students we

have today, not the students we may have had in the past, or the students we might wish we had. This oft-cited mantra is incredibly important, for the more we get to know the students in each of our classrooms today, the better we can respond to meet their needs. Hiren shared the results of a brief survey he conducted, in which our faculty participants shared their strong level of commitment to developing their teaching practices to support EDI in their classes.

Hiren then reviewed a tool being developed in collaboration with the Teaching & Learning Centre, inviting faculty input. The "Responsive Planning Template" provides a scaffolded thinking process that helps faculty design an equity-focused lesson.

The template is grounded in three core ideas:

1. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) connects all students with the learning process.
2. All students have valuable background knowledge and are able to learn when supported.
3. Evidence of student learning promotes teacher reflection and learning about identities, biases, power, and privilege.

The template stretches beyond alignment to only program and course learning outcomes to consider what it means to be aligned to one's students themselves. Sample prompts include,

- "What prior learning and experiences do my students bring to this lesson?"
- "How might my students' interests and identities be affirmed and engaged in this lesson?" and
- "Where is there an opportunity for student voice to be present in this lesson?"

These and other questions guide our thinking and compel us to create space in our classrooms for student voices, not just the ones who seem the most interested or who put their hands up the most frequently, but all of them. Pause and reflect on who already shines in the classroom and whose voices could be better engaged, respected, affirmed, and lifted up. As Hiren reminded us, **"Educators are the largest group in Ontario entrusted to translate and uphold human rights."** Hiren closed with a phrase he learned from renowned Canadian human rights lawyer, Patrick Case: "Keep mucking about. Strive for improvement, not perfection."
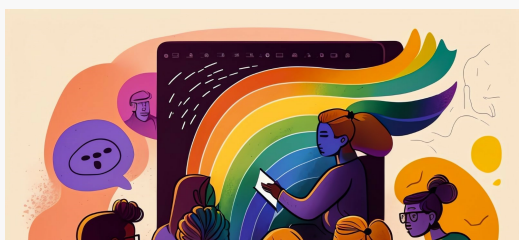
Caption: We can build inclusive classrooms together. Source: [Adobe Stock](#)

Event Calendar: Sustainability in Our Classrooms Course

How are your students impacted by the climate crisis? Where does your tap water come from? Where does your garbage go after it is collected? Can you name five migratory birds in your area?

These questions – and many more — are addressed in the short course Sustainability in Our Classrooms. This course offers a wide range of topics and strategies that help us integrate sustainability meaningfully into our course. It also offers us some time and space to start thinking about how we relate to the natural world in all its forms and how this might impact our teaching practice.

Course Details

Faculty participants complete four self-directed learning modules as they explore strategies to integrate environmental, economic, and social sustainability into their courses. Through discussion boards and journals, we will engage with multiple perspectives about the natural world and reflect on climate justice and the impact of the climate crisis on our communities and in the classroom.

This course is open to all faculty members. It is also included in the [PD Plan for Non Full-Time Faculty](#). Non-full-time faculty who successfully complete the course requirements will be eligible for remuneration. Participants who complete all modules and submit the final deliverable, a Sustainability Integration Plan, are eligible for a digital badge.

The next offering begins on **May 21, 2024.** If you are interested in joining, read the course details below, see if it is a good fit, and [register on MyPD](#) soon to secure your spot.

Caption: Lettuce plants in a wooden planter box. Source: Unsplash

Team Spotlight: Thank You, Emily!

As we close out the Winter 2024 semester, this is also the final edition involving one of our T&L teammates who has been integral behind the scenes of the CI Newsletter. A big thank you to one of our T&L co-op students, Emily Wong, for pulling together the drafts every other week and incorporating all of our feedback. Best wishes on your next journey, and have a great visit with your family in Hong Kong!

Caption: Emily's headshot from the Winter 2024 T&L Day. Source: Teaching & Learning

Looking for support? Feel free to reach out to the CI team at any time by emailing teaching@senecapolytechnic.ca.

Caption: Artwork by Isaac Murdoch, "The Petition to the Water Spirits", located at Seneca@York Courtyard. Source: Seneca Polytechnic, 2023.

tags : curriculum, development, edi, integration, learning, professional, reconciliation, sustainability, teaching, truth