

Teaching & Learning Day Fall 2018

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The Fall *Teaching & Learning Day* was held at King Campus on October 22nd in the stunning new Magna Hall. Nearly 150 faculty, staff, and administrators attended the day to listen to keynote presentations by Dr. Yana Weinstein (University of Massachusetts, Lowell) and Dr. Barbara Fenesi (University of Western Ontario). Each speaker also facilitated a workshop after their keynote on strategies to optimize learning for students.

The day began with Dr. Weinstein's talk about how cognitive science can inform how we as educators can best structure our teaching for optimal learning. It is all about Spaced Practice and Retrieval Practice. For more information, visit the [Learning Scientists' website](#), specifically the "6 Strategies for Effective Learning" page.

In the afternoon, Dr. Fenesi took to the podium to talk about how best to design presentation materials for optimal learning (informed by cognitive science, of course). It is all about multimedia/presentation design principles. For more, check out the "Detailed Descriptions of Presentation Design Principles" document on the [Teaching & Learning Day website](#).

Thank you to Maria May, the custodial and catering teams at King Campus, and ITS for helping the day run smoothly.

Over lunch, attendees had the opportunity to visit service area tables to learn more about the supports and services available to faculty. Thank you to Career Development, International Student Services, Seneca Libraries, Applied Research, International Mobility, the Sandbox/MyLearning, Counselling and Accessibility Services, and ITS for joining us and speaking with attendees.



Cal Barber attended *Teaching & Learning Day* and reflected on his experience. Thanks, Cal, for sending in your thoughts (shared below).





It was really worth the time to make it to the Fall 2018 Teaching & Learning Day at King campus.

Attending any Teaching & Learning Day is always a worthwhile experience. The Fall 2018 day was a double header with both valuable content and a great location to enjoy. Magna Hall is an impressive place for a meeting. While sitting in the Hall, you can't help but be pleasantly distracted by the outside views; meanwhile, the venue is welcoming, despite its size, enabling table discussions and experience sharing. It was an informal setting with the opportunity to have conversations with colleagues throughout the day.

The format of having two keynote speakers, each with a follow-up hands on workshop, made it a worthwhile day that went by very quickly. Both sessions were a good balance of information with time to process key messages. For me, two take-away points were:

Incorporating "Spaced Practice"

When thinking about the key messages from this session, I recalled the many times before I make an important decision that I say, "I need to sleep on it." This time to pause and let the brain do its thing to process the multiple inputs when making a decision clearly strengthens the quality of the outcome.

So the research and theoretical underpinnings of Yana Weinstein's presentation hit home to me that I should provide students with more time space to reflect on what is important before asking them to tell me about their learned knowledge. I made the link between how I make decisions and what my brain needs to do with what students may face when they decide what is important to study. Pacing the student's time to strengthen their recall by providing a gap between content delivery, retrieval practice, and course assessment is an important concept that should strengthen my teaching.

Revisiting how I present course content details

It is always a treat to listen to others present, to get ideas of what works / what should be avoided when I step up to make my presentations. Barbara Fenesi is clearly a 'pros' pro when it comes to clear communication. In the content-heavy courses I teach, I'm constantly looking for ways to simplify the details.

Seeing concrete examples of what is clear communications and what is not is always useful to validate what I do in my teaching. For me, a bonus from the session was taking advantage of the hands-on exercise to update some of the course slides I've always been planning to do but never been able to find the time. Thanks to this workshop, my over-detailed slides have finally been updated.

View the [December 2018 issue of the Academic Newsletter](#).

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