Winter Teaching & Learning Day – Focus on Educational Technology

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The Winter 2019 *Teaching & Learning Day* was held on February 25 at Newnham Campus in the CITE Building. The focus of the day was on educational technology. This event provided attendees with professional learning tailored to their interests and needs.

Our keynote speaker was Dr. Bruce Wainman, an anatomy professor and researcher from McMaster University. His presentation was entitled "X Reality and the Concorde Fallacy in Education."

The "Concorde Fallacy" refers to the Concorde airliner which, when unveiled, was praised for being innovative and would transform air travel; once launched, however, the British and French governments continued to fund the Concorde project even though they knew that the aircraft was a commercial disaster and it no longer made economical sense to do so. The term "Concorde Fallacy" is used as a metaphor when people continue defend an investment because they do not want to waste the money and effort they have already put into it.

Dr. Wainman shared his journey of using extended reality technology for teaching anatomy and the lessons learned through each stage of the research project. The more we invest into a project, the harder it becomes for us to let it go. We think that if we put more energy into something, the more valuable it is. The collection and analysis of data will help drive the projects in the right direction and avoid working with a technology tool long past the time we should have left it.

Extended reality is new and exciting educational technology that can play a useful role in learning. For example, instead of learning through hands-on activities, students engage in more powerful interactive models. These new technologies should not overwhelm teachers but should be a tool that empowers teachers. Dr. Wainman emphasized how not to have a solutions-mindset when it comes to working with extended reality. It is more important to think of the problem and the student learning needs and then how extended reality can provide possible solutions.

So how do educators resist the urge to use technology for the sake of technology instead of applying it where the student experience can be enhanced? How do we know when virtual reality is offering clear advantages over the current teaching modalities? Studies where the technologies are implemented and evaluated are needed to form generalizable knowledge and ascertain the effectiveness on teaching and learning. Understanding how they impact learning will ensure that we do not give in to using shiny new toys simply because they are shiny and new.

Watch Dr. Wainman's keynote from *Teaching & Learning Day* now:

The rest of the day was dedicated to four streams: Hybrid and Online Course Development, Open Educational Resources, Extended Reality, and the Faculty Playground. For each of these sessions, participants spent time exploring and learning with facilitators, followed by hands-on design and build.

As with the previous professional learning days this school year, attendees can apply for and claim a digital badge.

View the March 2019 issue of the Academic Newsletter.

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