

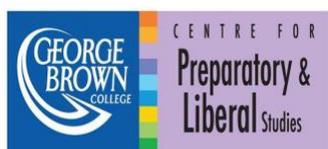


School of ESL, George Brown College

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at the School of ESL

Learn something; share something!

Fall 2021



Fostering Diversity and Inclusion

Hello Colleagues:

Welcome to the Fall edition of the SoTL-ESL News! It's a privilege to bring this issue to you and continue to participate in the dissemination of faculty expertise at the School of ESL. Working with colleagues who are resilient and continue to foster diversity and inclusion and keep the success and well-being of our students our utmost priority has been of paramount importance. I am extremely grateful!

This issue themed "Fostering Diversity and Inclusion" features Anna Bartosik, who believes teaching is a political act and engages in instructional and curriculum development practices that foster diversity and inclusion at the School of ESL and beyond. A *UDL Champion*, Bartosik shares with her readers professional adventures and takes us through her journey of understanding and appreciating the value of critical discussions among students and ELT professionals- very inspirational throughout. Similarly, Jennifer Hutchison shares with us the need to foster diversity and inclusion in our classrooms, which provides the opportunity for us to further reflect on our syllabus design and teaching practices. Hutchison helps us explore the ideas we can embrace in our classrooms to support student learning. In addition, this issue also highlights scholarly activities faculty members continue to engage in, which attests our commitment to "knowledge democratization" and becoming locally strong and globally connected to help our students in their academic and professional pursuits.

While our hope is that the pandemic will soon ebb, our determination at the School of ESL is that our quest for strategies for student success will persist, that our 'student first' commitment will continue, that our knowledge-seeking practices in search of new ways of teaching and learning will go on, and that our collaborative efforts and faith in collegiality that have inspiringly changed the trajectory of the pandemic pivot will prevail. Therefore, thank you for your effort and dedication in responding to these troubling times and helping prepare everyone involved for post-pandemic times when we may begin to slowly return to campus and launch both in-person and digitized curricula for our students to continue to advance academically, socially, and professionally in the future. As well, thank you for your commitment to supporting SoTL-ESL while you're acclimatizing to the evolving nature of this unprecedented time.

Thank you for your readership!

Raj Khatri
Co-Chair, SoTL-ESL

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Faculty Highlights

We are pleased to congratulate the following members at the School of ESL and colleagues on their important contributions to our SoTL-ESL community:

Presentations

Kushkiew, Plamen (2021, August 8). *Who I am (becoming) is how I teach: Exploring the evolving identity of an EAP teacher during/ post-COVID-19 remote delivery* [Virtual presentation]. MMVC21 Annual Conference, Toronto, ON.

Petronic, Ana-Marija. (2022, March 22–25). *Empowering ELLs Through Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. [Conference session]. TESOL 2022 International Convention & English Language Expo, Pittsburgh, PA.

Slezak, Vivien. (2021, May 29). *Anchor your voice: Audio recordings for assessments*. [Virtual presentation]. College Association for Language and Literacy Conference, Toronto, ON.

Learn & Share Corner

Journals and Newsletters

Check out these journals and newsletters for the latest developments in the field.

- [The Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning](#)
- [The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language](#)
- [TESL Canada Journal](#)
- [TESL Ontario CONTACT](#)

Upcoming Conferences and Workshops

- [TESL Ontario 2021 Annual Conference](#) (November 3–5, 2021)
- [TESOL 2022 International Convention & English Language Expo](#) (March 22–25)
- [TESL Newfoundland and Labrador 2021 Annual Conference](#) (November 19–20)

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

- [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning \(SoTL\) Canada](#)
- [International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning \(ISSoTL\)](#)
- [Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education \(STLHE\)](#)

Invitation to Review for TESL-EJ:

Acting as a reviewer for a peer-reviewed journal is a great way to get more involved in scholarship in the field as well as a wonderful professional development opportunity.

[TESL-EJ](#) is a peer-reviewed journal (indexed in Scopus) that publishes original research articles on a broad range of topics in TESL and Applied Linguistics.

If you are interested in becoming a reviewer for the journal, or if you have any questions about this opportunity, please contact Jeff Brown, Co-Editor, TESL-EJ at jeffrey.brown2@georgebrown.ca.

Faculty Insight

Supporting Student Engagement Through Diversity and Inclusion

By Jennifer Hutchison

At the start of each session at the School of ESL, we get to know our students and assess their learning needs. We explain the grading and assignments, help students with technology use, and answer questions. With all the excitement, we may not take enough time to secure our students' investment. As stakeholders, they are entitled to know exactly what they will achieve and what they will contribute. We need to involve them right away in establishing best practices for learning and for celebrating diversity in all its forms. By fostering transparency, diversity, and inclusion, we help students to become both extrinsically and intrinsically motivated.

Firstly, through a workshop at the Teaching and Learning Exchange, I learned to use the parent outline as a tool to foster engagement. I suspect that only the keenest of students review it on their own. After all, the document is long, tedious, and filled with codes. Nevertheless, if we present the outline in an engaging way, students will get excited about what they can achieve. Indeed, as I go over the Course Learning Outcomes (CLO), I see heads nod (as many as I can on screen, anyway) and wheels turn: "Well, I might just learn something here." And let us not forget the Essential Employability Skills (EES).

The SoTL-ESL News

Interview with Anna Bartosik

ESL professor and instructional designer in the Centre for Preparatory and Liberal Studies, Anna Bartosik is also a doctoral candidate at OISE. Anna develops online and blended learning courses, works on curriculum development, occasionally blogs, and teaches English language learners. Anna is interested in social justice and meaningful language learning and teaching. Her research interests include self-directed professional development in digital networks.

Thank you for joining us today for sharing your insight through our SoTL-ESL Newsletter. Could you briefly tell us about your professional background in ELT?

My first job was a six-year stint in LINC. At one point I taught a three-hour LINC class and then drove during a 30-minute break to a mixed-level school board non-credit class. My colleague and I found a place to run those classes, signed the lease, organized the furnishings, and ordered materials, and then handed out flyers so that we could have those jobs.

I stayed in that position for three years before I taught three semesters of business communication at Sheridan College, on top of my LINC and ESL jobs. This gave me the opportunity take a daytime position, which was a hard decision, because it meant a pay cut. The first year was difficult. I didn't receive much guidance and had it not been for two part-time teachers who helped me, I don't know if I would have stayed. During that time, I also did some private language school gigs, started a private tutoring business, and took on business clients.



When EAP at Sheridan College became a post-secondary program, I started my M.Ed. I left the M.Ed. and didn't return for ten years. I reapplied but for a Master of Arts, and while waiting for the program start, I began an Instructional Design (ID) certificate because it strengthened job prospects. Both the MA and the ID qualifications helped me get a transitional position as a curriculum developer at a chiropractic college, and now I'm here with you at George Brown.

You said you are interested in teaching as a political act and UDL in EAP. You are also a *UDL Champion* at the School of ESL. Would you tell us about these interests and how they've influenced your teaching in the process of supporting our students' academic endeavours?

I'm interested in access and accessibility, and how ELT promotes the white native speaker teacher narrative. I look at our work through

a UDL lens, which is helpful in identifying where we can revise how materials are selected, used, and how we teach. I believe that teaching is political, and when we avoid topics in the classroom because we think they may be too difficult or upset students, that is also a political act. I believe race, identity, and voices need to be seen and heard in language teaching curricula. When we select a video for a course, can students make connections to their experiences through this video? How do our materials reinforce the heteronormative family narrative? Do students hear their English spoken in the materials presented? If we have the choice of presenting a successful Canadian, do we pick the one we most identify with? How often do we include Donovan Bailey or Ben Johnson in our teaching materials instead of Terry Fox? If Ben Johnson's story causes us discomfort, we should explore that as educators, and exploring with our students is a learning experience for everyone.

As Professor of EAP and Instructional Designer, would you tell us about your role and how you've engaged in supporting colleagues in their professional growth, particularly when instructional and curriculum activities are online?

I'm happy to clarify my job. An instructional designer's job includes curriculum development, design, and involves consulting with, guiding, and project-managing subject matter experts throughout course design. This includes selecting ID models and instructional strategies which support the learning environment best. I also incorporate technologies that support learning as well and write course outlines.

My role includes curriculum development and design. I've worked with some colleagues on their courses, and faculty support has included sharing resources for development work. I've also worked on the design and development of 6 selectives and an interesting project in ConEd.

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"I believe race, identity, and voices need to be seen and heard in language teaching curricula."

The SoTL-ESL News

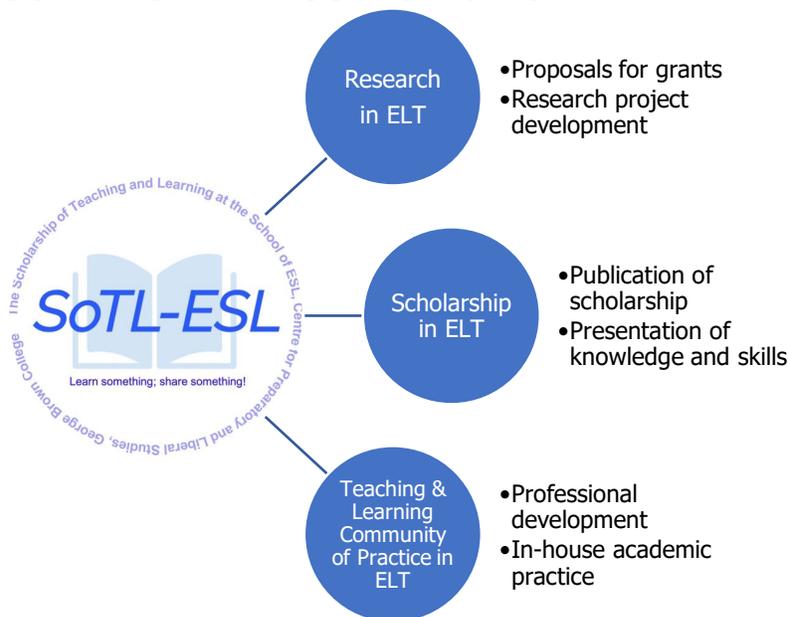
What does the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at the School of ESL (SoTL-ESL) mean?

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at the School of ESL (SoTL-ESL) was launched on November 4, 2019 at George Brown College's School of ESL in order to enhance student learning through scholarly works among faculty members teaching English for academic purposes (EAP). Honouring the core values of SoTL and the nature of English language teaching and learning at the School of ESL, SoTL-ESL is defined at the School of ESL as the systematic study of teaching and learning in the English language teaching (ELT) field (*Research in ELT*) that involves the public sharing of the study findings and promotes scholarship among ELT teachers (*Scholarship in ELT*) in order to improve instructional practices and maximize learners' language learning. In addition, SoTL-ESL provides ELT teachers with opportunities for professional development (*Teaching and Learning Community of Practice in ELT*) at the School of ESL.

Building upon Felten's (2013)* principles of good practice in SoTL, SoTL-ESL includes inquiry into ELT that is methodologically sound and learner-focused, incorporates an awareness of the challenges unique to the ELT field, is conducted in partnership with learners in GBC's context, and is publicly available for critique and application.

*Felten, P. (2013). Principles of good practice in SoTL. *Teaching & Learning Inquiry: The ISSOTL Journal*, 1(1), 121-125.

SoTL-ESL: Three Domains



The SoTL-ESL Committee

Raj Khatri and Ana-Marija Petrunic (Co-Chairs)

Sharmaine Itwaru (*Research in ELT*)

Jeff Brown (*Scholarship in ELT*)

Maria Glass and Andrea Rankin (*Teaching and Learning Community of Practice in ELT*)

Invitation to submit articles

SoTL-ESL is now accepting feature articles for its future issues. Faculty members are encouraged to submit their articles that have a maximum length of 1,000 words, including references. Articles previously published will not be accepted for re-publication. Review of articles submitted can take from 3 weeks to 2 months. Articles may address research work in ELT or may highlight practical tips and strategies in ELT, instructional methods, materials, and resources, technology in ELT classrooms, curriculum design, universal design for learning in ELT or assessment strategies in the field of TESOL and applied linguistics.

Faculty Insight

Supporting Student Engagement Through Diversity and Inclusion

By Jennifer Hutchison

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Secondly, let us turn to the diversity statement. I joined a group of GBC colleagues in a MOOC through Cornell University called *Teaching and Learning in the Diverse Classroom*. Each week, our fabulous Learning Centre facilitator, Jessica Paterson from the Office of Academic Excellence, led us in a heady debriefing and exchange of ideas. The course modules and ensuing discussions, both within our group at George Brown College and the larger community, gave us fresh ways to make our classes more inclusive. One of the takeaways is that students need to learn *straight away* that they are entering an environment that is warm and respectful and encourages everyone to participate. Into every course outline, the college embeds an equity statement that shows its commitment to diversity. We can develop these core tenants into a statement for our own classrooms that we create *with our students* to add to the CSI or course home page (Cornell Center of Innovation and Technology, n.d.).

Before drafting a statement, we should think about what “inclusivity” means and what has worked (and not worked) in previous classes. We also need to get the students’ feedback (Cornell Center of Innovation and Technology, 2021). We can ask them to describe situations where they felt excluded and then troubleshoot solutions together. We can get their input on how to handle viewpoints that are starkly (and perhaps culturally) different from their own and how to support peers who have learning challenges. It is best to have these talks at the outset while the scenarios are still *hypothetical*. If we wait until *after* an incident, we risk losing the students’ trust. By generating a class-specific diversity statement, we show that we are aware of and are sensitive to the interplay of social identities within the classroom.

The following is an example of a diversity statement in which my students and I integrated guidelines for discussions and group work. These guidelines are particularly valuable in an online environment because teachers cannot be everywhere at once. Hopping virtually from one breakout group to the next takes time and skill (I have gotten lost in cyberspace more than once—an eerie feeling, but I digress), so we can miss potentially explosive situations.

Each student is valued, irrespective of gender, race, sexuality, language, religion, and place of origin. We will build an environment in which everyone feels safe in expressing themselves without the risk of being judged. A big part of the learning is from each other. During class activities, we will:

- *Be open-minded and receptive of others' viewpoints and respectfully acknowledge that we come from different cultures and have lived through different experiences that have shaped our ideologies and beliefs.*
- *Collaborate with one another and value each other's contributions.*
- *Be patient and help peers to understand concepts and instructions.*
- *Participate in discussions, encourage others, and provide equal opportunities to contribute.*
- *Listen patiently and actively to each other.*
- *Respect and appreciate that we use our own unique strategies to learn and that some of us require accommodations from the school to implement these strategies. (Students are welcome to contact George Brown's [Accessible Learning Services](#) to develop a learning plan tailored to their needs.)*

In conclusion, we do not want to rush through the preliminaries to get to the “real” content. Instead, we need to go over the outcomes and skills thoroughly and then invite our class to explore and construct the social foundations of the course with us—a course they have a huge stake in. By doing so, we create a spirit of transparency, inclusivity, and respect that transcends the classroom. And, with any luck, we will increase the students’ intrinsic and extrinsic motivation *before* we start teaching.

References

- Cornell Center for Innovation and Technology. (2021). Diversity statements: Why and how. In Module 4: Curriculum/M4.2: Redesigning your syllabus [MOOC]. In M. Ivanchikova & M. Ouellett, *Teaching and Learning in the Diverse Classroom*. edX. <https://www.edx.org/course/teaching-learning-in-the-diverse-classroom>
- Weinhardt, J. M., & Sitzmann, T. (2019). Revolutionizing training and education? Three questions regarding massive open online courses (MOOCs). *Human Resource Management Review*, 29(2), 218. <https://doi-org.gbcpvx01.georgebrown.ca/10.1016/j.hrmr.2018.06.004>

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Interview with Anna Bartosik

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"My personal research is in self-directed PD in digital spaces; I am researching Twitter chats and looking at regional differences as well as examining whether familiarity with the Twitter platform plays a role in making the PD experience more beneficial to the user."

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at the School of ESL (SoTL-ESL)

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Learn something; share something!

Throughout this past year I've presented workshops in our department and in ConEd on Nearpod, Flipgrid, MS Forms, collaborative documents and presentation tools, and I've presented about access and accessibility with the TLX and in various UDL sessions since September 2020. I try to be as reactive as I can and support learning when it's needed.

In addition to teaching EAP and supporting colleagues in their professional growth, you continue to professionally engage in and outside of GBC, including your presentation at TESOL 2021 Virtual Convention. Could you share your insights into how faculty members at the School of ESL can continue our professional development opportunities and stay current in the field while supporting student success?

I enjoy learning about things I'm not confident about. On Twitter, that means listening and following BIPOC educators both in and outside ELT. Twitter isn't for everyone, but there are places to start exploring different ponds of knowledge. If people prefer to work on PD independently, George Brown's library has a TESOL Journal subscription, which provides peer-reviewed ELT content, albeit with a US perspective. If your learning wants to remain in the field of ELL and teaching in Canada, then I suggest the BC TEAL Journal, which is open access and explores current topics of research that may be more digestible than the TESL Canada Journal, which I also recommend. There was an interesting PD opportunity offered recently at George Brown: the UDL book club was discussing "Antiracism and Universal Design for Learning." Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok are also great learning spaces. Learning outside traditional PD spaces where I can ask questions and explore is where I like learning.

Can you talk about research projects you've engaged in? How will your research and scholarly activities contribute to the SoTL and learning and student success at the School of ESL?

My personal research is in self-directed PD in digital spaces; I am researching Twitter chats and looking at regional differences as well as examining whether familiarity with the Twitter platform plays a role in making the PD experience more beneficial to the user. The other research project I've been involved in is [LINC DIRE – LINGuistic & Cultural DIversity REinvented](#). LINC DIRE began as a SSHRC-funded project between three countries, designed to create and establish a stable network promoting cultural and linguistic awareness with the intent of fostering plurilingualism. I have been heavily involved in the LITE aspect of the project – the eportfolio – which takes an action-oriented approach to teaching language. In addition to working the technical side of the site and creating some instructional videos, I've been involved with classroom observations and coding teacher interviews.

Both self-directed PD and respecting the linguistic diversity in our teaching context are important. Twitter's "just-in-time" learning can be applied to our current context and the transition back to classroom teaching. We all have levels of expertise and knowledge and blanket PD doesn't benefit everyone equally. Some need deeper watering less often, whereas others enjoy dabbling and constantly learning. PD has to be meaningful to the individual, and motivation is key for PD. In our department, there is a collaborative atmosphere of sharing practical knowledge on the ESL Faculty Learn and Share team in Microsoft Teams, and so many people have offered their time to present what they are working on.

Plurilingualism has a place in EAP. It dovetails with Vision 2030 and new ways of teaching and learning. Let's consider the learners in our program; they have a range of life experiences and knowledge. If we can help learners tap into that knowledge and express themselves through multiple ways, I consider that a success.

Faculty Impact

Congratulations to our Cited Faculty Members!

Jeff Brown (*Asian Englishes* - 2020; *Cogent Arts & Humanities* - 2021; *International Journal of English Linguistics* - 2021; *BC TEAL Journal* - 2021)
Ryan Morrison (*Nature Index* - 2021)