



LSAC Pacific Conference Program

May 19, 2022 9:00AM–3:30PM

From Chaos to Positive Change

Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Richmond Campus, BC

www.learningspecialists.ca



Pacific Region LSAC Conference

From Chaos to Positive Change

Thursday May 19, 2022

Wilson School of Design, KPU, Richmond



Program Details

8:30 – 9:00 am	Registration, Coffee and Snacks
9:00 – 9:05 am Welcome	Sandra Smith Regional Chair LSAC Lyn Benn Conference Chair
9:05 – 9:55 am Session 1 (new)	Challenging Writing Imaginaries: Challenging Neocolonialism, Microaggressions, Linguistic Racism through Tutor-Tutee Dialogue Christina Page, Zahra Khan, KPU
9:55 – 10:15 am	<i>Morning Tea / Coffee and chatting to reconnect</i>
10.15 – 11.15 am	Short Presentations (15 min) + 5 min for Q & A x 3 sessions
10:15 – 10:35 am Session 2	Giving New Post-Secondary Students a SmartStart to University Learning Najmeh Keyhani, Pamela Haley, UWO
10:35 – 10:55am Session 3	Designing Customizable Asynchronous Learning Strategy Workshops Jovita Vytasek, KPU
10:55 – 11:15am Session 4	McGill’s Stay on Track: Three Methods of Peer Support for Learning Nick MacKenzie, McGill University
11:15 – 11:25 am	<i>Short Break</i>
11:25 – 12:15 Session 5 Panel Discussion	How to Train Your Neurodivergent Brain while Looking for Dragons and Other Cool Things Keith Gelhorn, Alana Tattrie, Emily Gallant, Angela Forbes, Chase Valiant, ADDvocacy
LUNCH 12:15 – 1:30 pm	

1:30 – 2.30pm	Short Presentations (15 min) + 5 min for Q & A x 3 sessions
1:30 – 1:50 pm Session 6	Online Tutoring and Tutor Training: From Emergency Measures to Effective Multimodal Service Delivery Fernanda Batista, Ontario Tech University
1:50 – 2:10 pm Session 7	Test Error Analysis – A Tool for Positive Change Richard ("Zack") Zajchowski, Camosun College
2:10 – 2:30 pm Session 8	Square peg meet round hole: A case study of adapting peer-based academic support for applied and technical programs Tara Corman, UFV
2:30 – 2:45 pm	<i>Short break</i>
2:45 – 3:35 pm World Café - Discussion Session 9	World Cafe-In the spirit of From Chaos to Positive Change, we are holding a World Cafe on the topic. Be prepared to brainstorm and share how we can move forward in our work.
3:35 – 3:45 pm	Wrap up and closing remarks

Message from the Conference Chair

Why this conference? Why now?



After being apart for over two years we can see so much positive change that it is important to take some time to celebrate! Today is an opportunity when we can actually get together both in person and online, and in doing so demonstrate the positive effects of HyFlex and online presences. The pandemic has certainly presented challenges in what, how, where, when and why we do the things we do. This conference highlights ways we as a profession have overcome challenges and at the same time encourages a continuation of creativity and contribution as we embark further at pushing the

boundaries to make learning and the learning experience exceptional for all.

Thank you for your contribution today and for your support for colleagues in the Learning Specialists Association of Canada.

You make the difference! You are the positive change!

Pacific Region LSAC Conference

From Chaos to Positive Change

Presenters' Details

Session 1 Panel/Roundtable	Challenging Writing Imaginaries: Challenging Neocolonialism, Microaggressions, Linguistic Racism through Tutor-Tutee Dialogue <i>Christina Page, Zahra Khan, KPU, christina.page@kpu.ca</i>
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Biography: Christina Page has been a Learning Strategist at Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) since 2015. Her interests include intercultural teaching, the intersections between interculturality and learning, and academic literacies development in undergraduate students. Her research focuses on faculty intercultural teaching practices. She is currently a PhD candidate in Education at Nipissing University. In addition to her Learning Strategist work, in the role of Educational Consultant, she facilitates programs in intercultural teaching for educators.

Description of Session: During the pandemic years, broad movements towards greater awareness of the need for anti-racist and decolonial practice has emerged in our postsecondary institutions. This session addresses this shift, beginning with an overview of the relationships between neocolonialism, linguistic racism, and microaggressions in internationalizing postsecondary institutions (Davis & Museus, 2019; Dovchin, 2019; Mahboob & Szenes, 2010; Page, 2022; Stein & Andreotti, 2017; Sue & Spanierman, 2020). After setting the practice of writing tutors within this context, experienced peer tutors will draw on their experience to explore the dilemmas that tutors face as they dialogue with tutees who may be negatively impacted by institutional and faculty practices. Tutors will share practices that aim to address these impacts, aiming to support students' confidence in communicating their knowledge in the face of linguistic and cultural discrimination. Next, the tutor panel guide attendees through a roundtable exploration of possible steps that could emerge within a writing/learning centre context, including strategies for training and supporting tutors, and engaging in broader advocacy within the institution. Together, we will discuss the crucial role of our peer tutors as collaborators for facilitating change in institutional dialogues around language, culture, and writing.

Session Takeaways

By attending this session, participants will (1) develop an extended framework for understanding the experiences of discrimination that tutees bring into the learning/writing centre (2) appreciate the dilemma that tutors face within institutional power dynamics in their unique space between tutees and faculty and recognize the role of training and support for tutors in this space, and (3) develop a vision for collaborating with experienced tutors in ensuring our centres are spaces of positive change within our institutions.

Learning Objectives:

- Explore the impacts of neocolonialism, linguistic racism and microaggressions on students, as witnessed by experienced tutors.
- Discuss the role of tutors and the broader learning centre system in providing hospicing (Andreotti et al., 2015) and care to students within the institutional context.
- Collaboratively generate ideas of additional practices for tutoring, tutor training, and advocacy.

References

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<p>Session 2</p> <p>Virtual Showcase (20 min.)</p>	<p>Giving New Post-Secondary Students a SmartStart to University Learning</p> <p><i>Najmeh Keyhani, Pam Haley, UWO. nkeyhani@uwo.ca</i></p>
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Biography: Pam Haley is a STEM Learning Specialist with the Learning Development and Success Team at Western University. She holds a BSc. (Biology) and a BEd. from Western University, is an Ontario Certified Teacher and is currently working on completing a MEd. (Studies in Teaching and Learning) from the University of Ottawa. She has worked in student affairs for over ten years in various student facing roles and lives with her family in London Ontario.

Najmeh Keyhani is a Learning Specialist (Graduate Programming) with the Learning Development and Success Team at Western University. She received her PhD in Education from Western University in 2020 and holds a master's degree in Entrepreneurship. She works both with graduate and undergraduate students and has experience evaluating several student transition programs.

Description of Session: There have been many disruptions and challenges that the pandemic has caused for schools in Canada and throughout the world (UNESCO, 2022). In a study carried out by Napierala et al. (2022), 45% of the 565 surveyed first-year post-secondary students in Ontario indicated that understanding and remembering content learned in high school was a challenge for them. This was an even higher concern for STEM students as 52% of them pointed to this issue. Hence, facilitating first-year undergraduate students' transitions to university learning has become an important consideration in higher education settings (Pownall et al., 2021).

To help increase the likelihood of students' success in their first-year studies, Western University started a program titled SmartStart: Academics in the summer of 2020. This program is a self-directed online program for incoming science students at Western University that provides them with an overview of key grade 12 math and science curriculum material deemed significant for their learning in their first-year university courses. The program also includes a course on Academic Writing that offers students information on how writing differs at a post-secondary level compared to high school. Students going through the courses during the month of August receive support from Learning Coaches (upper year students) and can attend events intended to introduce them to key faculty members and orientate them to elements of academic life at university.

Session Takeaways

Participants in this virtual showcase session will:

1. learn how Western University developed, runs and evaluates this yearly program.
2. gain valuable insight into the nature of collaborative cross-campus partnerships and student supports used throughout the program.

References

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- UNESCO. (2022). Education: From disruption to recovery. UNESCO. <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>

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<p>Session 3</p> <p>Virtual Showcase (20 min.)</p>	<p>Designing Customizable Asynchronous Learning Strategy Workshop</p> <p>Jovita Vytasek, KPU, jovita.vytasek@kpu.ca</p>
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Biography: Jovita Vytasek is a learning strategist at the KPU Learning Centre. She has a background in educational psychology and a PhD in educational technology and learning design. Her interests and work include learning analytics, instructional design, cognition, motivation and learning strategies.

Description of Session: Through this pandemic, we have learned to connect with students more online and the advantages of having addition online, anytime resources available. Student may be hesitant to book with a learning strategist or need specific help at a particular moment, and so opening up access in multiple ways can be beneficial. An advantage of the pandemic is that we have the opportunity to explore these resources more and how they can support students. There are opportunities to create engaging asynchronous material for students to access 24-7 on-demand. This presentation will demonstrate an initial approach Kwantlen Polytechnic University is piloting for designing asynchronous personalized learning strategy support online. It is developed from the literature on learning design (Moreno & Mayer 2000), multimedia learning (Mayer, 2005; 2019) and personalization of feedback (Kauffman, 2015; Winne, 2013). The goal of this presentation is to share with the community the approach we are developing and gain feedback and commentary as we pilot this new endeavor. The hope is that it will be informative for those who might wish to attempt similar designs, highlight some of the things we have learned through this pandemic and explore how we can use this information to provide more services for students in the future.

References

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- Winne, P. H. (2013). Learning strategies, study skills, and self-regulated learning in postsecondary education. In *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research* (pp. 377-403). Springer, Dordrecht.

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<p>Session 4 Virtual Showcase (20 min.)</p>	<p>McGill’s Stay on Track: Three Methods of Peer Support for Learning <i>Nick MacKenzie, nick.mackenzie@mcgill.ca</i></p>
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Biography: Nick MacKenzie is from Montreal and, following his studies, he found a job at McGill University. He was a member of the recruitment team for almost three years before joining Teaching and Learning Services in October 2021 to manage the Stay on Track program. He has enjoyed the experience of coordinating a student support initiative and is excited to improve and grow the program.

Description of Session: Peer-to-peer interactions in post-secondary education can create opportunities for student support and development, both inside and outside the classroom. Many colleges and universities across the country are offering programs of this nature. Through a new program called Stay on Track, McGill undergraduate students are provided a peer-led, goal-oriented co-curricular opportunity to facilitate their academic success in their course work, become self-regulated learners, and receive support critical to their well-being while pursuing their degree. Stay on Track is a program providing a choice between three tracks and participants can choose to engage in whichever they feel best suits their needs:

Track A – Digital reminders to track weekly goals: On a weekly basis, mentees set their learning and well-being objectives with a peer-mentor or independently. Each week students receive a reminder via email to help them reach their weekly objectives.

Track B – Virtual or in-person check-ins with a peer-mentor: After an initial session where mentees set their learning and well-being objectives under the guidance of their peer-mentors, mentees and peer-mentors have a weekly 30-minute virtual or in-person check-in to discuss progress and barriers in their studies.

Track C – Virtual or in-person peer study groups: Mentees attend drop-in study sessions during the week. These sessions have one peer-mentor as part of the group who helps orchestrate the dynamics of the group. During the study sessions mentees and mentors motivate each other and hold one another accountable even while working on different projects.

This presentation will introduce how Stay on Track is structured, including the benefits and challenges of the program, as well as review opportunities for growth and improvement.

Session Takeaways

One-on-one mentoring was the most engaging support method. Better practices are required to improve our other support methods.

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<p>Session 5</p> <p>Panel Discussion</p>	<p>How to Train Your Neurodivergent Brain while Looking for Dragons and Other Cool Things</p> <p><i>Keith Gelhorn, Alana Tattrie, Emily Gallant, Angela Forbes, Chase Valiant, ADDvocacy. info@ADDvocacy.org</i></p>
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Biography:

Keith Gelhorn - Founder and Chief Empowerment Officer of ADDvocacy

Alana Tattrie - Head Coach and COO of ADDvocacy

Angela Forbes - 1st year Cybersecurity Student at Nova Scotia Community College. Coaching client of Keith since November 2020

Emily Gallant (she/they) is a student at Mount Saint Vincent University, currently doing a Bachelor of Arts combined major in Gerontology and Womens Studies. She recently graduated from the Social Services program at NSCC and received the Governor Generals Academic Medal.

Description of Session: At ADDvocacy, our team coaches neurodivergent youth and adults living with ADHD, Learning Disabilities, Autism, Anxiety and co-occurring mental health challenges that impact executive functioning. Our clients are students in Grade 12 - Ph.D. and adults who are struggling in their personal and professional lives.

Our unique approach arises because all of our coaches are neurodivergent and are no strangers to the challenges and paradoxical ADDvantages this can have on one’s life. ADHD and LD are both marked by deficits in executive functioning as expressed through difficulties in organization, time management, goal setting, decision making, problem solving, and navigating social and emotional challenges (Richman et al., 2014). Compared to their peers, individuals with ADHD and LD will experience increased problems with academic achievement, and face more occupational and financial challenges (Ahmann, et al. 2018).

A growing body of research provides evidence for the efficacy of coaching and an increasing number of post-secondary institutions are recognizing the need for specialized coaching to be added to disability services (Ahmann et al., 2018. Field et al.,2013. Parker & Boutelle, 2009. Parker et al., 2011).

The feedback from dialogue with a peer is a critical process that fosters self-reflection. This relationship is frequently cited by students as the primary reason for their success. Habits are created more easily when a goal is clearly defined and a simple action is outlined and practiced daily. Evidence shows how important it is to be consistent with where, when and how the new action is practiced (Gardner et al., 2012).

For this reason, the Coaches at ADDvocacy meet with students at the same time and day each week and focus on building daily and weekly routines using the Passion Planner. The Passion Planner is a useful tool because it has a built-in process for Self-Reflection and Tracking Progress.

Session Takeaways

1. Research links the widespread efficacy of Executive Function Coaching to:
 - Teaching students how to take abstract goals and turn them into concrete actions
 - Supporting students to develop their own systems and strategies
 - Encouraging greater accountability and progress
 - Supporting the acquisition of new skills and habits
 - Improvements in GPA and LASSI (Learning and Study Strategy Inventory)
 - Reported gains in subjective well-being, confidence, self esteem, and emotional regulation (Ahmann et al., 2018. Field et al., 2013. Parker & Boutelle, 2009. Parker et al., 2011).
2. The value of peer support lies in the immediate feeling of connection and exchange of stories and information and is tied to better coping skills and improvements in quality of life. Peer support is increasingly recognized for its ability to offer hope and self determination (Cyr et al., 2016).
3. ADDvocacy has been in business for over 10 years and has successfully coached thousands of students across Canada and the United States. On average, our students will see a 10-15% boost in marks. They also report huge progress in confidence and self-awareness and self- esteem.

References

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<p>Session 6</p> <p>Virtual Showcase (20 min.)</p>	<p>Online Tutoring and Tutor Training: From Emergency Measures to Effective Multimodal Service Delivery</p> <p><i>Fernanda Batista, Ontario Tech University,</i> <i>fernanda.batista@ontariotechu.ca</i></p>
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Biography: Fernanda is a Peer Learning Coordinator at Ontario Tech University, where she supervises a team of approximately 55 undergraduate students who work as peer tutors, SI leaders, and peer learning programs assistants with the Student Learning Centre. She has a background in Education and English Language and Literature (BA, MA, and PhD) and has taught ESL, English, and writing in the K-12 system abroad as well as in the postsecondary system both in Canada and internationally for almost 20 years.

Description of Session: The COVID-19 pandemic caused Ontario Tech University’s peer tutoring program to change significantly, as it did to most —if not all— programs in academic institutions worldwide. The restrictions had a negative impact on the program when they were first implemented but ended up bringing with them new possibilities that boosted service availability and attendance while also increasing training opportunities offered to Peer Tutors.

Prior to COVID, the peer tutoring program was offered in person only on the North and Downtown Oshawa locations. Our tutors would work at designated areas on both campuses Mondays through Fridays mainly during business hours and students would come to meet them at appointed times for one-on-one consultations. Approximately 18 of the tutors also worked in the drop-in learning communities for Athletics, Chemistry, Math, Physics, and Writing, and though some of these communities were already offering academic support in a hybrid mode, the tutors worked exclusively at the physical locations offering in-person assistance. Similarly, all training sessions were also offered in person in instructor-led workshop format.

When the work-from-home mandate was announced to staff and peer staff, tutoring appointments were interrupted and the number of attended appointments was reduced for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. A few weeks into the pandemic, however, a decision was made to offer the service online and during weekends in addition to business days. This new appointment mode and day options contributed to a sharp increase in usage of the program in the 2020-2021 academic year. Moreover, the need to explore online synchronous and asynchronous training options led to the development of modules to be completed using a learning management system, which added quality and flexibility to the existing training and placed it in a position to meet certification requirements.

Session Takeaways

Attendees will discuss how offering flexibility in appointment modality and training format may improve availability and quality.

References

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Session 7 Virtual Showcase (20 min.)	Test Error Analysis – A Tool for Positive Change <i>Richard Zajchowski, Camosun College, zackr@camosun.bc.ca</i>
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Biography: Richard Zajchowski, aka “Zack”, has spent much more than 40 years working with post-secondary students at a variety of institutions across Canada as a learning skills instructor and counsellor, a physics instructor, and an upgrading instructor. He is still very passionate about learning skills and was one of the founders of LSAC. He is a co-author of the book “Learning for Success – Effective Strategies for Students” published by Thomson Nelson and now in its 4th edition. He has also published articles in the area of learning and quantitative problem solving

Description of Session: Unfortunately for struggling post-secondary students, their first test mark in a course is a very good predictor of their overall final course mark - unless they make effective changes to their study behavior (Guidry, 2020; Jensen & Barrow, 2014). But how can they know what effective changes they need to make? This is where a test error analysis that focuses on study behaviour can be very useful. In this showcase I will present two test error analysis tools that I use: one for short-answer or multiple-choice tests and one for mathematical problem-solving tests. These tools focus on study behavior errors and not on “content” errors. My goal is that participants will leave this session being able to use and adapt these tools to help their struggling students make effective study behaviour changes.

Session Takeaways

Participants will leave this session being able to use and adapt these tools to help their struggling students.

References

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Jensen, P. and Barrow, W. J. (2014). Midterm and first-exam grades predict final grades in biology courses. *Journal of College Science Teaching*, 44(2), 82-89.

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<p>Session 8</p> <p>Virtual Showcase (20 min.)</p>	<p>Square peg meet round hole: A case study of adapting peer-based academic support for applied and technical programs</p> <p><i>Tara Corman, UFV, tara.corman@ufv.ca</i></p>
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Biography: Tara Corman has been working in post-secondary education for the past 10 years with a focus on academic writing, experiential learning, and international education. In 2020, she joined the Academic Success Centre team at the University of the Fraser Valley as a Learning Strategist. Tara is passionate about supporting students in achieving their goals as academic learners, engaged citizens, and future professionals.

Description of Session: The University of the Fraser Valley’s Academic Success Centre has run a successful and growing peer-based academic support program for seven years. In 2020, the ASC administrative team expanded with the addition of a new learning strategist position focused on enhancing the academic support provided to programs based out of UFV’s Chilliwack campus, which includes the Faculty of Health Sciences and the Faculty of Applied and Technical Studies. This presentation will focus on the experience of working with an established peer tutoring program designed for traditional undergraduate degree programs to develop and increase engagement with relevant academic support, primarily focused on math skills, for trades programs. Given the varied and condensed nature of trades programs, a traditional peer tutoring model of trades students helping trades students was not suitable. With no additional funding or personnel resources, academic support services were planned around utilizing existing peer tutor and institutional resources to meet the needs of trades students. Challenges, successes, and opportunities will be discussed from the perspective of a learning strategist approaching this work in the context of Covid-19 restrictions and with no prior foundation in math tutoring or trades training. Peer tutor, trades faculty, and trades student perspectives will also be explored. Finally, lessons learned for program adaptability and nimbleness will be discussed.

Session Takeaways

Processes followed and lessons learned in regards to adapting an established student support program for a targeted purpose.

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Conference Committees

Chair: Lyn Benn

We thank everyone who has made this possible.

Regional Chair LSAC: Sandra Smith, UFV

Proposal Review Panel: Lyn Benn, Alice Macpherson, Marti Alger

Logistics Team: Emily Tan, Rajveer Bhatti, and Nammi Kanagasabay

Peer Tutor Assistants: Zahra Khan, Smriti Kaur, Joshua Li