

Brock Teaching

News from the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies, Brock University

Inside this edition

- Teaching excellence page 2
- Educational technology page 3
- Book review page 4

Volume 2, Issue 2, Fall 2003. Published twice a year

3M award-winner is new CTLET Director

Brock Professor Maureen Connolly, the University's latest 3M Fellowship winner, is the new Director of the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies (CTLET).

Connolly began her new position on November 1, 2003. The CTLET supports, promotes and advances the quality of teaching at Brock. As Director of the CTLET, Connolly will provide academic and administrative co-ordination and leadership to a number of activities focused on improving the University's teaching and learning environment.

"Dr. Connolly is an exceptionally talented and dedicated educator who is widely respected for her many invaluable contributions to teaching excellence and educational leadership at Brock," said University President David Atkinson. "Her level of commitment to students and their success is matched only by her passion to further enrich teaching and learning at the University."

Over the past 25 years, Connolly devoted her career to excellence in teaching and learning. From the public school system to adult education, from teaching students with disabilities to the past 12 years in post-secondary education at Brock, Connolly's approach to teaching has remained the same — lessons from the classroom spill over to lessons in life.

The recipient of a 2003 National 3M Teaching Fellowship takes her subject matter and couples it with real life experience so that students will address the competing priorities they face on a daily basis. In the process, she provides them with a very important opportunity to take stock of who they are and what is important to them.

"My intentions as a teacher are to encourage and enable autonomy in others and to provide them with the support, competencies and sensitivities to work in the real world of people," says Connolly, a professor in the Department of Physical Education and Kinesiology. "I want to give students a strong indication that



Professor Maureen Connolly has a student assist her during a classroom demonstration.

the mundane world is where you live. You will find joy, humour and adventure in that world — that's where you spend all your time."

She describes her courses as paper light and process heavy.

"I deliberately set up situations of difficulty for my students because I want them to face difficulty and then do something about it and I will be there to help them get through it," she says, emphasizing that she does not do the work for the students but rather with the students.

Connolly lives by her own credo of "you teach who you are." She says that to be a reflective teacher, there must be a consistency between your life and your craft. Her honesty and integrity is held in high regard by her students.

A citation provided by 3M Canada and the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE) reads: "Maureen Connolly's students in the Department of Physical Education and Kinesiology universally praise her energy, honesty, and empathy. One writes, 'Professor Connolly is an extraordinary teacher,' and another notes that 'her risk-taking empowered me to take my own risks.'"

Continues on page 2.

Brock celebrates success in 3M fellowships

Over the past several years, Brock has established an impressive track record in 3M Teaching Fellowship awards.

Professor Maureen Connolly is the third Brock Professor to be named a 3M Teaching Fellow in the past four years. Her 2003 award is the fifth overall for the University.

The Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies (CTLET) has a pivotal role in the 3M Fellowship nomination process. The CTLET encourages faculty to work with them in dossier preparation for the 3M Teaching Fellowships which are awarded each year from 3M Canada and the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE).

As the only teaching award of its kind, 3M Fellowships are a mark of excellence for the award winners and their institutions.

Past Brock winners include Professor Anna Lathrop, Chair of the Department of Physical

Continues on page 2.

Top marks for Quality of Education

The quality of education at Brock University ranks second among Canadian universities in a *Globe and Mail* student satisfaction survey published October 15.

The second annual *University Report Card* was produced by the *Globe and Mail*, in partnership with Uthink and the Strategic Counsel.

Brock's second overall ranking in the Quality of Education category of the survey reflects student satisfaction in such areas as quality of teaching, faculty members' knowledge of subjects, effectiveness of teaching methods and quality of teaching assistants.

Brock ranked first in the country in the category of Quality of Teaching Assistants and Availability of Teaching Assistants. A training program for teaching assistants is just one of the programs offered by the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies (CTLET.)

Here are highlights of Brock's best rankings in Quality of Education and areas of teaching in the 2003 *University Report Card*. The 2002 rankings are in brackets.

No. 1:

- Teaching Assistant Quality (1)
- Teaching Assistant Availability (1)

No. 2:

- Overall Quality of Education (6)
- Usefulness of Faculty Feedback (1)
- Effectiveness of Teaching Methods (2)

No. 3:

- Quality of Teaching (5)
- Availability of Faculty Outside the Classroom (2)

No. 4:

- Faculty Subject Knowledge (-)



University honours Dr. John Mitterer for commitment to teaching excellence

Professor John Mitterer, an Associate Professor in the Psychology Department, was recently chosen as the recipient of the 2003 Brock University Award for Distinguished Teaching. This award recognizes a significant commitment to providing and developing quality learning experiences for students in addition to valuable contributions in curriculum development and mentoring of colleagues.

Mitterer has been a faculty member at Brock University since 1981 and is highly regarded for his expertise in the innovative use of educational technologies for teaching. Mitterer, who holds a PhD in Cognitive Psychology, has also taught or has been cross appointed in the Departments of Child and Youth Studies, Communications, Popular Culture and Film, Computer Science, the Institute for Applied Human Development, and the Faculty of Education.

Mitterer has co-taught Brock's first-year Psychology course for 20 years, which means that he has taught some 20,000 Brock students the fundamentals of psychology. He has ensured however, that his approach



Professor John Mitterer

to the course refrains from growing stale or stagnant.

"I have incessantly invented and reinvented myself as a teacher, as I search for what will invite my students to successful educational experiences," he says. "I have always remained open to new ideas about teaching, whether they spring from informed practice, theory, or research."

His work in introductory psychology is aimed at creating a cognitive apprenticeship environment for his students through the use of technology. His interest in the use of computers in education has led him to develop CD-ROMs, videodiscs, Web sites and, most recently, to implement an online seminar component for his course, one that allows small groups of students to engage in discussions about psychology in an online environment as well as in Brock's seminar classrooms.

Students have recognized Mitterer as a student-friendly and extraordinary teacher, who is enthusiastic, well equipped, experienced, interesting, enjoyable, ambitious and encouraging. One student describes him as a "dynamic lecturer," while another student indicates that Mitterer "knows his stuff, and keeps the class interesting."

Mitterer continues to work on his ultimate dream, a fully integrated instructional learning environment for the teaching and learning of introductory psychology, including textbook, electronic and web-based components.

3M award-winner is new CTLET Director - *continued from page 1.*

Connolly is quick to credit her own teachers for helping her shape best-teaching practices. "I had some really good teachers who were willing to take some risks for me and supported me — I was a bit of an unorthodox student," she says. "They were good teachers because they really tried to understand the people they were teaching. I saw that as an extension of their teaching. I didn't see it as being extraordinary — that's what you are supposed to do."

Connolly was one of eight recipients to receive the prestigious national award this year from 3M Canada and STLHE. This is the only national teaching award of its kind in Canada. It is given to individuals who not only excel in the teaching of their own courses but also demonstrate an exceptionally high degree of leadership and commitment to the improvement of university teaching across disciplines. Connolly is the fifth Brock Professor to be named a 3M Teaching Fellow.

"This award is great for me, but it's even better for students," she says. "They get the sense of the thoughtfulness that goes into teaching on an everyday basis. Awards allow you to model good teaching. When people win awards, it raises the bar for everyone else."

As the new Director of CTLET, Connolly will be working closely with faculty to promote the scholarship of teaching.

"I am delighted and proud to be accepting this position and I applaud Brock University for its foresight and integrity in making a serious commitment to the visibility, status and support of teaching," Connolly said.

"Certainly, teaching innovation, development and scholarship are equal partners with research and service in a robust academic profile, and encouraging their ongoing and complementary nature makes sense in our complex and ever-changing contemporary post-secondary context," she said. "Given my long history with the excellent personnel and programs in CTLET and Information Technology Services, I am looking forward to great adventures ahead."

Brock's success in 3M fellowships - *continued from page 1.*

Education and Kinesiology, in 2001; Professor Barry Joe, the current Director of the Centre for Digital Humanities and a Professor of Communications as well as of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures, in 2000; Professor Don Ursino, now retired from the Department of Biological Sciences, in 1991, and Professor Clarke Thomson, now retired from the Department of Geography, in 1989.

Six faculty members honoured at Spring Convocation

Brock University honoured six faculty members for their contributions to teaching as part of the Spring 2003 Convocation.

Recipients of the annual Faculty Award of Excellence for Teaching are chosen by a selection committee from each Faculty which includes representation of faculty, staff and students. Among other criteria, nominees must have a reputation for superior teaching and be recognized for this quality by students and colleagues. They must demonstrate

creativity and excellence in the development of new course/program teaching materials, and they must set a high standard and successfully motivate students to attain such a standard.

The CTLET would like to congratulate this year's recipients of the Faculty awards for excellence in teaching:

- Professor Lorne Adams, Department of Physical Education and Kinesiology, Faculty of Applied Health Sciences

- Professor Carol Sales, Department of Management and Marketing, Faculty of Business

- Professor Tony Mollica, Pre-Service Department, Faculty of Education

- Professor Susan Spearey, Department of English, Faculty of Humanities

- Professor David DiBattista, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences

- Professor Heather Gordon, Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Mathematics and Science

Library and CTLET partnership sees fruition

By Margaret Grove,
University Librarian

What began almost three years ago as a casual conversation about potential alliances between the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies (CTLET) and the University Library has developed into a promising partnership. The most visible evidence of this collaboration is the CTLET's new location on the north Thistle corridor, next to the Library's newly constructed e-classroom. Space for both the CTLET and the e-classroom became available when Cataloguing and Collections staff vacated this area to move to the 11th floor.

Designing the new e-classroom, a shared resource for the Library and the CTLET, was

a fascinating and challenging undertaking. Although technology is integral to the e-classroom, there was a clear focus from the outset on the need to design this space around teaching and learning needs rather than the rigidities of specific technologies. Flexibility was one of the most important design principles — in order to accommodate different teaching strategies and unexpected learning interactions, the room was planned to incorporate as much flexibility as possible. In concrete terms, this means modular, mobile tables rather than fixed desks, and a wireless network to support the use of portable devices such as laptops and tablets. Careful attention was also given to aesthetics, social ambience, lighting and other such details to make the room a comfortable space for people.

Once all of the construction details have been completed, the University community will have an opportunity to see this wonderful facility at an

open house.

I am delighted to see the joint plans of the CTLET and the Library take shape and extend a very warm welcome to the CTLET.

New location for CTLET

Effective October 1, the CTLET moved to its new location in TH253 adjacent to the Library's e-classroom. Although an official "Open House" is in the works, the staff of the Centre extends a warm invitation to all members of the Brock community who wish to stop by and see the new space. The Centre has also assumed responsibility for the facilities in the former Electronic Learning Research and Development Lab in Welch Hall where we will continue to explore the instructional benefits of a variety of e-learning activities. Drop in to either location to visit our staff and/or our resources for effective teaching.

CTLET

Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies



Technology support provided by specialist



Matt Clare

The Centre would like to welcome Matt Clare who officially joined the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies (CTLET) as its Educational

Technologies Support Specialist this past spring.

This new position involves supporting instructors with their use of learning objects, WebCT, the Web and other emerging educational technologies. None of these technologies, nor the CTLET itself, are new to Matt. He graduated in the spring with his Honours in Communications Policy from Brock, and while still a student he worked as a Learning Technology Developer through a partnership with the CTLET, Information Technology Services (ITS) and Brock's Experience Plus program.

While employed as a Learning Technology Developer, Matt designed the first Learning Object that Brock submitted to Ontario's Co-operative Learning Object Exchange (CLOE), which later became the first Learning Object in the repository to be re-used at a different institution.

Since the start of his employment, Matt has worked with faculty from across the University to develop their WebCT courses, and has designed Brock's new WebCT login screen and the CTLET Web site. If you have any questions about educational technologies or if you are willing to share ideas for integrating technology into your teaching, contact Matt, at ext. 4734, or by e-mail: Matt.Clare@brocku.ca

The CTLET's new Web site

As the Internet matures, the qualifications for an effective Web site have become more rigorous. While the CTLET's previous Web site had staked out an important early interest in the World Wide Web, a new site was needed to move from marking space on the Internet to making a contribution.

The new look of the site brings a crisp design with a prominent Flash animation which features those making a difference in teaching at Brock. The site is now driven by a Content Management System (CMS) — this means that information can be edited instantly by the persons with the information, not just the person with the technical skills. What a CMS means to visitors to the site is that the content is always up-to-date and worth frequent visits. The redesign has also brought enhancements to a number of specific areas:

- A fully browseable calendar of events is complemented by online registration;
- News about teaching at Brock is prominently featured on every page;
- The site now complies with standards for accessibility;
- A WebCT FAQ assists students and instructors to find help within the broad spectrum of WebCT related services as quickly as possible;
- Information, such as a list of Brock's teaching award winners, can be found on the CTLET Web site through the powerful Google™ search engine.

Lastly, if this issue of Brock Teaching has sparked your interest, you can find this and other back issues as PDF files under the Publications section at: www.brocku.ca/ctl/

The dog ate my diskette and other stories

By Professor Jon Radue

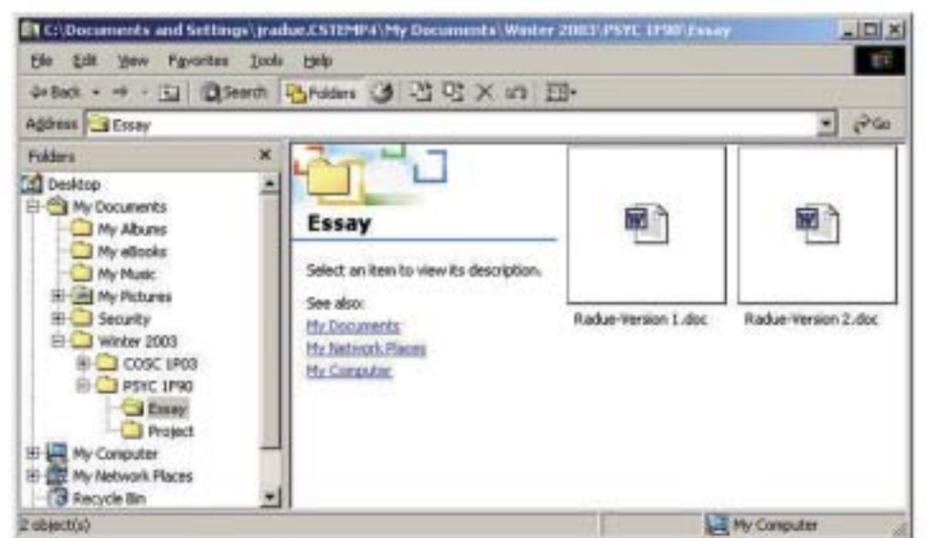
What can we, as faculty, do to help our students maintain the integrity of their work and their files? The answer lies in proper backup procedures and versioning — intelligent use of well-known procedures can go a long way towards providing proper security.

Let's have a look at a simple technique to use at Brock which has the elements required to protect a student from both unanticipated plagiarism charges, and from devouring canine mouths.

What is essentially needed is a technique to keep a running dated and time-stamped journal of progress in completing an assignment, as well as secure and convenient backups.

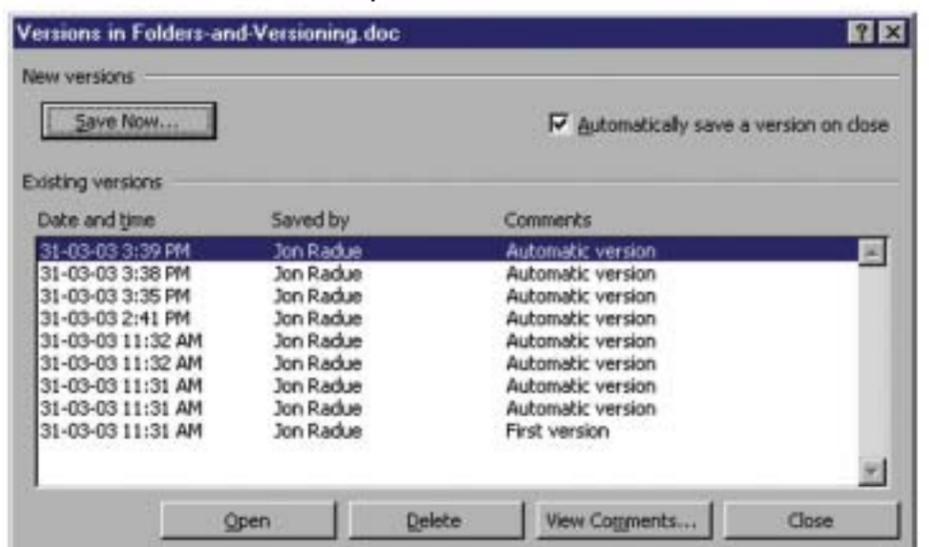
We start by maintaining folders and files on a student's network disk at Brock, in addition to a diskette if the student works at home as well.

Each semester create an appropriately named folder, such as "Winter 2003." Inside that folder create folders for each course, and inside each course, folders for each required assignment. These folders can be created in advance! Consider the following:



Here we have a folder called "Winter 2003" containing folders for courses "COSC 1P03" and "PSYC 1F90." In "PSYC 1F90" are two folders, one for an essay and one for a project. In the essay folder we find two documents, saved deliberately with different names specifying the version number, using the "Save As..." option on the File menu. (Note that these folders were created on the C: drive, but could as easily have been created on the Brock network drive. The network drive is also backed-up regularly by Brock so that 'lost' documents could be retrieved in an emergency.) Peer reviews and other documents can also be kept in the appropriate folder.

The real utility of using the networked disk comes in the proof that the student did work as of the date that it was saved, and thus a verified trail of dated material is available. In addition, if one uses Microsoft Word's "Versions..." menu choice (on the "File" menu), and places a checkmark next to the "Automatically save a version on close" box, then MS Word will save a different version of the document every time the document is saved or closed!



If one needs to revert to a previously saved version, just select "Versions..." from the "File" menu and select the version required from the list, and click "Open."

As with all backup and recovery techniques, one must understand the procedure, and one must practice with some dummy files until the details and implications are known and clarified!

Follow similar rules for folders to store e-mail! It is suggested that the student use Brock's e-mail system, accessing it from the Web at <http://webmail.brocku.ca>

See also: <http://bedfordstmartins.com/technotes/techtiparchive/ttip020501.htm>

Upcoming Faculty Development in Educational Technologies

Date	Time	Location	Topic	Facilitator
Wed. Nov. 26/03	12 -1:00 pm	Senate Chamber	Cognitive Apprenticeship, Technology in Large Classes	John Mitterer, Psychology
Wed. Dec. 3/03	10 -11:30 am	WH 147	Digital Wine Tasting	Mike Laurence, CTLET
Thurs. Dec. 11/03	10 -12:00 pm	IT Training Room	Basic WebCT	Jill Grose, CTLET Matt Clare, CTLET
Tues. Dec. 16/03	10 - 12:00 pm	IT Training Room	Advanced WebCT	Jill Grose, CTLET Matt Clare, CTLET

No Place to Learn - a critique of higher education

Reviewed by Jill Grose, Associate Director, CTLET

No Place to Learn, written by Tom Pocklington and Alan Tupper, both Professors in the Department of Political Science at the University of Alberta, is an interesting, albeit controversial, read. The premise of the book is that, despite the increasing rhetoric in universities which asserts that scholarship includes both teaching and research, teaching remains undervalued and unrewarded in Canadian universities and, as a result, students are being short changed. The undervaluation of teaching is perpetuated by “the myth of mutual enrichment,” namely the notion that “good researchers make good teachers.”

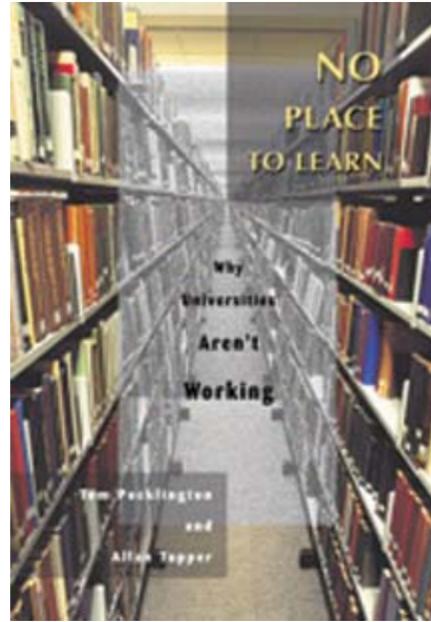
According to Pocklington and Tupper, the myth of mutual enrichment works to direct institutional resources towards the support for research (which is in turn rewarded by various granting agencies) and to allow universities to argue ways in which they are distinctively different from colleges. In theory, a good researcher is at the cutting edge of the knowledge in his or her field and is passionate about conveying that knowledge. The myth perpetuates the notion that active researchers create knowledge and exciting courses while teachers simply transmit knowledge. But, according to Pocklington and Tupper,

BOOK REVIEW

No Place to Learn: Why Universities Aren't Working (2002)
Tom Pocklington, Alan Tupper
UBC Press, 224 pages

the reality is that today's research has become more and more specialized and is often not understood by, or relevant to, undergraduate students who are still struggling with basic theoretical considerations. Moreover, Pocklington and Tupper argue that university systems reward professors for their research publications (which are not necessarily read by undergraduates) and for quantity over quality. For many faculty, particularly in research intensive universities, teaching is then relegated to part-time and sessional instructors who are underpaid and undervalued.

While there is much in this book that is oversimplified, particularly in its assertion that “Canadian universities no longer provide effective, high quality undergraduate education,” there is much that rings true. Of note is their argument that, despite the 40/40/20 model of faculty roles and responsibilities, teaching and research are neither mutually enriching nor balanced in Canadian institutions because “university practices contradict university ideology.”



They cite three persuasive arguments for disproving the “mutual enrichment” theory: 1) professors are awarded “course reliefs” and “buy out” time to conduct research but the reverse is often unheard of; 2) teaching responsibilities are contracted out to sessional instructors who do not conduct research; 3) new faculty are often awarded a reduced teaching load in order to develop their research, but not their teaching competencies. In reality, then, research and teaching are not mutually enriching but rather mutually antagonistic endeavours in that they frequently compete for time and resources.

Pocklington and Tupper suggest a number of recommendations for improving university education and providing undergraduate students with “a place to learn.” Among others, they suggest that universities should put a greater emphasis on the quality rather than the quantity of research publications, particularly early on in a faculty member's career; universities should reverse the practice of sessional lecturers teaching junior courses and tenured faculty teaching advanced specialized courses (so that tenured faculty can spend more, not less, time with undergraduate students); and universities should engage in training graduate students (the future professorate) to teach as well as to conduct research. In fact, doctoral candidates should be required to take courses not only in the mechanics of teaching but also in issues relating to “the history, problems and prospects of university education.”

While there is much in this book to annoy or anger some readers, (probably because each institution would see itself as exempted from the researchers' criticisms), there is also a great deal that is refreshingly honest. Much of what is argued will resonate with faculty members who have felt the need to publish or perish. This book is a recommended read for anyone who teaches and researches in higher education.

TAs devoted to professional development in teaching

On September 15, 115 Teaching Assistants gathered for a full-day event to discuss the joys and challenges of being a Brock TA. Presentations from Human Resources, the TA Union, the Vice-President Academic, the Library, the Student Development Centre and the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies oriented teaching assistants to the resources of the University. Five concurrent workshops on teaching and learning issues allowed TAs to gather in smaller groups to discuss topics related to empowering learners, evaluation and assessment, active learning, academic integrity and effective lab demonstrating. The CTLET wishes to thank Darren Harper, Fiona McMurrin, Sherri

Young, Stephen Gray, Terry Boak, Candice Dahl, Les McCurdy Myers, Maureen Connolly, Lorne Adams, Jill Grose, Gail Neff, Jon Radue, Wanda Gilmore, Matt Clare, Suzanne Parm and Kelly Hartle for devoting time and energy to making this day a success.

The Long Range Planning Committee has recommended that TA training be made mandatory across the institution. Some departments already work closely with TAs to orient them to the roles and responsibilities of teaching seminars or labs. Given the recent *Globe and Mail* survey in which Brock TAs ranked number one in the country, there is no doubt that Brock teaching assistants are already a committed and dedicated group!

New Resources in the CTLET

- **Essential Elements: Prepare, Design, and Teach Your Online Course** (2002), Elbaum, B, McIntyre, C, Smith, A., Atwood Publishing.
- **What is the Use of Lectures?** (2000) Bligh, D., Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- **Lecturing: A Practical Guide** (2002) Brown, S., & Race, P., Stylus Publishing

Helping students with their study skills

Brock's Student Development Centre is there to help your students sharpen existing learning strategies, and to develop new skills.

The Centre's Learning Skills Services offers a variety of workshops that address a range of academic concerns from exam and essay writing skills to individual study habits.

Fran Young, Senior Learning Skills Instructor, says it is important that programs are set up to meet the busy timetables of today's students.

In addition to the scheduled workshops offered by the Centre, students now have the option of ordering group sessions for suitable dates and times.

Here are some examples of workshop options:

Order a Workshop

Students can arrange a session for a group of at least five students who wish to take one of the Study Skills Workshops at a time convenient for them. The students

are required to fill out a registration form on which they will indicate the name of the workshop they are ordering and a suggestion of dates and times that will suit the group. Students submit their request, along with a registration fee to the Student Development Centre.

Snap Shops

These one-hour workshops are tightly focused on a single topic. Presently, topics available include: Overcoming Procrastination, Handling Exam Anxiety, Setting Your Goals, How to Write an Abstract, How to Proofread, Edit and Revise Your Paper, Improving Memory, How to Write a Thesis Statement, How to Write a Critique, and How to Write Multiple Choice Exams, and more. These workshops are offered on a scheduled basis. Students can also request an Order a Workshop.

For more information about the Learning Skills Services available to students, please contact Fran Young, at ext. 3114.

Brock University,
Centre for Teaching, Learning and
Educational Technologies,
Web site:
www.brocku.ca/ctl

Brock Teaching is published twice per year by:
Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies, Thistle
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Brock Teaching is produced by the Office of External Relations,
Brock University.

Photography: Divino Mucciante