



FEBRUARY 2017 ISOTL NEWS

New Collaborative SoTL Grant Opportunities

In only a few months the Institute will be moving into the Riddell Library and Learning Centre! The new space in the RLLC will be a venue for our SoTL community to gather, collaborate, and conduct research. To celebrate the opportunities the venue will permit, ISoTL is proud to launch a collection of new grants with support from TransCanada.

The *TransCanada Mentorship Grants* (\$5000) will support MRU research teams of a SoTL mentor and a SoTL newcomer. Over the course of their collaborative project, the more experienced SoTL researcher will mentor their partner in designing and implementing a SoTL project and identify appropriate publication venues for SoTL.

Upcoming Deadlines

March 1, 2017

**ORSCE Student
Dissemination
Award**

March 15, 2017

**ISSOTL17
Proposals**

March 16, 2017

**TransCanada
Mentorship Grants**

March 16, 2017

**TransCanada
Undergraduate
Research Grants**

The *TransCanada Undergraduate SoTL Research Assistant Grants* (\$1000) and the *TransCanada Undergraduate SoTL Research Partner Grants* (\$3000) both aim to facilitate increased student participation in teaching and learning research projects with faculty.

Finally, the *TransCanada Undergraduate SoTL Dissemination Award* (\$1500) will permit students to join their faculty supervisor at a SoTL or disciplinary education conference to present their SoTL findings.

Additional information on each of these awards will be posted to the Institute's website in the coming days.

ISoTL Network USRA recruitment poster at Student Research Days

Looking to recruit a research student for your SoTL project? The Institute for SoTL invites you to submit a job posting for a recruitment poster. The poster will be displayed at Student Research Days, helping faculty and prospective research students to connect. Job postings should include:

(1) a description of the project in less than 100 words, (2) a brief list of duties, (3) required qualifications such as completed courses or disciplinary expertise, (4) your contact information, and (5) your photo. Job postings are required by March 24 to be included on the poster.

Workshop on Research Partnerships with Undergraduates

Undergraduate research experiences are a high-impact practice for a liberal education (Kuh, 2008).

Furthermore, successful Tri-Council funding generally requires the applicant to have experience supervising HQP (highly qualified personnel). However, just hiring a research assistant does not guarantee a fruitful relationship.

Faculty can improve productivity of undergraduate researchers by setting clear goals and learning outcomes for the research experience. The Institute for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning is offering a workshop on Research Partnerships with Undergraduates on March 21. In this 1.5 hour workshop, participants will practice establishing a research learning plan and learn how to facilitate a research training regime. A registration link for the workshop will be sent to the Institute's email list.

To join the ISoTL mailing list, contact Anne Johnston (ajohnston@mtroyal.ca).

Kuh, G. 2008. *High-impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Volunteer for ISSOTL17

Mount Royal University is co-hosting the International Society for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning conference in 2017 with the University of Calgary. There's still time to get involved! Email Brett McCollum (bmccollum@mtroyal.ca) or Anne Johnston (ajohnston@mtroyal.ca).



Community Member Highlight

Brett McCollum, Acting Director of ISoTL, Professor of Chemistry

My research experience began during the first year of my undergraduate studies. For four years, I was an undergraduate researcher in Dr. Paul Percival's SFU Muonium Chemistry research group, investigating the reactivity of novel systems using the radioactive antimatter muon. The experiences I gained during that time motivated me to pursue my PhD, and ultimately led me to my current faculty position.

Appreciative of my own experiences, I strive to 'pay-it-forward' and mentor undergraduates in authentic research projects. As many of you know, it's a challenge to support undergraduate researchers due to limitations of time and funding. Even the lack of dedicated research space on campus has been a barrier for many researchers. In my case, the absence of a chemistry major has restricted me to recruiting students from other majors, with the hope that they are sufficiently passionate about my research to contribute in a meaningful way.

Fortunately, through my recruitment and cultivation efforts, my team has had a steady influx of talent. My former USRAs, Ana and Yuritzel, won second place in the student poster competition at the Canadian Society for Chemistry conference. We continued our collaboration after the conference, co-authoring a paper on *Representational Technologies and Learner Problem-Solving Strategies in Chemistry* (McCollum et al., 2016).

This year, my team has worked with Dr. Layne Morsch of the University of Illinois Springfield on a SoTL project, studying the barriers and benefits of international collaborative learning assignments. Undergraduate researchers from my team will present our findings at the American Chemical Society conference in San Francisco. In my experience, conference dissemination provides our students with a new appreciation for research as professional practice.

One of my former students has attributed her undergraduate research experience as a primary factor in advancing her graduate school application.

"My invaluable undergraduate training has been a catalyst for my current graduate school trajectory. I will carry forward the skills and competencies I gained at Mount Royal University in order to meet my academic and clinical aspirations." – Cassidy Fleming, PhD Candidate in Rehabilitation Science at the University of Alberta



(Left-to-right) Darlene, Cassidy, Kara, Brett, and Brandon at the 2016 Symposium on SoTL.

Although we face challenges when engaging students in authentic research experiences, if you haven't yet had the experience of supervising a team of undergraduate researchers I encourage you to try it. I consider it one of the most rewarding aspects of my research.

McCollum, B., Sepulveda, A., & Moreno, Y. (2016). Representational technologies and learner problem solving strategies in chemistry. *Teaching & Learning Inquiry*, 4 (2).

Submit your SoTL profile of 300-400 words (including a photo) for inclusion in a future newsletter, or suggest a peer as a profile subject.