Welcome

Greetings from the Dean and Associate Dean

Welcome to the second edition of the Faculty of Health and Community Studies Research and Scholarship Bulletin (RSB). Recently the Board of Governors at Mount Royal approved the Academic, Student Services and Research plans and will be reviewing the Institutional plan in the near future. A key component of each plan is the commitment to the guiding principles of being: student centered, accessible, accountable, community-oriented, collaborative, learning and retention-focused, and visionary.

Aligned with these newly developed university strategic plans, the Faculty of Health and Community Studies embraces the scholarship of discovery, integration, application and teaching as outlined in Boyer’s (1990) model. We view research and scholarship as integral to teaching excellence and the provision of quality post-secondary education. Consistent with our mission, there is a strong commitment to research and scholarship that is integrated into classroom activities and service to our communities.

In this edition of the RSB you will find numerous examples of research and scholarship “in action”. We are pleased to share course-based student projects, as well as research and scholarship activities of the Faculty. We are also quite pleased to share a number of activities that highlight the interprofessional activities being carried out by faculty and in collaboration with our Centre of Child Well-Being, Centre for Criminology and Justice Research, and our Integrative Health Institute.

Sincerely,

Dr. Chad London, Dean

Dr. Vince Salyers, Associate Dean

Our Vision: Inspiring students to make a difference.
Creating Compassion after Cancer

The Canadian Cancer Society estimates that in 2011 more than 170,000 Canadians will be diagnosed with some form of cancer, with an estimated 75,000 deaths.

As mortality rates have continued to decline over the last 20 years, more and more individuals are surviving the life-changing experience of cancer. The experience of surviving a life-threatening illness can incontrovertibly alter an individual, but for many working-age people the need to return to the work can lead to further complications.

At Mount Royal, researchers Lori Buchart and Tracy Powell are committed to finding new ways to improve the experience of returning to work after a life-threatening illness, particularly those who have been afflicted with cancer. Their research is providing an opportunity for organizations and people to develop best practices that can create a model of returning to work (R2W) that not only improves the chances of success for the survivor but for the organization as well.

This competing paradigm in any R2W program is the primary focus of Buchart and Powell’s research, and their unique perspectives are the key to developing a balanced program. A Professor in Mount Royal’s School of Nursing, Powell spent her career before academia as an oncology nurse at Calgary’s Tom Baker Cancer Centre, working on clinical trials of new life-saving cancer treatments and working with individuals recovering from cancer. Buchart’s background as a Professor in Mount Royal’s Bissett School of Business with a focus on human resources and training is also coloured by her own experience as a cancer survivor. Marrying the desire to return to work with a program that is flexible enough to accommodate change is necessary to prevent further stress and conflict in the survivor’s workplace. Through interviews with cancer survivors returning to work and human resources professionals, Powell and Buchart were able to draw out where some of the pressure points, and what might be done to alleviate them.

Ultimately, teaching organizations and individuals to be mindful and open to the needs of returning employees is the key to building a successful R2W program. For nurses and HR specialists graduating from Mount Royal’s programs, they have the benefit of professors who are teaching them the essential differences that will give them a better understanding of the real impacts on R2W programs.

For Powell, giving students the capacity to truly understand the needs of both sides is mutually beneficial. “This is not a simple issue of business versus the individual’s needs. Studies have shown that well-treated and empowered workers are more productive. By giving returning workers agency over their experience and the support they need to find the work experience that is right for them, the company is ultimately looking out for its best interest.”

—Colin Brandt, Web Communications Officer, University Advancement, Marketing and Communications

Publications (December 2011 – June 2012)


Presentations (December 2011 – June 2012)


Choate, P. (2012). Helping parents. Presented at How to Win in Adolescent Addiction: Evidence-Based Practice (Conference), Calgary, AB.


Holmgren, J. (2011, Nov). Murder and maggots by Dr. Gail Anderson, Forensic Entomologist, Simon Fraser University. Hosted presentation to Mount Royal University community, Calgary, AB.

Holmgren, J. (2012, Apr). The CSI effect and the Canadian jury. Presentation to Mount Royal University Board of Governors, Calgary, AB.

Holmgren, J., & Tomaszewski, A. (2012, Apr). Why we need to be involved in our justice system. Panelists: Ron Dalton, Exonerree; David Milgaard, Exonerree; Win Wahrer, Director of Client Services, Association in Defence of the Wrongly Convicted (AIDWYC); Dr. Janne Holmgren, Associate Professor; and, Dr. Andreas Tomaszewski, Assistant Professor. Presentation to Mount Royal University community, Calgary, AB.

Jakubec, S. (2012, May). A troublesome intersection of research and social justice literacy: The power and potential of “social organization literacy” for nurses. Institute of Philosophy in Nursing, Banff, AB.

Jakubec, S., & Astle, B. (2012, Feb). Believer or skeptic?: Nursing students practice evidence informed decision making with everyday questions. Western and North-Western Region of the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing, Lethbridge, AB.

Jakubec, S., & Astle, B (2012, Feb). Enlivened research literacy through an examination of the evidence in policy and practice guidelines. Western and North-Western Region of the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing, Lethbridge, AB.


Alisha Clarke, Amilyn Dyck, Kaitlyn Grahl, Kimberly Njaa, Lana Schartenberg, Andrea Siwic, Lisa with their poster presentation on June 8, 2012 at the School of Nursing’s Community Health Nursing Course Conference.


Stanhope-Goodman, S., & Kerr, H. (2012, April). What’s up with IEN assessments in Alberta?”. Poster Presentation at the Partners in Education and Integration of IENs Conference, Winnipeg, MB.


Community-Engaged Scholarship

Nursing students in their second year of studies, placed in clinical groups and working with seventeen various community groups, displayed their work in a poster conference on Friday, April 13, 2012. With enthusiasm and pride, students showcased their community research and health promotion projects. They presented to an interested audience of faculty, student colleagues and community stakeholders.

Community placements included those at MRU (Iniskim Centre, Wellness Centre and the MRU Child Care Centre), Cargill Foods, and others as far afield as Siksika Nation, Strathmore, and High River. Student placements in the city included a variety of seniors housing organizations, schools, and organizations such as the Canadian Liver Foundation, Big Brothers and Sisters, and the Margaret Chisholm Resettlement Centre for new Canadian immigrants. Working together with the community members as partners in health attainment and delivery, the students undertook various research activities conducting focus groups, administering surveys and mapping community assets while looking at relevant literature that related to their community. Many groups conducted screening for cardiovascular risk factors while other groups looked at wellness initiatives, supporting community capacity building and facilitating or supporting projects that served to empower community members toward attaining health related goals defined by the communities themselves. It was a great deal of work done in a compressed period of time and students rose to the task truly making a difference for the community members with which they collaborated. Faculty and community stakeholders alike were proud and impressed with the level of work they accomplished in such a short period of time this winter semester. Spring semester 2012 saw our nursing students being invited back to these and several other community placements when they will continue working toward community partnerships that will move these community members toward health attainment and maintenance. A second annual poster conference took place on Friday, June 8, 2012 and was also a great success.

– Helena Myllykoski, Associate Professor, School of Nursing

Books and Book Chapters (December 2011 – June 2012)


Positive Behaviour Supports for Children Website

In 2008 Linda Fountain, Department of Social Work and Disability Studies, and Dr. Joanne Baxter, Department of Child and Youth Studies, received a grant from Family Supports for Children with Disabilities (FSCD), Alberta Government, to develop a website to provide strategies for Aides supporting children with behavioural challenges due to a disability. This website was launched in 2010 and has been widely used across the country. They have been building on the website since then, launching a portal for teachers and caregivers last fall, and a portal for families and caregivers in February, 2012.

The website is designed for parents and professionals to be able to access useful information whether they have just 10 minutes or several hours to go through it more methodically. It provides information in an engaging way, and addresses different learning styles by using narration, visuals, video, and kinetic interactivities. The website presents evidence based strategies for minimizing challenging behavior, promoting developmental skills, and working as a team. In addition, each portal includes information of particular interest to the targeted user group. The websites are linked, promoting transparency. For example, aides can hear parents talk about the challenges of having someone working with their child in their home, while parents can hear aides discussing the challenges from their perspective.

The team has now received two new grants to continue developing the website. The first grant is to develop training materials for writing effective Individual Service Plans (ISPs). This will include learning materials, presentation PowerPoints, workshop exercises, downloadable TIP Sheets and Templates, and examples of effective and non-effective ISPs. The target audiences will include FSCD Workers, Service Providers, and Families and Caregivers. The second new grant is to develop a video series to help people understand the inner world of children with disabilities and how their experience is manifested in behaviour. Experts as well as parents will participate in making the videos. Both projects will be completed in March 2013. To date, seven grants have been received, totaling $1,143,000.00.

Linda Fountain, Associate Professor, Social Work and Disability Studies

Other Scholarship (December 2011 – June 2012)

Integrative Health Institute, Mount Royal University (2012, May). Addressing the stigma of mental health: A research perspective. Video conference facilitated by Dr. Heather Stuart, Professor and Bell Canada Mental Health and Anti-Stigma Research Chair, Queen’s University. Kingston, ON.

Integrative Health Institute, Mount Royal University (2012, April). Creative Aging Symposium – A Celebration of all Forms of Creativity in Later Life Targeting Aging Services Professionals, Artists, Healers, Baby Boomers and Older Adults, Calgary, AB.


Jakubec, S. (May - June 2012). Lindsay Giles (Recreation and Mental Health Project) – student supervised.


Jakubec, S. (March 2012). Student Research Day, Student Project/ Presentation Mentor (x2 projects), Mount Royal University – student supervised.

Jakubec, S. (January 2012). Distinguished Faculty Award Nominee: Mount Royal University, Calgary, AB.


Don’t Push Your Luck! Evidence-Based Educational Board Game for Children Living with Hemophilia

Andrea Pritchard Kennedy and Lisa Semple, School of Nursing are leading a board game development project for children living with chronic illness; this game was designed by award winning artisans Matt Tolman and Gavan Brown, funded by Bayer Canada, and supported through the Centre for Child Well Being. This game is based on recommendations generated by children from Andrea’s doctoral research. ‘Don’t Push Your Luck!’ is an innovative educational game, designed to inspire discussion between the players about hemophilia, as well as help youth learn how to make decisions that are in their best interests. Each player in ‘Don’t Push Your Luck!’ takes on the role of a child with hemophilia competing to have the most health and balanced lifestyle, while trying to manage the risk they take in their activities. Players are faced with the constant challenge of balancing of risk versus reward. Bayer Canada funded development of this board game, including production of 100 games for distribution at children’s hospitals across the country. Over the past few months we received positive response from over 50 participants in play test focus groups with youth, families and healthcare providers; special thanks to MRBN student Lindsay Read who facilitated play tests at the Alberta Children’s Hospital. Bayer Global recently announced that they will fund our research project to formally test the board game at four sites in Canada and the United States. We hope to adapt the board game for play with children living with other chronic illnesses. The game was presented in Toronto, Ontario on May 5, 2012 in a plenary session at the first National Pediatric Nursing Conference “Canadian Nurses Partnering for Children’s Health”.

– Andrea Pritchard Kennedy, RN, PhD, Principal Investigator, Lisa Semple, RN. MN, Co-Investigator, Centre for Child Well Being, Mount Royal University Matt Tolman & Gavan Brown, Game Designers, Radfactory House of Design Lindsay Read, Research Assistant, MRBN Student
Awards and Honours (December 2011 – June 2012)

Booke, J. (2012, Feb). Doctor of Philosophy degree awarded, The University of Calgary, Calgary, AB.


Clark, D. (2012). Granted Full Professor Rank, Mount Royal University, Calgary, AB.


Jakubec, S.L. (2012). PI- Alberta Addictions and Mental Health Research Partnership Program ($8,000.00).

Jakubec, S.L. (PI). Ministry of Tourism, Parks and Recreation Grant ($5,000.00).

Jarrell, J. (2012). Granted Professor Emerita, Mount Royal University, Calgary, AB.


Lafave, M. (2012). Granted Full Professor Rank, Mount Royal University, Calgary, AB.

Legg, D. (2012, Feb). King Clancy Award: Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons, Toronto, ON.

Legg, D. (2012). Granted Full Professor Rank, Mount Royal University, Calgary, AB.

Winterdyk, J. (2012). Granted Full Professor Rank, Mount Royal University, Calgary, AB.

Social Work Students Present at International Conference

Over the past year social work students, Kristina Bisson, Erika Vincent, and Samantha Leonard worked with their professors, Carolyn Anderson and Yasmin Dean to collaborate with students and faculty from Zayed University to develop a student led presentation on leadership. This is the second time that Mount Royal and Zayed University students have collaborated at the International Women as Global Leaders Conference in the United Arab Emirates.

This year, Education Professor, Dr. Patience Sowa of Zayed University joined Dr. Carolyn Anderson and Yasmin Dean in selecting and preparing students from both universities to work via skype, email, and social networking in developing their vision for sustainable communities. Student Erika Vincent described the experience of presenting at the conference. She said, “It was overwhelming to realize that of all the participants, we were the only first year diploma students presenting at the conference. And then cool to learn that people wanted to hear what we had to say”. “Perhaps most striking was the similarities between students from Zayed University and us” said Kristina Bisson who went on to say, “it’s one thing to talk about other cultures but once you’re immersed in a conference that brings together women from Africa, Asia, the Middle East and a few North Americans, you start understanding the world quite differently”.

Photo courtesy of Social Work student Kristina Brisson
When asked how they will continue their learning, the Mount Royal students said they will maintain the friendships begun with their peers at Zayed University. They are also committed to encouraging other students to consider participating in international opportunities available through Mount Royal.

Samantha Leonard explained, “The experience helped me see the world more broadly. I’d never been out of Canada before. This whole trip; it’ll make me a better social worker”. In addition to making new friends, these MRU Social Work students also met Theo Sowa, CEO of the African Women’s Development Fund. Ms. Sowa attended their presentation and subsequently invited them to apply for internships with her organization.

The 2010 presentation represents one more step in the evolution of this partnership that originated at the 2006 Women as Global Leaders Conference. Dr. Carolyn Anderson described the reason she engages in this type of undergraduate student research saying, “Attendance at international conferences lead students to understand how to fundraise, apply for conferences, collaborate, develop presentations, and then disseminate learning. Really, it’s what they learn in class brought to life”.

Anderson and Dean intend to continue their unique partnership with Zayed University. Planning is currently underway for the next conference. Our next small step for sustainability of this project is to encourage other faculty and their students to join us in Dubai for the 2014 Women as Global Leaders Conference.

—Yasmin Dean, Associate Professor, Social Work and Disability Studies

---


Cardel Place and MRU Child and Youth Action Research Project

In early 2012, Cardel Place introduced a Raise the Bar campaign to increase physical activity levels among children, youth, and families in north-central Calgary. The partnership with support from the Calgary Flames Foundation is a pioneering, multi-year, community-based action research project that was launched to establish baseline fitness levels within north-central Calgary’s children and youth, create evidence-based strategies to increase young peoples’ physical activity levels and to track improvements over time.

According to Mount Royal University President, Dr. David Docherty, “This is pioneering work. It’s the first time that a Canadian public recreation centre and a university are collaborating with the community on an action research project targeted directly at real solutions to increase physical activity.”

Dr. Dwayne Sheehan from the Department of Physical Education and Recreation Studies is the Principal Investigator. Various members from the Faculty of Health and Community Studies are also involved, including the Project Coordinator, Nadine Van Wyk, Dr. David Legg, Dr. Heather Ray, Dr. Julie Booke, and Dr. Joe Pavelka. Additionally, six MRU undergraduate students are working full time on this study this spring. The Project is well underway and the response of the families participating has been very favorable. Highlights to date include:

- Over 270 children (ages 4-12 years) are participating in the study. They have been recruited from the Cardel Place community in north central Calgary as well as partner sites including two middle schools and children from the MRU early childhood program.
- As the project moves forward, members of the research team will continue to recruit more children from various locations in north central Calgary. The study is anticipating a total of 750 children, 250 of which will be part of a ten year longitudinal study.
- The children are eager to participate and learn, especially when they have the opportunity to interact with the MRU research assistants involved in the baseline testing.

We look forward to providing regular updates as the project progresses. For more information please contact the research team leaders at cardelresearch@mtroyal.ca.

– Dwayne Sheehan, Assistant Professor, Physical Education and Recreation Studies

---


Salyers, V. (2012, April). Research Conduct Award: Zeta Mu at Large Chapter, Sigma Theta Tau International, San Diego, CA, USA.


Rural Health Care Providers Care for Victims of Sexual Assault

Nearly four in ten Canadian women have been sexually assaulted. Alberta has the second highest sexual assault rate among the provinces. More than half of the reported assaults in 2005 were committed outside of Edmonton and Calgary. With those kinds of statistics, it’s no wonder professionals in health care, policing and counseling are concerned with providing optimal services for victims. However, rural Albertans face several challenges to providing and accessing services and care for sexual assault. In rural settings, care is usually provided in busy emergency departments by physicians who can rarely be spared for the lengthy exam times to work with victims, nurses who are unfamiliar with procedures, counsellors who are not always available, and police who may not be familiar with either the evidence collection, constraints of health legislation, or the impact of the assault on victims behaviours during interviews. The result is that some rural communities require local police to transport victims hours away to urban centres for better care. This not only removes police from the community, but it takes the victim away from her support network and may cause gaps in her services or follow up.

“It’s not that rural health care workers or other professionals lack the skills necessary to provide optimal care,” says Cathy Carter-Snell, associate professor at Mount Royal University’s Forensic Studies and Forensic Research Network. “They just haven’t seen enough cases to feel comfortable with the procedures.” In other cases it may be that they know what to do but do not have the staff or resources to provide the services required.

Understanding the seriousness of this issue, Cathy and her co-researcher, Sonya Jakubec, sought assistance from ARDN for a project that would help rural nurses, doctors, counsellors, and police feel more comfortable working with victims of sexual assault. The project, Determining Needs of Southern Alberta Rural Communities for Improved Sexual Assault Services, identified the educational and resource needs of professionals in rural Alberta that would assist them in better supporting the victims. The project had many partners including, the Calgary Sexual Assault Response Team, Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse, the University of Calgary, and the RCMP. In addition, three rural sites agreed to be interviewed as focus groups consisting of nurses, physicians, victim service workers and social workers, RCMP and city police.

With the results of their online survey and three focus groups, Cathy and Sonya now believe they have enough information about what professionals working with victims need to provide improved services locally or to better support women who still need to be transported out of the community. What was noted in both the surveys and the focus groups was the significant commitment all professionals had to providing excellence in services. Additionally, the team is seeking funding to develop two key audiovisual materials: a video on the contents and use of the RCMP sexual assault evidence kit, and a podcast of professionals discussing issues in responding to disclosures and reducing secondary victimization. On-site training will be made available to areas who request it. Projects that will continue as a result of this one include developing culturally appropriate materials for Aboriginal women and training in injury assessment and identification. Alberta Health Services will also be working with the team to look at making their sexual assault experts on call in Calgary available for consultation when women arrive at police stations or health centres.

“We hope that sexual assault service providers feel more supported and notice increased knowledge and comfort when working with victims of sexual assault,” Cathy says. “We are trying to support them. And we hope the support trickles down to the victims so they feel better cared for in their own communities.”

— Melissa St. Dennis, Communications Officer, Alberta Rural Development Network
We wish to acknowledge the contributions of the following individuals:

Colin Brandt, Web Communications Officer, University Advancement, Mount Royal University

Helena Myllykoski, Associate Professor, School of Nursing, Mount Royal University

Linda Fountain, Associate Professor, Social Work and Disability Studies, Mount Royal University

Andrea Pritchard Kennedy, Associate Professor, School of Nursing, Mount Royal University

Yasmin Dean, Associate Professor, Social Work and Disability Studies, Mount Royal University

Dwayne Sheehan, Assistant Professor, Physical Education and Recreation Studies, Mount Royal University

Melissa St. Dennis, Communications Officer, Alberta Rural Development Network