

## Anti-Racist Teaching

### *In the context of the events of September 11th*

Olivia Petrie, CST, and Diane Naugler, Graduate Program in Women's Studies & Graduate Students' Association

On September 24, 2001 the Graduate Students' Association, in collaboration with the CST and the Centre for Human Rights and Equity, held a session for TAs to discuss teaching-related concerns arising from the tragic events of September 11<sup>th</sup>. The session was organized in response to concerns raised by TAs about difficulties they were experiencing in their teaching. Some instructors had expressed uncertainty about how to respond to the high emotions, tensions and incidents of racism that were occurring in the classroom. Others were attempting to determine to what extent, if at all, the ongoing effects of the tragedy should be brought into their classrooms – and, more importantly, how to do so. Yet others wished to find ways to support themselves and their students, particularly those of Muslim descent, during this difficult period.

In attendance at the session were several key faculty and staff who generously offered advice and insights into these concerns. This article summarizes some of the ideas generated at the session. As such, we recognize that each instructor's own knowledge, experience and social frame of reference will play a role in determining which of these ideas will be appropriate or feasible for your use. Each instructor's teaching principles and classroom context will likewise factor in to how you might structure your own responses. Nevertheless, we hope that these ideas can be modified, adapted, or used as a springboard to other innovations for responding to heightened emotions, tensions and incidents of racism in the classroom.

### **Strategies for responding to heightened emotions, tensions and incidents of racism in the classroom**

#### **Develop and observe groundrules**

In order to facilitate effective classroom discussion on controversial or difficult topics it is important to take measures to ensure that it will take place in a climate of openness, support and respect. The provision of clear boundaries within which teaching and learning can take place is the key to creating and maintaining this climate. Many instructors provide explicit guidelines to their students in the form of groundrules that set out expectations on how classroom discussions will proceed. Others may choose to develop such guidelines with their students through discussion over one or two classes. Instructors can also provide ongoing support to students' development of effective communication techniques, such as active listening, examining different viewpoints, and expressing comments in ways that will promote learning rather than defensiveness and conflict. The active encouragement of students to contribute constructively to classroom discussion, through groundrules and ongoing support, will go a long way toward diminishing the potential for tension, confrontation and personal attacks that can occur in the classroom.

Occasionally, however, there may be situations (such as inflammatory statements, name-calling, other personal attacks) in the classroom where tensions and conflict arise despite clear ground rules and ongoing support for constructive communication techniques. The heightened tensions and diversity of responses to the tragic events of September 11<sup>th</sup> may increase the potential for this to occur. To deal with such incidents, our faculty resource people offered a number of excellent strategies.

*(Continued on page 2)*

#### UPCOMING EVENTS:

*Monday, February 11, 2002*  
**Teaching & Learning  
Symposium**

*April 29, 30, May 1, 2002*  
**Course Design Institute**

**Watch for further details of these  
events to be announced shortly.**

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**(Anti-Racist Teaching ... from page 1)****Probe underlying assumptions**

Probe the assumptions that underlie the statement by asking the student for an explanation or elaboration of the subject that led to the statement. Ask questions like, “*That’s extraordinary, can you tell us more about ‘xx?’*” to encourage students to examine the ideas behind their statement. Avoid personalizing the dialogue, rather keep the discussion focussed on the comment that was made.

**Bring the class into discussion**

Provide an opportunity for students to voice their concerns related to the statement on the understanding that each individual is limited by his/her own social location and experience and so making room for different experiences and opinions. Spend a few moments finding out how the statement is perceived by other members of the class. In doing so, a broader range of viewpoints can be brought to bear on the topic. Depending on the statement, you may wish to offer to talk to students specifically after the class if they wish to do so.

**Encourage critical thinking**

Use the statement as an opportunity to help students think critically, to learn to question what they hear and read, to read more broadly and seek out alternative sources of information, and to share that information with each other.

**Connect to course content**

If you determine that the issue can usefully inform your course content, you may consider adapting your teaching accordingly. Some instructors have integrated issues related to the September 11th events in a variety of creative ways to enrich studies in their courses.

**Break into smaller groups**

Break the class into smaller groups to examine the issue from all sides or to discuss a related question. Construct open-ended questions to stimulate thought and discourage right/wrong answers. This allows the opportunity for students to pool their ideas, experience and knowledge and enables everyone to contribute. This has the additional benefit of limiting the audience should the student in question prove particularly disruptive. Have each group report their findings back to the full group.

**Create listening dyads**

Break students up into pairs. Using a relatively easy topic, have one student talk without interruption for a short period of time. At the same time the other individual in the pair listens knowing that he/she will have to paraphrase the speaker’s remarks at the end of that time. Have students switch roles and repeat the process. This proven strategy demonstrates to students how well or how poorly they listen and how easily misinterpretations can occur. They can subsequently work to improve this skill.

**Establish a talking circle**

Establish a talking circle or “round” to give each student a chance to speak on an issue without interruption, allowing students to pass if they wish. Consider using an object or talking stick that is passed from student to student, and only the student holding the object can speak while everyone else listens. This has proven to be an effective way to de-fuse heated discussion between two or three students as it requires students to listen to each other and provides an opportunity for some to cool down. This strategy is an adaptation of some First Nations/Aboriginal ceremonial practices.

**Take a break**

If the comment takes the discussion into an area in which you are uncomfortable or emotionally unable to deal with, or if it has led, or is likely to lead, to conflict or confrontation, don’t feel compelled to pursue the matter further. Instead, find a way to break up the flow, perhaps by acknowledging to the students that the discussion has become difficult, or that more information is needed, and suggest that you set the subject aside for a later date. Consider bringing in guest lecturers, facilitators or colleagues to inform the ensuing discussion.

**Write and reflect**

Take a moment for quiet reflection as a way of putting an issue aside and moving on to something else. Suggest that students take a moment to write down their thoughts in relation to the issue and either turn them in or hold on to them. At a later date you can return to the issue in a structured way. This is an effective method for helping students deal with strong reactions or controversial subject matter, and also provides the instructor time to ‘chill’ and think carefully about how they might process the issue.

**De-fuse disruptive behaviour**

You may encounter a situation where a student disruption would most appropriately be dealt with through the procedures set out in the *Senate policy on dealing with disruptive and/or harassing behaviour by students in academic settings*. There are many ways to de-escalate disruptive situations as they occur: remain calm and polite, offer to talk privately to the individual during a break, allow a little time to vent and use active listening to get to the root of the problem and help resolve the concerns. If, after you’ve warned the student that their behaviour is disruptive, they persist, you can ask the student to leave. If the student refuses to leave, you may ask Security to assist.

**Get help**

In the event that you are in immediate danger or feel that your students’ safety is in jeopardy (this is different from just being in an uncomfortable situation), call or ask a student to call Security (416-736-5333). Security will invoke the emergency procedures with the Metro Police. For further information on dealing with emergencies, consult the salmon-coloured pages of the York Internal Directory.

**Self care**

Many facilitators and participants at the session stressed the importance of self-care. Many instructors found themselves juggling a diverse set of roles (teacher, facilitator, rule-setter, defender, counsellor ...). As you find ways to support your students, particularly those who are being subject to ethno-racial backlash, it is also important to attend to your own needs. It is likewise important to know your own position on the issues, on what you base your fears and judgement, and conversely where your own biases lie. Seek out supportive colleagues in your department and elsewhere with whom you can debrief and discuss issues and concerns that arise in the classroom on an ongoing basis. Remember that as instructors you have full access to the counselling services at York.

**Offer new ideas**

The ideas in this list were generated by faculty and staff at the session as examples of how instructors might effectively deal with tensions and incidents of racism that might come up in the classroom. This article will be posted on the CST website, and if you have other ideas, please send them to the CST and we will add them to the list.

*For further ideas & information see page 7*

# Dialogue and Resistance in the Classroom

Carl E. James, Faculty of Education

*This article is excerpted from a longer article, *Diversity in the Classroom: Engagement and Resistance*, that appears in Janice Newton et al (eds) 2001. *Voices from the Classroom: Reflections on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* (Toronto, Garamond Press). In order to conform to the newsletter format, a substantial portion of the original article has been omitted here. Readers are encouraged to read Professor James' article in its entirety in *Voices*, available at the York Bookstore.*

The new population of students enters university with the expectation that the principles of access and equity will be reflected in the pedagogical approach to their education and that their cultural interests and needs will be recognized and supported. In using a critical approach to education, we attempt to meet these needs and interests while recognizing and validating the students' lived experiences and engaging them in dialogue, dialogue that is premised on the "discourse of empowerment." This approach engages students through dialogue in theorizing about social issues so as to produce transformative action. Through dialogue we provide space for students to contribute to their own learning based on their experiences and with the understanding that they regard the teaching-learning process as one in which their participation is valued. Dialogues also enable educators to learn about the students' experiences in order to build on them. A dialogical approach is moreover a way of inviting students to question, and educators to hear about students' struggles with new or contradictory information. And, it allows students, in bell hooks' words, to "come to voice" (hooks, 1988).

But getting students to articulate their positions in class is not always easy. Indeed, traditional schooling may have taught them that there are right and wrong answers, that teachers are endowed with the information, and that their role is to listen, take notes and be ready to reproduce the notes in the examination. No wonder some are reluctant to talk in class. Many students might perceive the dialogical approach as intimidating. Some might fear being challenged or appearing uninformed or unintelligent. Those who participate might be perceived as "talking too much," and

consequently might be criticized. Indeed questioning what students believe or have come to accept as "truth" or "fact" is always a problem.

Students are sometimes reluctant to question things, not because they are unfamiliar with the issues being discussed, but because they accept the idea that some issues are best addressed by "experts," such as the educator/professor, or by people whom they believe understand these issues because of their lived experiences. For instance, white students or male students tend to expect racial minorities or women to address issues of racism or sexism. However, it is necessary to encourage all students to address these issues. They have experiences with these issues as well, and it is important for them to engage in critical analyses of these subjects. It is crucial that students understand that they all bring insights and interpretations, which are informed by their particular identities and experiences.

We must avoid making those perceived as "having the experience" the only voices that are heard on such issues. In not encouraging other voices, we could be reinforcing sexism, racism, heterosexism or classism, in that, as bell hooks points out, we take the burden of accountability away from those who consider themselves exempt, while placing it on those who are perceived as having experiences with the issues.

Sharing one's ideas sometimes means taking risks, and dialogue sometimes produces tension and conflict. Our culture tends to avoid what is perceived as "conflict" or "confrontation." When it arises in classes, it is expected that the course director will *resolve* it and provide closure. The expectation is that individuals should be made to feel comfortable again. It is, however, not always possible to restore comfort or provide closure to discussions. But we can help students learn how to live with discomfort and manage tension and conflict, and to understand their sources. Sometimes, this might mean engaging them in further discussions about the subject, having them raise questions, and leaving them to arrive at their own resolution and closure. Responsibility for seeking one's own closure is important to the learning process; learning does not begin or end in the classroom with that lesson or with that particular course director. Any discussion might be just the beginning of a long and difficult process. Students should learn that unanswered questions do not always indicate ignorance but can reflect a critical and analytical mind.

*(Continued on page 4)*

*photo of Carl James and class*

*(Dialogue & Resistance ... from page 3)***Resistance**

When we challenge or question traditionally held views; when new information interferes with individuals' understanding of events, it is likely that students will resist. Resistance will be a part of any classroom discourse in which, as Deborah Britzman (1995) points out, we willfully interfere with individuals' understanding, knowledge or sense of identity.

For example, my attempts to get teacher candidates to comment critically on the educational system in Ontario are often met with resistance because students do not wish to see the flaws of the system. After all, it is where they intend to work after graduation; also, it is the system through which they "made it." Criticisms sometimes even produce tears.

Resistance may be based in other types of beliefs. If students attend classes because they want to know what is on the examination, then they expect the course director to take an approach such that they have in their notes what will be on the exam. When they come in order to find out what the course director wants in the essay, or to discover the political orientation of the course director so as to submit work that will be approved, they will resist any attempts to engage in dialogue because it does not fit their understanding of the purpose of the class.

Individuals want to be liked, and to maintain favourable relations with their peers and the course director; thus, they may be reluctant to respond critically to comments by either. Students wish to receive good grades and may feel that challenging the course director will be to their detriment. Also, they may have difficulty separating criticism of an idea from criticism of an individual. An individual's idea is seen as intimately linked to the person; any criticism of the idea is seen, or received, as a personal matter—even as a putdown or rejection. Therefore, students resist engaging in critical discussions.

Sometimes resistance takes the form of silence. For instance, when I discuss employment equity and access to post-secondary education, articulate, participatory students, usually white males, will disengage from the discourse, particularly in a situation where women or racial

minorities are present (more so if they are the professors) or if the general sentiment in the class is one of support for equity programs. Their silence is very noticeable. If they are asked to comment, the response might be, "Everything has been said," or "I don't have anything to say." There are times when students will put forward their ideas and remain silent afterwards. Some might even leave the room. Such actions reflect students' attempts to exercise their power and/or their unwillingness to be challenged on their positions (Delpit 1998; Tatum 1992).

One might assume that members of marginalized groups would welcome the opportunity to participate in class discussions, particularly around issues which validate their experiences. As course directors, we would hope that by providing space for dialogue, students from marginalized groups, whose experiences traditionally have not been represented in the class materials, would "come to voice" and provide their perspectives. But their participation in class is sometimes limited; they too use silence as a strategy of resistance. This might be a result of their skepticism or distrust of the institution's or course director's commitment to interrogating and changing the *status quo*. Or they might not wish to be made obvious in class, particularly if they are in small numbers. Students are not necessarily convinced that it is safe to provide alternative viewpoints (James 1994).

Further, marginalized group members might not wish to destroy the alliances they have made with other students or call attention to themselves. Consequently, they resist discussing issues that make them "realize or reflect on their experiences with oppression" (Ng 1994, 43), or matters that place dominant-group students on the defensive. For example, racial-minority students might resist any discussions that support employment equity or access initiatives to education by remaining silent or by arguing that the current system of meritocracy is effective in meeting the needs of all Canadians. For these students, maintaining positive relations with their peers, and the integrity of their group with regard to their academic ability might be the basis for their resistance. They are protecting themselves.

*(continued on page 5)*

### **Checklist for ENGAGED PEDAGOGY**

*Teferi Adem, Human Rights and Equity*

The following checklist for engaged pedagogy is designed to encourage teachers to create more liberating classroom environments and to think about what it means to educate a diverse student body.

**Discourage:**

- Qualifiers which reinforce racial stereotypes
- Assuming that all members of racial groups are the same, or even similar
- Ethnic clichés
- Racist/ethno-centrist jokes
- Patronizing behaviour or tokenism by race
- Expecting that students of non-European ancestry will respond for their entire ethno-racial group
- The avoidance of eye contact with students of non-European ancestry
- Relating a students' academic difficulties with her/his ethno-racial background
- Using a "colour-code" to describe or interpret the actions of students

**Encourage:**

- An acknowledgement of the presence of racial diversity in your classroom
- Taking responsibility for managing/monitoring ethnic and racial interactions
- Establishing ground rules for mutual respect in the classroom
- Choosing language and usage that do not reinforce bias
- Giving equal respect to all races and presenting a balanced representation in visual aids and other media
- Choosing texts and print media that avoid racial discrimination and stereotyping
- Expanding your horizon by including contributions from non-traditional scholars
- Acknowledging and respecting all of your students' accents
- Being patient with students whose first language is not English or French
- Encouraging students to relate their learning to their personal experience

Reprinted with the author's permission from: *Voices from the Classroom: Reflections on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* (Toronto: Garamond Press, 2001).

## GROUND RULES FOR CONSTRUCTIVE CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

York's diverse student population presents wonderful opportunities to enrich the learning that takes place in the classroom. In order to use diversity in a most productive and effective way, instructors can aim to establish a classroom climate for constructive interaction and dialogue to take place. One such strategy is to establish groundrules that provide clear boundaries and expectations for discussion, particularly those discussions that are potentially controversial or otherwise difficult in nature. Groundrules can ensure that the broadest range of ideas is expressed in a climate of openness, fairness and respect. They can also help promote classroom safety, and diminish the opportunity for tension, confrontation and personal attacks.

York's policies and procedures on student conduct, disruptive and/or harassing behaviour by students, racism, and sexual harassment might provide an effective starting point for developing a framework for constructive classroom discussion. In addition, the following are some principles that might be considered when developing groundrules for constructive discussion, and the roles of instructors and students in ensuring that it takes place within the specific teaching and learning context in which you teach.

Respect for everyone's opinions and experiences is essential for creating a climate for open and honest dialogue and encouraging the broadest range of viewpoints. Inflammatory statements, name-calling and other personal attacks are counterproductive to effective classroom exchange.

Constructive classroom discussion creates awareness and understanding of the issues under discussion and promotes the expression of the broadest range of ideas, including opposing viewpoints. Comments should aim to contribute greater insights into the topic and promote learning - rather than defensiveness, conflict and anger.

Many instructors provide groundrules to their students in writing, sometimes as part of the course outline, to encourage a common understanding of how to engage in constructive discussion. For groundrules to be effective, it is important to remind people when these are broken, and to review and perhaps alter the guidelines if needed at various points throughout the term.

*Adapted from Discussion Groundrules, Intergroup Relations Centre, Arizona State University ([www.asu.edu/provost/intergroup/resources/](http://www.asu.edu/provost/intergroup/resources/)). See also the Bulletins on Inclusive Teaching at York University prepared by SCOTL ([www.yorku.ca/cst/res/index.html](http://www.yorku.ca/cst/res/index.html)) and the York policies and procedures on student conduct ([www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation](http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation)).*

Learning involves both contributing ideas and points of view, and actively listening to other points of views. Learning is maximized when many different view points are expressed.

Discussion and comments directed toward the issue under discussion, not towards a particular individual, maximize the learning potential of the discussion.

Dialogue and discussion to reach consensus or to convince others to agree with a specific point of view is counterproductive, rather higher levels of learning can be reached by examining the widest range of viewpoints.

### *(Dialogue & Resistance ... from page 4)*

#### Conclusion

We see here a number of contradictions, conflicts and tensions that are inherent in the ways we engage students in the classroom. Evidently, there is no particular approach to teaching that will alleviate the problems we are bound to experience in the teaching-learning process. Probably Deborah Britzman (1995) said it best when she said that we "cannot teach anyone anything. We can only create conditions where they get to know how they learn, what they wish to learn, and understand what they think they are saying when they say what they say." With this in mind, it seems appropriate that we use an approach to education that provides everyone with an opportunity to share her or his interpretation and knowledge. By so doing, we can provide space for dialogue, and help students to manage

their confusions, conflicts, tensions, doubts and ambiguities, all of which are inherent in any learning process.

#### References

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- Ng, Roxana. 1994. Sexism and racism in the university: Analysing a personal experience. *Canadian Woman Studies* 14: 42-46.
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### Alan Blizzard Award for Collaborative Projects that Improve Student Learning

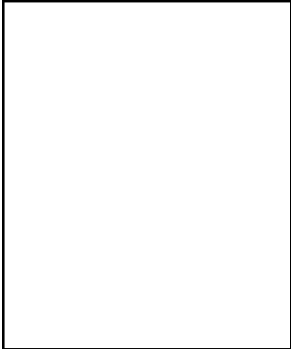
Sponsored by the Society on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, this award is designed to stimulate and reward collaboration in teaching, and to encourage and disseminate scholarship in teaching and learning. The award is open to groups of at least two individuals, including course teams, departments, instructional development centres, committees, and colleagues from different departments working on a common project designed to increase the effectiveness of learning.

*The deadline for applications is January 31, 2002, and guidelines and information are available at the CST.*

# Introducing...

## *New faces at the CST, and some familiar ones too!*

*There are several new faces at the Centre for the Support of Teaching this year, including a new Director, Ron Sheese, and new Faculty and Graduate Teaching Associates, Monique Adriaen, Roy Koehler, and Andre Goldenberg. They join returning Faculty, and Graduate Teaching Associates, Belarie Zatzman and Anik Bay, as well as continuing administrative staff, Olivia Petrie, Mala Thakoor and Marianne Braendlein. Altogether, the staff and associates have put together a very full and interesting program of teaching development activities for faculty and teaching assistants and we look forward to an exciting academic year.*



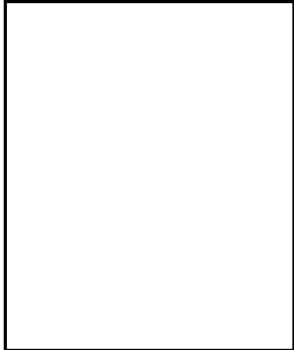
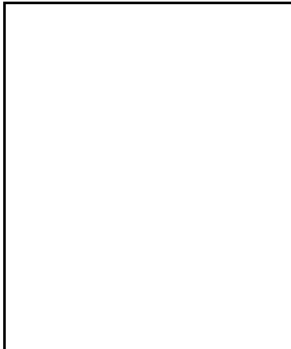
**Ron Sheese** (Psychology and Centre for Academic Writing/Arts) has taken on the directorship of the Centre. Ron has been an important contributor to the development of programs at the CST from the beginning and so we are delighted that he agreed to take on the directorship after Pat's departure. In addition to directing the Centre, Ron is undertaking a review of our programs and will be working to

implement a coherent organizational structure for supporting the use of technology in teaching across the institution.

Ron was appointed to the Department of Psychology in the Faculty of Arts in 1971. He is also associated with the Centre for Academic Writing (CAW) and the Division of Social Science in that Faculty. His past administrative experience includes Chair of Psychology, Director of CAW and Associate Dean of Arts. He has served on and chaired numerous Arts and Senate committees.

Ron brings to the CST a wide array of experience and leadership in teaching and learning. For many years he coordinated the CAW's summer workshop on critical skills teaching, he has organized joint curriculum projects with Seneca and Georgian Colleges, and he has founded and edited the electronic journal *Positive Pedagogy*. The quality of his classroom teaching has been recognized by awards from his Department and OCUFA, and he holds a 3M Fellowship for excellence in teaching. He has directed introductory courses in Psychology and in Social Science, as well as upper-level courses on statistics, educational psychology and cognitive psychology. He is an active fellow of Calumet College.

**Monique Adriaen** (French Studies/Arts) is a new Faculty Associate for 2001-02. Monique has undertaken a pilot project to work with a core group of faculty members over the academic year to examine pedagogical frameworks for the use of technology in teaching. The group will concentrate on identifying and fostering effective pedagogical strategies that make appropriate use of technology, and evaluating the potential for technology to achieve certain teaching and learning objectives. Through the year, participants will explore the use of instructional paradigms, communication technologies, the Internet, the evolving roles of instructors and learners, and evaluation and assessment of student learning to gain insights into the ways in which technology can be better used to achieve instructional goals.

**Roy Koehler** (Physics and Astronomy/Science) is also a new Faculty Associate this year. Roy is working specifically within the Faculty of Pure and Applied Science to promote discussion and critical exchange on the development and use of enhanced teaching and learning methods. He will be available to provide information and assistance to members within Science. Roy has successfully integrated a variety of technical

and pedagogical innovations in his teaching, and is looking to identify other teaching methodologies to improve student learning across the disciplines to encourage further innovations and advancements in Science teaching. Ultimately, he is looking to develop new resources and activities to promote improvements in university teaching and learning in the Sciences.

*(continued on page 7)*

*Check out the CST's on-line resource...*

### TEACHING & LEARNING WEBLIOGRAPHY

[www.yorku.ca/cst/Webli](http://www.yorku.ca/cst/Webli)

The Webliography contains a sampling of links to practical web-based resources on: Curriculum development, delivery & evaluation; Teaching critical thinking; Problem-based learning; Cooperative learning; Teaching with technology; TA teaching tools; Helping students; and Associations and journals.

(Introducing ... from page 6)

**Belarie Zatzman** (Fine Arts/ Atkinson) returns for a third year as Faculty Associate and is once again coordinating the highly successful New Faculty Teaching at York (NFTY) program. The NFTY program provides ongoing support for faculty in their first three years of teaching at York, to increase their understanding of teaching and learning processes, assessment methods, and informed classroom

practice. The programme offers an intensive summer institute, workshops, individual mentoring, and panel discussions made up of some of the finest teachers at York. The New Faculty Teaching at York programme extends throughout the year with sessions that focus on engaging students in the course material, structuring discussion, group work, and student presentations, improving classroom presence, and other topics based on the perceived needs of new faculty participants. New faculty wishing to become involved in the ongoing teaching development program should get in touch with Belarie.

**Anik Bay** (Environmental Studies) returns once again as a Graduate Teaching Associate. Anik has set up an interesting and informative teaching development program for TAs involving both formal workshops and the less formal peer discussion and resource group, TARG. Among her priorities for the year, she is particularly interested in highlighting the multiple facets of the TAs contribution to university learning. In addition, she and André (see below) have already begun to plan for TA Day 2002 and they will be seeking out support and resources to make this extremely popular and excellent event even better next year.

**André Goldenberg** (Anthropology and Osgoode) is a new Graduate Teaching Associate this year. André's main responsibility is to coordinate the discipline-specific teaching development program, which involves working with 30 Teaching Development GAs in 17 departments across campus. This program has gained significant momentum since its inception in 1996 and we look forward to its continued success. In addition, he

is planning TA Day 2002 along with Anik, and will be guest editor of the 2002 TA issue of the *Core* newsletter. He will be soliciting submissions for *Core* in an upcoming issue.

## UNIVERSITY-WIDE TEACHING AWARDS

*Deadline: January 18, 2002*

***Do you know an instructor who deserves recognition for excellence in teaching?***

York University has four annual university-wide awards for excellence in teaching. The awards demonstrate the value York University attaches to teaching and recognizes those who, through innovation and commitment, have significantly enhanced the quality of learning by York students. The awards are sponsored by the York Parent's Association, and the recipients are selected by the Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning (SCOTL).

Recipients of the awards receive:

- A monetary award of \$3,000
- Inclusion on the UniversityWide Teaching Award plaques in Vari Hall
- Recognition at York's Convocation ceremonies

Nominations should be submitted to the Secretary of SCOTL, University Secretariat, S883 Ross Building, by January 18, 2002.

Further information and nomination forms are available at the Centre for the Support of Teaching  
111 Central Square, 736-5754  
cst@yorku.ca - www.yorku.ca/cst/res/uwta.htm

(Anti-Racist Teaching ... from page 2)

### For further ideas and information

"How do you handle a sexist, racist or other excluding or pejorative comment from a member of your class?" January 2000. York Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning (SCOTL), Bulletin Number 1.

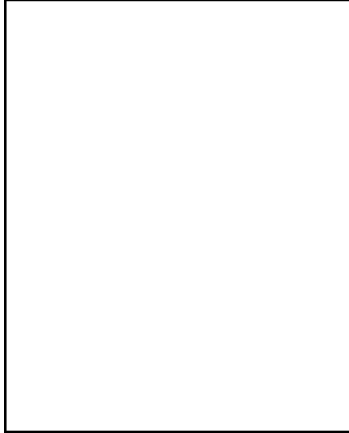
"What do you do to establish a positive climate in the classroom?" March 2000. SCOTL, Bulletin Number 2.

Neff, Rose Ann and Weimer, Mary-Ellen, eds. 1989. *Classroom Communication: Collective Readings for Effective Discussion and Questioning*. Madison WI: Magna Publications.

Newton, Janice, et al, eds 2001. *Voices from the Classroom: Reflections on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*. Toronto: Garamond Press.

# Congratulations Jan Rehner!

## *On receiving a 2001 3M Teaching Fellowship for teaching excellence*



*Jan Rehner (Division of Humanities and Centre for Academic Writing, Faculty of Arts) has been awarded a 2001 3M Teaching Fellowship for her exceptional contributions to university teaching and learning. This prestigious national award is given to individuals who not only excel in the teaching of their own courses, but who also demonstrate an exceptionally high degree of leadership and commitment to the improvement of university teaching across disciplines. For the 2001 3M Teaching Fellowship competition, Jan is one of ten recipients selected from 48 nominations from 26 Canadian universities. Below is the citation that accompanied the announcement of Jan's award.*

Jan Rehner has a distinguished record of outstanding teaching in writing and critical studies. She is the winner of the Ontario Colleges and Universities Faculty Associations (OCUFA) Teaching Award (1992). Jan espouses the goal of wanting to "transmit a passion for learning, for self-awareness and self-reflection, for the energizing process of discovery, shifting perspectives and revisioning what is possible" and this is exactly what she does. She has been a teacher, mentor, model and friend to generations of students, including some who were very apprehensive about entering or returning to post-secondary education and others who were marginalized because of their social background.

By creating and working in several programs that afford greater accessibility to such students, Jan has demonstrated a clear commitment to having teaching and the university act as forces for social justice. She is committed to access and fairness, to giving each student the opportunity to develop his/her full potential, and to making the university a real institution of democratic values.

In addition to her passion for knowledge and her devotion to students, Jan is valued for her work as a team-teacher. Her influence in university pedagogy extends throughout Canada and the United States where she is regarded as a thoughtful, enthusiastic colleague committed to interdisciplinary teaching and professional development. She has conducted numerous workshops for countless faculty and teaching assistants and has been one of only two Canadians to be invited to participate in the professional development programs of the National Faculty in the United States. Here, too, she has empowered and enlivened, introducing new ideas and new approaches, "affecting positive change in classrooms of several hundred teachers and their thousand plus students in the US..." As one of the beneficiaries of her exceptional generosity has written, "Jan is a remarkable and admirable representative of her profession and her country, richly deserving of the recognition this award brings."

## UNIVERSITY-WIDE TEACHING AWARD WINNERS

*Elizabeth Watson, Chair of SCOTL*

The Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning (SCOTL) is pleased to announce the recipients of this year's University-Wide Teaching Award for teaching excellence. These awards honour those who have significantly enhanced learning at York.

The Committee received 23 strong files representing teachers across the campus who have clearly made an impact on their students and colleagues. The high quality of the nominations made the Committee's task very difficult, and in the full-time faculty category two awards were made. The Committee recognizes the work involved in putting the nomination files together, and thanks the students, faculty, and staff who took the time to put forward the nominees.

Congratulations goes to:

*Senior Full-Time:*

**Silviu Guiasu**

Arts/Mathematics and Statistics

*Full-Time:*

**Leesa Fawcett**

Environmental Studies

&

**Brenda Spotton-Visano**

Atkinson/Analytic Studies & IT

*Part-Time/Contract:*

**Judy Libman**

Bethune College

Each recipient was honoured with a cash award from the Parents' Association, as well as with a plate on the University Teaching Award Plaque in Vari Hall, a desk plaque and a citation presented at convocation.



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