Symposium on Learning Outcomes: A Toolkit for Assessment

October 16 – 17, 2014
Eaton Chelsea Hotel
Toronto, Ontario
## Conference Organizers & Staff

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We would also like to acknowledge the sponsorship of the following:

**Reception (Day 1)**

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Thursday, October 16, 2014

**REGISTRATION AND BREAKFAST**
7:30 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.  Churchill Court

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**
8:15 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.  Churchill Ballroom

Maureen Mancuso, Chair, Conference Planning Committee

**PLENARY SESSION 1**
8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.  Churchill Ballroom

*What's Working in the Learning Outcomes Toolbox?*

- **Tom Angelo** (moderator), Assistant Provost & Director of the Center for the Advancement of Faculty Excellence (Queens University of Charlotte)
- **Eileen DeCourcy**, Associate Vice President – Teaching and Learning (Humber College)
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**CHAIR: MAUREEN MANCUSO, Chair, Conference Planning Committee**

The first two Learning Outcomes conferences have focused on why and how to take a Learning Outcomes approach in developing and delivering programs in colleges and universities. This year’s opening plenary session is more focused on refining, implementing and assessing learning outcomes in three contexts: curriculum development, credit transfer and student success/employability. The speakers will identify approaches that are working effectively and the gaps that exist between current and perceived best practice. The session will set the stage for the conference sessions that follow on tools for learning outcomes development, implementation and assessment.

**By the end of this session participants will be able to:** (i) understand the current status of LO efforts in curriculum development, credit transfer and student success; (ii) identify salient issues around LO’s at their institution and address key areas of success and challenges in these areas; (iii) and discuss the most promising new approaches and tools for narrowing existing gaps in these areas.
WORKSHOPS – DAY 1, SESSION 1
10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

WORKSHOP A
Mountbatten Ballroom

Putting Financial Oversight and Quality Assurance on the Same Page

SPEAKERS: John Shepherd, Ann Clarke-Okah, Jessica DeVries, Office of Quality Assurance (Carleton University)

CHAIR: SERGE DESMARAISS, Acting Provost & Vice President – Academic (Univ. Guelph)

The changing landscapes for postsecondary education is requiring that publicly-funded institutions be more accountable and demonstrate that academic programs are adding value. This workshop will explore how a well-developed Learning Outcomes Assessment process can contribute to improved fiscal responsibility. Assessment data provides the valuable evidence that contributes to academic improvements but also can play a critical role in demonstrating accountability and understanding of “value for money.” It is often assumed that program improvements cannot be made without additional fiscal resources. Having recently completed two projects in which we explored the tension between the goals of continuous program improvement and program efficiency, we will present some of our findings and recommendations for enhanced efficiencies while still ensuring continually improving program quality. The session will also provide a forum to discuss how these findings might be incorporated into other post-secondary institutions.

By the end of this session participants will: (i) have a better understanding of how a mature learning outcomes assessment process can contribute to program efficiency; (ii) have an increased inventory of indicators of quality that can be used in decision making.

WORKSHOP B
Carlyle Room

Alignment of Assessment, Course Learning Outcomes and Program Learning Outcomes

SPEAKERS: Erin Aspenlieder, Open Learning and Educational Support (University of Guelph), John Donald, Julie Vale, Karen Gordon, and Ryan Clemmer, School of Engineering (University of Guelph)

CHAIR: PETER GOOCH, Senior Director – Policy and Analysis (Council of Ontario Universities)

At the program level, an outcomes-based curriculum improvement process relies on the deliberate assessment of key course level learning activities. In order to identify the most appropriate learning activities to assess in courses for the purposes of program level assessment, course activities must be constructively aligned to program level learning outcomes. This alignment can prove challenging, as it requires that instructors and administrators not only apply constructive alignment within courses and within the program as a whole, but also consider what and how to assess at each level. In response to this challenge, the University of Guelph’s Open Learning and Educational Support (OpenEd) and School of Engineering (SOE) developed a six-step process that guides faculty in
linking course level learning activities with the assessment of program level outcomes for the purposes of continuous improvement/accreditation. This hands-on session will introduce participants to this process by inviting participants to align course activities and assessments with program outcomes. Participants will discuss how this process balances instructor autonomy in course administration and assessment with program level data acquisition and reporting. Participants will further reflect on how such a process could be adapted and/or applied in their unique institutional and departmental settings.

**By the end of this session participants will be able to:** (i) align course level learning outcomes with program level learning outcomes; (ii) evaluate alignment between course assessments and program level learning outcome assessment.

**WORKSHOP C**

**Rossetti Room**

**Where are We Now?**

*A Discussion about Learning Outcomes Assessment Projects*

**SPEAKERS:** Brian Frank, Director of Program Development – Faculty of Engineering (Queen’s University), Peggy French, Educational Designer (Mohawk College), Lori Goff, McMaster Institute for Innovation and Excellence in Teaching & Learning (McMaster University), Richard Gorrie, Open Learning & Educational Support (University of Guelph), Sandy Hughes, Centre for Teaching Innovation & Excellence (Wilfrid Laurier University), Dale Lackeyram, Open Learning & Educational Support (University of Guelph)

**CHAIR:** BARBARA CROW, Associate Vice-President – Graduate (York University)

When there is so much exciting and innovative work being done with learning outcomes in higher education, from scholarly research to practical deployment, sometimes there is just not enough time for questions or reflective discussion after an engaging panel or presentation. The goal of this session is to expose people to a variety of work in this area, but ensure there is time for audience participation, questions and discussion. The session will include four brief reports on learning outcomes-related activities involving a wide range of institutions and programs, and facilitated to ensure audience involvement. Panelists will describe their projects, identifying goals, challenges and successes. Brian Frank will talk about learning outcomes and engineering accreditation. Peggy French will present observations on Mohawk College’s initiatives with e-portfolios and learning outcomes. Lori Goff will talk about helping faculty to identify existing assessments that demonstrate learning outcome achievement and Sandy Hughes will give a senior administrator’s perspective. As well as facilitating the discussion, Dale Lackeyram and Richard Gorrie will present aspects of Guelph’s learning outcome initiatives. The presentations will intentionally be kept short to allow for maximum time for questions and discussion.

**By the end of this session participants will be able to:** (i) identify the goals, challenges and successes of an array of higher education learning outcomes initiatives from the panel presentations; (ii) discuss a broad range of issues related to learning outcomes arising from, but not limited to, the panel initiatives; (iii) share experiences and reflect critically upon learning outcomes from a variety of perspectives.
WORKSHOP D

Curriculum Mapping: Lamenting the Logistics of Data Mapping

Scott Room

Speakers: Jovan Groen, Patrick Milot, and Robert Sawler, Centre for University Teaching (University of Ottawa)

Chair: Alice Pitt, Vice Provost – Academic (York University)

Defined as a deliberate process of curriculum deconstruction to better understand how the sum of the parts relates to the whole, curriculum mapping and analysis of academic programs are increasingly in demand at the University of Ottawa. As with numerous other institutions, data collection associated with curriculum mapping has shifted from a paper-based to a digital format. This evolution has transformed the time and place of data collection, which in turn reduces much of the time and logistics associated with this step in favour of data analysis. Despite the creation and implementation of an online tool, challenges still arise, including such issues as the ability to engage professors in the process, the consistency of data entry, and the complexity of data processing. To more seamlessly gather and process data, an online syllabus design module was developed which will allow data collection while providing expanded processing capacity over existing online tools. In addition to serving the purposes of curriculum analysis, the module will enhance the quality of course syllabi at the University of Ottawa.

By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) explain how a course syllabus template tool can be used to collect and track curriculum data; (ii) evaluate the advantages and challenges associated with the logistics of data collection for curricular analysis and mapping; (iii) describe curriculum mapping practices used at other institutions with regard to implementation-related successes and challenges.

WORKSHOP E

Linking Learning Outcomes to Undergraduate Degree-Level Expectations

Seymour Room

Speakers: Sandra Cardinal and Theresa Steger, Program Planning, Development & Renewal (Humber College)

Chair: Geneviève Paquette, Quality Assurance Associate (OCQAS)

Program and course learning outcomes, when well-designed and aligned with degree-level expectations, offer transparency for students, instructors, administrators and other institutions and support program review and renewal processes. They can facilitate efficient program sequencing and integration, authentic student assessment, transfer credit, and elimination of gaps in student achievement. The workshop facilitators will share their experiences with aligning learning outcomes with the six categories of the Ontario Qualification Framework’s Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (UDLE’s), as a means to support program planning, development and renewal at Humber ITAL. Participants will gain an overview of the structures and processes used at Humber and will use their own course outlines as a basis for actively sorting and writing learning outcomes for each of the UDLE categories.

By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) discuss the range of applications of outcomes-based learning models across educational uses; (ii) identify the limitations and challenges inherent in the outcomes-based model; (iii) apply the Ontario Qualification Framework to sort, assess and improve learning outcome statements.
Analytic rubrics can be an effective means for improving the quality and consistency of learning outcomes assessment. In this session we will present a framework for rubrics that has been built on learning outcomes compiled from the literature in 5 major competency areas: communication, teamwork, investigation, problem analysis, and design (i.e. application of knowledge). This framework also encompasses some aspects of critical thinking. The framework is intended to be applicable across a wide range of disciplines and assessment approaches. We will show specific examples of how the framework can be applied to develop rubrics and compare learning outcomes across courses. Participants will have the opportunity to try applying the framework to develop a rubric for their own projects or for a case study. The session will include discussion of rubric use, training for users, and the process of validating the resulting rubrics.

By the end of this session participants will: (i) be familiar with the learning outcomes that have been developed in the 5 major competency areas; (ii) have the ability to apply the provided learning outcomes framework to build a rubric for their own course or assignment; (iii) have the opportunity to collaborate after the symposium on the further development, validity testing, and application of the rubric framework.

By the end of this session participants will leave with: (i) guidelines that you can adapt for use to evaluate/shape your efforts to enhance investment and/or engagement in LOA; (ii) practical strategies you can adapt to enhance academic administrators’ or faculty members’ investment and engagement in LOA; and (iii) useful resources (including new colleagues) and references for follow up.
WORKSHOP B

Carlyle Room

Learning Outcomes of Design in Action

SPEAKERS: Job Rutgers and Paul Epp, Industrial Design Program (OCAD University)

CHAIR: CHRISTINE BOVIS-CNOSSEN, Vice President – Academic (OCAD University)

In this session, we’d like to share the curriculum design ‘tools’ and ‘processes’ we have used in reorganizing OCADU’s Industrial Design program and the process of evaluating student learning. The overall aim of these changes were to better meet the needs of a constantly changing design field, make the curriculum more transparent to both students and faculty; and to prevent overlaps and gaps in the program’s learning outcomes. In this year’s conference we aim to demonstrate how we used iterative feedback and classroom projects to formulate, communicate and implement a student centered curriculum website.

By the end of this session participants will: (i) grasp how ‘design thinking’ and ‘design doing’ tools and techniques can be applied to curriculum design through demonstration of examples and discussion; (ii) have a detailed overview of the steps it takes to translate an ambitious vision for curriculum design into workable solutions. In an open discussion, we will use a curriculum design challenge suggested by the audience as a case study.

WORKSHOP C

Rossetti Room

Hot Topics in Generating and Assessing Graduate Learning Outcomes

SPEAKERS: Brenda Brouwer, Vice-Provost – Graduate Studies (Queen’s University) and others

CHAIR: BRIAN CAMPBELL, Associate Provost & Dean of Graduate Studies (UOIT)

Using a strategy that has proven effective in generating discussion at the Canadian Association of Graduate Studies (CAGS) annual meetings, this hot topics workshop will engage attendees in dialogue on issues of importance to them. Registrants for the conference will submit an issue of importance (and relevant to the conference theme) that they would like to have discussed i.e. a ‘hot topic’. About 4-5 topics will be selected that are sufficiently distinct from themes to be addressed in other graduate focused sessions. Individuals will be identified amongst graduate deans and other conference speakers and asked to share their insight, experience, strategies and/or words of wisdom on a given hot topic for no more than 5 minutes. These brief presentations will frame the discussion period that will follow.

The intent is to provide opportunity for idea exchange, to learn from the experiences of others, and to identify particular challenges that warrant broader discussion (including topic(s) to be considered for future learning outcomes conference or CAGS meeting).

By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) apply new ideas and strategies into their own work environment; (ii) understand the challenges in formulating and assessing graduate outcomes given the various program structures and subject matter
### Using Curriculum Mapping for Quality Assurance and Strategic Curriculum Reform

**Scot Room**

**Speakers:** Erika Chamberlain, Associate Dean (Academic), Faculty of Law (Western University)

**Chair:** Sam Scully, Chair, Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance

This session is aimed at academic leaders who intend to use curriculum mapping to stimulate faculty discussions about curriculum reform. It will outline the process used to develop degree-level expectations, course-level learning outcomes, and a curriculum map for the Faculty of Law at Western. Our degree-level expectations were designed idealistically so as to highlight areas where new content, skills and assessment methods were desired. These areas or “gaps” were then acknowledged during our quality assurance process, which laid the foundations for ongoing curriculum reform discussions. This incremental process has served to motivate faculty to review longstanding pedagogical approaches in legal education and to see the need for modernizing the curriculum.

Participants in this session will be encouraged to identify strategic directions for their respective academic programs and to develop plans to achieve these goals through the curriculum mapping process.

**By the end of this session participants will be able to:** (i) outline the process from degree and course-level outcomes through to curriculum mapping for their own faculties using a template from a successful project; (ii) design a curriculum map that strategically highlights areas for curriculum reform; and (iii) create a personal tool-kit of strategies and ideas in order to lead faculty discussions on the need and options for curriculum reform.

### Feeling the Measure: Evaluating Affective Learning Outcomes

**Seymour Room**

**Speakers:** John Oughton, Centre of Organizational Learning and Teaching (Centennial College) and Eleanor Pierre, Educational Consultant (EJP Communications)

**Chair:** Cindy Hazell, Professor Emeritus (Seneca College)

Although many course outlines include affective outcomes, they often lack clarity on how these will be evaluated. Because such outcomes address emotions, values, and attitudes, they appear more challenging to assess than straightforward cognitive performances such as comprehension, calculation, and application. In fact, many courses have no explicit description of how affective outcomes will be measured. However, it is common knowledge that affective factors such as motivation, confidence, interest, professionalism, and “grit” play a key role in academic and career success. Criteria and rubrics can be developed to grade both observable affective behaviours and student’s reflection on their struggles and progress with affective outcomes. This workshop will present a gathering of typical affective outcomes from college and university courses, a range of effective evaluation strategies, and then ask participants to decide which strategy might be most practical and effective for measuring achievement of a specific outcome.

**By the end of this session participants will be able to:** (i) discuss common difficulties in evaluating affective outcomes; (ii) identify a variety of strategies for evaluating affective outcomes; (iii) determine the most appropriate strategy/strategies for specific affective outcomes.
Information Literacy (IL) is a foundational function and responsibility of the academic librarian. Association of Research and College Libraries (ACRL) Guidelines inform IL learner performance, knowledge, and attitudes. Our assessment design blends these guidelines with Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (UDLEs) and a depth-wise learning evaluation model, resulting in a three-part framework that measures IL program effectiveness. Our blended framework is based on mapping these various models against one another which offers an assessment tool, roll up indices and facilitates organizational impact measures. We will outline the framework and discuss assessment, indices and impact as a means of driving evidence based decision making in IL programming and academic libraries. Workshop leaders will guide participants through mapping guidelines, learning outcomes and assessments to their own context.

By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) understand the three separate models used in this blended framework; (ii) understand the framework mapping process; (iii) understand how to develop an integrated framework for their own institution.

LUNCH
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Churchill Ballroom

WORKSHOPS – DAY 1, SESSION 3
2:00 p.m. – 3:00/3:30 p.m.

We see program outcomes as the centerpiece of our curriculum development and program assessment process. But how do we involve faculty in the development and assessment of these learning outcomes? We will begin the session with a discussion of distinctions between an engaged and disengaged department. Then, based on our experience with more than 40 departments at our institution, we will share various processes that encourage faculty engagement in the program-level assessment process. For example, as part of the design and development phase, we often begin with an “ideal graduate brainstorm” in which we ask faculty to explore the knowledge, skills, and values they would like students to possess if they had ideal instructional conditions. This process helps to
develop a shared program vision, which can then be translated into measurable program outcomes. Other activities we will share include: critiquing program outcomes and creating performance indicators; developing progression maps that help refine indicators and outcomes; and participating in customized course design workshops to integrate program outcomes at the course level. The session will conclude with an opportunity for participants to reflect on how they could apply one or more of these tools at their institution.

By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) describe what engagement and disengagement looks like on their campus; (ii) list a variety of activities that could be used to involve faculty in the program outcomes assessment process; and (iii) reflect on how they could apply one of the presented tools at their institution to encourage faculty engagement in the program outcomes assessment process.

WORKSHOP B  (90 mins)  Carlyle Room

Embedded Learning Outcomes Assessment:
Exercise your Learning Outcomes and Assess them too!

SPEAKERS: Steve Joordens, Dwayne Pare, Lisa-Marie Collimore, Tim Cheng, Rob Walker, Sue Joordens, Advanced Learning Technology Lab (University of Toronto Scarborough)

CHAIR: SANDY WELSH, Vice Dean – Graduate Education & Program Reviews (Univ. of Toronto)

In this workshop participants will be introduced to the novel concept of embedded learning outcome assessment; assessing outcomes during assignments that were designed explicitly to exercise them. This concept will first be presented via the “going to the gym” metaphor, but then participants will gain direct experience with embedded learning outcome assessment via a hands-on, synchronous peerScholar activity designed to exercise critical thought, self-reflective thought, and communication. After this “experiential learning” demonstration the presenters will highlight how these – and any other – learning outcomes can be quantified. Data from several experiments that explicitly shows predicted changes in these indicators will then be presented. Finally, the utility of these indicators in terms of online portfolios or course/program redesign will be highlighted. The overall point of our workshop will be the following: well-designed learning activities can do more than just support the learning of specific competencies; they can also provide “on the fly” assessments that can be used to support mastery track of learning or can guide program/course redesign.

By the end of this session participants will (i) have a better understanding of how our more general learning outcomes, like critical thought, creative thought, metacognitive thought, and clear and efficient communication, can be exercised and developed in any size class delivered via any medium; (ii) see this philosophy as it is embodied in a specific learning technology, peerScholar, and thus have a clear sense of how assignments can be linked to these general learning outcomes and the role research can play in validating this link; (iii) appreciate the role technology can play in terms of making a large or online class seem smaller and warm.
WORKSHOP C  
(90 mins)  
Rossetti Room

*Professional Skills Development and Learning Outcomes in Graduate Education*

**SPEAKERS:** Barbara Crow, Dean of Graduate Studies (York University), Brenda Brouwer, Vice-Provost - Graduate Studies (Queen’s University), Leigh Yetter, Dean of Graduate Studies (McGill University)

**CHAIR:** LINDA MILLER, Vice Provost – Graduate Studies (Western University)

There has been considerable resistance to incorporate professional skills development (PSD) in the learning outcomes of graduate education. Over the last two decades, the demands for and the expectations of graduate education have changed dramatically. Since the implementation of *Reaching Higher* (2005) in the province Ontario, the number of graduate students has increased by 45 per cent. As a consequence, particularly for doctoral students, traditional career pathways, such as professorial positions, are neither plentiful nor necessarily desired. Increasingly, graduate students want to know how to make their education more relevant and translate their knowledge into a range of professional opportunities.

In this panel, we will provide an overview of national and international trends in the development of professional skills for graduate students followed by examples of the integration of PSD at York, Queen’s and McGill universities. We will address faculty resistance, student concerns, QAP learning outcomes, with a particular emphasis on the Humanities.

**By the end of this session participants will take away concrete examples to:** (i) rethink what "skills" means at the graduate level through identifying and articulating existing skills in the graduate curriculum; (ii) engage students in rethinking their futures by leveraging the lived experiences of post-docs and graduate alumni as a means of supporting the development of versatile graduates; (iii) engage faculty in rethinking graduate skills.

WORKSHOP D  
(60 mins)  
Scott Room

*A Learning Outcomes-based Approach to Writing Across the Curriculum*

**SPEAKERS:** Cary DiPietro, Faculty & Curriculum Development Centre, Susan Ferguson, Writing & Learning Centre, and Roderick Grant, Faculty of Design (OCAD University)

**CHAIR:** KATHERINE PENNY, Director, Curriculum Quality Assurance (Ryerson University)

In this session, participants will be invited to share their experiences of developing and promoting cross-campus curriculum initiatives using a learning outcomes-based approach. The session will focus on the example of a Writing Across the Curriculum initiative at OCAD University that began in the fall of 2013 to address widespread concerns about undergraduate writing. The cornerstone of the initiative is a statement of degree-level learning outcomes for writing (`The Framework for Undergraduate Writing Competency`).

The three presenters will discuss the development of the Framework in relation to OCAD University’s unique curricular and institutional context, specifically, its need for a flexible approach that mobilizes the strengths of studio education while still staking a claim for the particular value of writing and disciplinary literacy as part of art and design education.

The session will also showcase curriculum development in the Graphic Design program at OCAD U and how the Framework has been applied through curriculum mapping strategies and integration into a core studio sequence. Specifically, the presenters will demonstrate practically how they used taxonomies of learning to map writing-specific benchmarks for the Graphic Design program in relation to degree-level expectations, program-level learning outcomes and year-by-year, course-by-course progression.
By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) compare approaches they use for aligning degree-level expectations and program and course-level learning outcomes with those of other post-secondary institutions; and (ii) draw upon the OCAD U model to develop a learning outcomes-based approach to cross-campus curriculum initiatives at their own institutions.

**Workshop E**

(60 mins)  
Seymour Room

*A Case Study in the Value of Learning Outcomes – Vision, Structure & Flexibility*

**Speakers:** Donna Braggins and Joe Morse, Faculty of Animation, Arts & Design (Sheridan College)

**Chair:** Judy Robinson, Vice President – Academic (Durham College)

This session will use Sheridan’s Bachelor of Illustration program to discuss how learning outcomes can form the backbone of a strong, responsive program. One of the original college degrees, the Illustration program has evolved through a major change in its curriculum, removing streaming and adding much more choice to students, while faithfully adhering to program outcomes that meet changing employer expectations and reflect developments in the field.

Consideration of the benefits of using a learning outcomes structure will include: coherence of the program form an administrative point of view, use for community building among faculty, room for academic freedom for delivery and interpretation while being accountable to students, and a strong communication of program values. Sheridan’s use of critical performance statements at the program and course level is an additional variation to learning outcomes that has found and important place in the culture.

By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) describe how adherence to a learning outcome structure leaves significant leeway for academic freedom and curricular innovation; (ii) discuss non-curricular benefits to administrators and faculty offered by a learning outcome structure; (iii) explain what a “critical performance statement” is and its potential role.

**Workshop F**

(60 mins)  
Gerrard Room

*Measuring Program Effectiveness: Transforming Program Learning Outcomes into a Practical Measurement Tool*

**Speakers:** Joanne Hewson, Dept. of Clinical Studies, Dale Lackeyram, Office of Open Education, Kerry Lissemore, Associate Dean – Academic (Ontario Veterinary College, University of Guelph)

**Chair:** Ivy Loke, Senior Policy Advisor (PEQAB)

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) provide a vision of what knowledge, skills and attitudes are expected of graduates upon successful completion of a program. These PLOs must therefore be developed through careful consideration of the ways in which program training may be applied to the future careers of graduates. In professional training programs, PLOs must go beyond societal expectations and those held by the profession, to also be crafted in alignment with the expectations of the accreditation body.

In this session we present the process involved in the creation of a behaviorally-based, Global Assessment Rubric, derived from PLO’s as a means to achieve measurement of intended outcomes in a consistent fashion across the curriculum. We also discuss how learners, instructors, and administrators can utilize the data derived from this tool in the following ways: (i) by using formative
and summative direct feedback to inform the effort of learners; (ii) by using outcomes performance feedback to improve instruction in a timely manner; (iii) by using outcomes performance data and trend analysis for program improvement and reporting to accrediting bodies.

By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) adapt existing learning outcome statements from their program or discipline into specific student competencies for assessment; (ii) develop behavioral descriptors that portray the expected range of student performance for an identified competency statement; and (iii) plan how to integrate a Global Assessment Rubric tool into student assessment within their program or discipline.

WORKSHOPS – DAY 1, SESSION 4
3:15 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

WORKSHOP A
Scott Room

Measuring Course Learning Outcomes with Online Quizzes

SPEAKERS: John Dawson, Dept. of Molecular & Cellular Biology (University of Guelph)

CHAIR: PAT ROGERS, Associate Vice President – Teaching & Learning (Wilfrid Laurier Univ.)

Course learning outcomes provide a framework for how we teach and assess our students, but measuring them can be logistically challenging, especially in very large classes. To measure the learning outcomes in the very large Introductory Biochemistry course at the University of Guelph (1,113 students in Fall 2013), six online quizzes were administered. All questions on the online quizzes were linked explicitly with learning outcomes for this molecular bioscience course, which were in turn aligned with the learning outcomes for the programs in the Molecular and Cellular Biology Department.

At this session, you will gain insight into discipline-specific variation of course learning outcomes, connecting course and program learning outcomes and be equipped with ideas and methods for assessing the achievement of those outcomes in courses using online tools. Moreover, you will analyze the learning outcome assessment data from the Fall 2013 Introductory Biochemistry course and contribute to discussion of ways to improve the course based on that assessment data, thereby modeling the process of collecting and analyzing learning outcome assessment data to inform evidence-based planning for continuous improvement of courses.

By the end of this session participants will: (i) be equipped with ideas and methods for assessing the achievement of course learning outcomes using online evaluations through participating in the session; (ii) gain insight into discipline-specific variation of course learning outcomes and the connections between course and program learning outcomes by examining program and course learning outcomes related to a molecular bioscience course; (iii) extend the assessment of course learning outcomes to the discussion of student learning and evidence-based planning for continuous improvement of courses by analyzing real course learning outcome assessment data.
WORKSHOP B
Seymour Room

**Sustainability Across the Curriculum: How to Use Learning Outcomes to Quantify Teaching and Learning of Social, Environmental and Economic Sustainability Skills and Knowledge**

**SPEAKERS:** Sandra Neill, Curriculum Specialist (George Brown College)

**CHAIR:** THERESA STEGER, Program Development Consultant (Humber College)

Ontario’s Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, together with industry, has emphasized the need for graduates to have social, environmental and economic sustainability skills and knowledge. In order to render visible all courses that teach—and measure learner acquisition of—sustainability skills and knowledge, George Brown College undertook a comprehensive audit of learning outcomes to determine current levels of sustainability teaching and learning within all active programs of instruction. Using learning outcomes to quantify sustainability teaching and learning is especially effective since it ensures that sustainability skill and knowledge gains are being measured and evaluated. Audit results revealed which programs provide a framework for learning that emphasizes sustainability skills and knowledge, particularly as these relate to a student’s own field of study. We also know which courses, and specifically which learning outcomes within courses, support this learning. As a result of our sustainability-across-the-curriculum audit George Brown is better able to link its sustainable research mandate to broader industry productivity and graduate preparation. This workshop will share the design, data and next steps arising from our sustainability-focused audit of learning outcomes.

By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) explain why learning outcomes are the most effective location within post-secondary curriculum to embed sustainability knowledge and skills; (ii) identify LOs that integrate social, environmental and/or economic sustainability themes; (iii) use learning outcomes to quantify teaching and learning of social, environmental and economic sustainability skills and knowledge across the curriculum.

**COFFEE BREAK**
3:45 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.
Churchill Court

**PLENARY SESSION 2**
Churchill Ballroom

4:15 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.

**What You Want to Know and What You Need to Know about Your Students’ Learning**

**Peggy Maki**, Independent Higher Education Consultant specializing in assessing student learning

**CHAIR:** BRENDA BROUWER, Vice-Provost & Dean of Graduate Studies (Queen’s University)

In our assessment cycles, what if we seek to become experts about the range of barriers, misconceptions, misinterpretations, incorrect assumptions, or faulty logic that travel with students along their undergraduate or graduate studies? What if we then used that knowledge about student-centric learning as the basis of curricular/co-curricular design, new pedagogies, and educational practices? In her plenary session Peggy Maki will offer a model for taking a backward designed problem-based approach to assessing students’ learning based on agreed upon expectations for students’ exit level achievement. This model moves assessment chronologically forward by positioning inquiry groups to raise and answer questions about “why” students have difficulties learning, transferring learning, or applying learning. Becoming knowledgeable about “why” students have difficulties and using that knowledge to inform teaching, position us to innovate the next
generation of curricular and co-curricular design aimed at not only improving student learning, but also advancing students to our expected levels of performance.

**By the end of this session participants will be able to:** (i) identify a range of barriers and challenges students confront or carry with them; (ii) raise open-ended research or study questions about your students’ learning that you would answer through evidence of (a) students’ work and (b) students’ learning or meaning-making processes.

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**WINE & CHEESE RECEPTION**
5:15 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.
Churchill Court

**SPONSORED BY:**

[Canadian Publishers' Council]
Friday, October 17, 2014

REGISTRATION AND BREAKFAST  
7:30 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.  
Churchill Court

WORKSHOPS – DAY 2, SESSION 1  
8:30 a.m. – 9:30/10:00 a.m.

WORKSHOP A  
(60 Mins)  
Mountbatten Ballroom

Designing for Learning

SPEAKERS: Peggy Maki, Independent Higher Education Consultant specializing in assessing student learning

CHAIR: JOHN DOERKSEN, Vice Provost – Academic (Western University)

Focusing on exit-level expectations and criteria and standards of judgment for your students’ learning, this session identifies inter-related principles that guide effective course- and program-level design. Planning courses and programs backwards from exit-level expectations shapes pedagogy, instruction, educational practices, teacher feedback, students’ own awareness of their learning, the design of assignments that foster exit-level expectations, and methods of assessment. Particular attention will be paid to assignment design using one assignment and a scoring rubric as the basis of small group and large group discussion.

By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) apply a critical thinking (CT) scoring rubric to an assignment and discuss/report on how well that assignment positions students to demonstrate CT; and (ii) discuss how assessment results can deepen understanding of when and why patterns of underperformance occur in students’ progression towards exit level expectations and fuel discussion about systemic ways to assist students improve those patterns.

WORKSHOP B  
(90 mins)  
Carlyle Room

Authentic Assessment of Threshold Concepts using the SOLO Taxonomy

SPEAKERS: Michael K. Potter and Erika Kustra, Centre for Teaching and Learning (University of Windsor)

CHAIR: BRUCE TUCKER, Associate Vice-President – Academic (University of Windsor)

In this interactive workshop, participants will use the notions of authentic assessment, threshold concepts, and the structure of observed learning outcomes (SOLO) taxonomy to plan their own assessments of program-level learning outcomes. Although the task of assessing learning outcomes at the program-level can seem daunting, participants will find that by following a well-defined process and using their own learning outcomes as indicators for opportunities and limitations, the task becomes simple and manageable.

This workshop will be most accessible to participants experienced in thinking about and using the key concepts of learning outcomes, constructive alignment, authentic assessment, threshold concepts, and the SOLO taxonomy. However, each concept will be introduced and defined as it is introduced, with opportunities for discussion as well as hands-on application.
By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) formulate extended abstract learning outcomes for a threshold concept in their disciplines; (ii) plan an authentic assessment task aligned with the outcome they’ve formulated; and (iii) articulate basic definitions of authentic assessment, threshold concepts, and the SOLO taxonomy.

**WORKSHOP C**  
(60 mins)  
Rossetti Room

*Considering Progression of Competency within Multiple Facets of Learning; or Everything I Learned from Obi Wan Kenobi*

**SPEAKERS:** Jean Bridge, Centre for Digital Humanities (Brock University) and Mary Wilson, Centre for Academic Excellence (Niagara College)

**CHAIR:** ANNA LATHROP, Vice Provost – Teaching & Learning (Brock University)

A consortium comprised of Brock University, Niagara College, University of Ontario Institute of Technology and Durham College is developing an online toolset to profile diverse game education programs across Ontario based on relationships between content, performance (competency) levels and facets of learning. This workshop will test a process for breaking down subjects/competencies into outcomes that are each essential and also dependent on what comes before.

This work will reference the Game Education Matrix (GEM) - a framework and taxonomy for capturing progressive levels of achievement within core competencies in each of 6 disciplines that constitute education in games. At each level, multiple learning outcome statements must be written to articulate benchmarks for core competencies, keeping in mind that that each level automatically includes the previous levels. Game education programs will use GEM toolset to locate their particular areas of student achievement within an overarching, even somewhat vast, framework of game education.

The successful and accurate profiling of programs in the GEM will rely upon a collaborative approach to the composition of learning outcomes that encompass the progression of learning in subject-specific content while taking into account multiple facets of learning. It will embrace the philosophy of “leveling up” from game culture by asking the user to select a minimum of LOs at the first level to unlock LOs at the second level and so on. This will allow us to avoid both the Swiss cheese effect of non-progressive models and the dangers of conferring mastery too early. The information generated by these profiles will be shared and enable Colleges and Universities to identify how programs complement or contrast with others for transfer purposes.

By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) distinguish between several levels of competency within a discipline; (ii) devise language that frames distinctions in levels of competency; and (iii) evaluate how dimensions of learning (cognitive, psycho-motor, affective) impact levels of competency.
**WORKSHOP D**  
(90 mins)  
Scott Room

*Defining and Assessing Program-Level Learning Outcomes at the Graduate Level*

**SPEAKERS:** Sandy Welsh, Vice-Dean of Graduate Education & Program Reviews (University of Toronto), Serge Desmarais, Acting Provost & Vice-President Academic (University of Guelph), Lori Goff, Manager of Program Enhancement for MIIETL (McMaster University), Trevor Holmes, Senior Instructional Developer (University of Waterloo), John Shepherd, Vice-Provost & Associate Vice-President Academic (Carleton University)

**CHAIR:** PATRICIA WEIR, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies (University of Windsor)

Learning outcomes (LOs) for graduate programs are central to institutional quality assurance processes and are an important component for understanding academic change at the graduate level. Compared to undergraduate LOs, fewer opportunities exist to discuss and investigate challenges in the development and assessment of graduate-level LOs. This session brings together a panel of two experienced academic administrators and two senior instructional developers to examine key issues and to share practical advice for handling graduate-level LOs. The four panelists will speak to the following issues:

- Opportunities and challenges in defining and assessing learning outcomes, especially non-coursework components of programs;
- Use of LOs to improve the quality of our graduate programs;
- Ways to conceptualize and approach the assessment of LOs, while respecting different practices, histories and traditions within graduate programs

By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) identify and evaluate challenges in defining graduate learning outcomes; (ii) recognize and apply some strategies for using LOs to improve the quality of graduate programs; (iii) discuss possible ways to approach graduate-level LO assessment and compare to approaches used in home institution.

**WORKSHOP E**  
(60 mins)  
Seymour Room

*Adaptive Technology: Implementing Learning Outcomes to Increase Student Success*

**SPEAKERS:** Catherine Swanson, Educational Consultant (McMaster University), Nick Morfopos, Karen Fozard, and Margaret Janzen (McGraw-Hill Education)

**CHAIR:** BILL MUIRHEAD, Associate Provost – Academic (UOIT)

This workshop focuses on adaptive learning tools such as LearnSmart Achieve – built with learning outcomes at their core – and how such tools can be implemented to increase teaching effectiveness and learning efficiency. Adaptive learning tools improve student engagement, grades, and retention, enabling students to improve their success in post-secondary and more effectively prepare them for the workforce. Real time data analysis from such tools improves instructional efficiencies, directs effective retention strategies, and improves curriculum development and accountability.

Catherine Swanson will discuss the value of inquiry to student development and engagement and how effective Learning Outcomes can direct student success. The second half will highlight LearnSmart Achieve, a proven adaptive learning tool that provides personalized instruction and practice to achieve mastery of identified Learning Outcome. Emphasis will be placed on how to use real time analytics and targeted reports to focus classroom time, improve retention, and improve curriculum development.
By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) use adaptive technology to identify and implement learning outcomes; and (ii) identify how adaptive learning can improve student performance through targeted remediation and more efficient study.

**WORKSHOP F**

Assessing Cognitive Skills – Critical Thinking

**Gerrard Room**

**SPEAKERS:** Jill Scott, Vice-Provost – Academic, Teaching & Learning, Brian Frank, Director of Program Development – Faculty of Engineering, Jake Kaupp, Engineering Education Research Associate, Natalie Simper, HEQCO Learning Outcomes Project Coordinator (Queen’s University)

**CHAIR:** JEELA JONES, Director, Quality Assurance (University of Ottawa)

Queen’s University is part of a consortium of six Ontario universities and colleges funded by the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO), committed to developing assessment techniques for general learning outcomes and cognitive skills. One of the strategies used in this research was the application of the AAC&U VALUE meta-rubrics to assess the development of critical thinking, problem solving, communication and lifelong learning in selected courses. Preliminary findings from the first year of the longitudinal study suggest that specific feedback from assessment activities have effectively provided evidence to inform pedagogical decision making in affecting course improvement.

In this session participants will engage in a collaborative rating session, applying assessment techniques utilized within the project to rate critical thinking demonstrated in a student work sample. Presenters will also discuss how the research data has been used provide feedback to instructors, identifying strengths and weaknesses in the demonstration of the learning outcomes and cognitive skills by their students. A systematic process is also underway utilizing annotated work samples to develop specific course-based descriptors for the AAC&U VALUE rubric dimensions to more readily enable the adoption/ incorporation of these rubrics within the course context. Methods are aimed at sustainable assessment achieved within standard course contexts, and demonstrate first steps at wider-scale rollout, developing internal processes for the implementation, management, and assessment of university-wide learning outcomes that recognize and enhance disciplinary expectations.

By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) identify relative merits of assessing generic learning outcomes and cognitive skills; (ii) use the AAC&U Critical Thinking rubric to assess a student work sample; (iii) understand some implications of assessment of general learning outcomes in the wider scale context.
WORKSHOPS – DAY 2, SESSION 2
9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

WORKSHOP A
Mountbatten Ballroom

Engaging Students and Developing Critical Thinking and Writing Skills through Peer Evaluation

SPEAKERS: Karen McGarry and Andrew Wade, Department of Anthropology (McMaster University)

CHAIR: RON BOND, Vice-Chair, Saskatchewan Higher Education Quality Assurance Board

One of the biggest pedagogical challenges for first year university and college instructors is that students entering post-secondary institutions often lack basic writing and critical thinking skills. Given large class sizes, Instructors and Teaching Assistants are often unable to provide the one-on-one time that students require to develop such skills. This workshop explores how the implementation of various student peer evaluation techniques (via computer software such as PeerScholar and Enhanced Insight) can help improve critical thinking and writing skills by empowering students to work collectively to evaluate and improve each other’s writing skills. This workshop will facilitate a group discussion/brainstorming session of the positive and negative aspects of student engagement in peer evaluation techniques. This will be followed by a brief PowerPoint presentation which shares how peer evaluation methods helped meet student learning outcomes within the context of a first year anthropology class at McMaster University. This workshop will be of interest to faculty members and other instructors of large classes in the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences and in other courses with essay-based writing requirements.

By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) identify the benefits of student peer evaluation techniques in meeting course learning outcomes; (ii) understand the benefits of interactive engagements with peers to improve student writing skills; (iii) use concrete methods to overcome particular challenges with respect to the use of comparative models.

WORKSHOP B
Rossetti Room

At the Heart of Improvement: Linking Program Mapping and Program Quality at SAIT

SPEAKERS: Christina Tulloch, Co-ordinator – Academic Initiatives, and Doug Connery, Curriculum Co-ordinator – School of Business (Southern Alberta Institute of Technology Polytechnic)

CHAIR: MAGGIE CUSSON, Chair of Academic Development (Algonquin College)

What does it take to pull your program outcomes “off the shelf”?

In 2007, SAIT set the goal of developing program outcomes for its programs and used the program mapping process to achieve this goal. By 2014, we have realized the benefits of our efforts, program mapping is well-refined, and outcomes are in place. However, a recent project to develop additional majors for an existing degree highlighted the need for us to evolve our approach. It became evident that the essential link between a program’s outcomes, course assessments and program quality is still quite murky for faculty and other stakeholders.
This session will focus on SAIT’s exploration into using program outcomes as a framework for quality. Two questions are at the heart of the project:

1. How does program mapping become viewed as more than an “academic exercise” in a post-secondary context where the achievement of outcomes is not necessarily linked to program quality assurance?
2. What needs to be in place to support a cultural change of this nature?

The discussion will focus on the implications of a “program outcomes centric” approach to quality in the Alberta context. We will share our experiences with the goal of discovering and sharing best practices.

By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) discuss the complexities, opportunities and challenges of linking program outcomes, course outcomes and program quality; and (ii) evaluate strategies used to engage faculty in program quality processes.

WORKSHOP C  
Reconciling Institutional Learning Outcomes and Accreditation Processes: Educational Developer and Faculty Perspectives

SPEAKERS: Gavan Watson and Erin Aspenlieder, Educational Developers - Open Learning & Educational Support; Andrea Buchholz, Chair, Dept. of Family Relations & Applied Nutrition; Sean Kelly and Karen Landman, Landscape Architecture Program (University of Guelph)

CHAIR: GLENN CRANEY, Executive Director (ONCAT)

With some professional bodies transitioning towards outcomes-based framework for accreditation and the adoption of outcomes-based institutional quality assurance (QA) processes at Ontario universities, program-level learning outcomes in professional programs must often serve multiple stakeholders. Balancing these constituents’ needs adds to the complexity of program-level curricular processes, while also increasing their stakes.

Offered for those participants balancing accreditation and QA, this session offers participants the opportunity to hear from the practical experience of faculty and curriculum committee members of accredited programs (Landscape Architecture and Applied Human Nutrition) at the University of Guelph. Joined by educational developers who support curricular processes, this session aims to communicate the tension and value of outcomes-based approaches while providing the opportunity to learn from the panel’s successes and challenges with mapping and assessment. Participants will actively engage in the session by reflecting on and sharing practical solutions for outcomes mapping and assessment both individually and in small groups. Our aim is to support participants with practical solutions, including orienting participants to curriculum mapping software, for identifying and working through challenges they might face in developing and assessing learning outcomes that meet the needs of multiple constituents, with a specific focus on accreditation.

By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) identify the tensions among multiple constituents (e.g. accreditation, institution, program, faculty, and students) when taking an outcomes-based approach; (ii) reflect on the value of taking an outcomes-based approach to address these tensions; and (iii) develop context-specific answers to practical questions based on participants’ experience with their own curricular review process(es).
**WORKSHOP D**  
*Faculty Panels: Enabling Learning Outcomes Assessment*

**Gerrard Room**

**SPEAKERS:** Karen Gordon and John Donald, School of Engineering (University of Guelph)

**CHAIR:** Sandy Hughes, Director, Teaching Innovation & Excellence (Wilfrid Laurier University)

The accreditation process for Canadian Engineering programs includes a requirement for assessment of program learning outcomes, or graduate attributes, as part of a curriculum improvement framework. One challenge for the program and its faculty members is to collect and review data related to student performance, such as exit surveys, rubric results and grades, in a time efficient manner while still providing meaningful recommendations for curriculum change. The School of Engineering (SOE) has implemented a Panel Review Process to engage faculty in the review of assessment information in an efficient and meaningful way. This session will introduce the attendees to the SOE Faculty review panel process and engage them in an opportunity to assess program outcome data. In addition, attendees will be able to see how this process leads to curriculum improvement and refinement of program learning outcome statements.

**By the end of this session participants will be able to:** (i) organize student data in a relevant manner to assess program level learning outcomes; and (ii) conduct a panel review session relevant to their own specific curriculum goals.

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**COFFEE BREAK**  
10:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.  
Churchill Court

**SPONSORED BY PEARSON CANADA**
PLenary Session 2

11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.  
Churchill Ballroom

Assuring the Quality of Achievement Standards and their Valid Assessment in our Universities

Geoff Scott, Emeritus Professor and Senior National Teaching Fellow (University of Western Sydney; Australian Office for Learning & Teaching)

Chair: Jill Scott, Vice Provost – Teaching and Learning (Queen’s University)

This workshop will take stock of some important current trends in higher education assessment and build on the work carried out by Professor Scott as part of his Australian Government National Senior Teaching Fellowship. In particular, we will explore new efforts at ensuring that the focus of PSE program learning outcomes is relevant and desirable for the coming decades. In addition, we shall discuss how we ensure that the assessment of these learning outcomes is valid (fit-for-purpose), and consider some of the strategies used by senior and local teaching and learning leaders who have successfully engaged all (not just enthusiastic) academic colleagues with this agenda.

Professor Scott is particularly interested in locating examples of assessment tasks that are both highly engaging to students and also fit-for-purpose, and in discussing the processes currently used to confirm that program level learning outcomes are appropriate.

Important issues to be highlighted will include: (i) how best to use assessment for learning (not just of learning); (ii) what constitutes a valid graduate capability framework; and (iii) how best to develop graduates who are work-ready not only for today but also work ready plus for tomorrow.

The integrating themes for the workshop are:
• Good ideas without an implementation plan are wasted ideas
• Change doesn’t just happen; it must be led, and deftly.

In preparation for the workshop two documents are available and participants are encouraged to read them before the workshop.

By the end of this session participants will be able to: (i) develop a shared overview of international developments and ‘hot spots’ in learning outcome assessments along with a common framework within which to locate and enhance work in this area; (ii) clarify the difference between assuring the fitness of purpose of learning outcomes set down for our higher education programs and the fitness for purpose of the ways in which they are assessed; (iii) identify the key strategies that take a good idea in higher education and actually make it work successfully and consistently in practice, including the key capabilities and tactics of effective teaching and learning leaders in learning outcome assessment.

Closing Remarks

12:15 p.m. – 12:30 p.m.  
Churchill Ballroom

Maureen Mancuso, Chair, Conference Planning Committee

Lunch

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.  
Churchill Ballroom

Boxes are available for those needing to depart right away