#3 Lifelong and life-wide learning: The transformative role of eportfolios in online graduate education

Shauna Reckseidler-Zenteno, Debra Hoven, Corinne Bosse, Terra Murray, Jon Dron, Caroline Park, Marti Cleveland-Innes, Cindy Ives, Wendell Kisner, Meaghan Sullivan, Shawn Fraser

In the increasingly connected and digitally-enabled society in which we live, universities are recognizing the need to develop life-long learners who can demonstrate a number of competencies interwoven with the ability to critically reflect and collaborate in diverse networks. A learner's journey can be documented through the creation of an eportfolio, which is a portfolio in a digital or electronic format that can be tagged, searched and displayed in multiple formats. Educational institutions, including AU, are adopting the use of eportfolios, recognizing that eportfolios are an effective way to demonstrate learning outcomes while enhancing the individual learning experience. With the critical element of reflection on the learning journey, eportfolios are also transformative in the sense that learners come to a deeper understanding of what they have learned, their learning processes, and how their formal learning connects with their professional and personal lives. In addition, eportfolios are sometimes considered disruptive of traditional modes of assessment and evaluation, and transformative of pedagogical approaches and curriculum design. Assessment emerges naturally from the learning process, unlike most conventional assignments and exams, and portfolios inevitably make the learning process personal, relevant and meaningful to the learner. This also means that they provide deep insights into individuals' unique learning journeys, so they are also relatively immune to plagiarism.

The Faculty of Graduate Studies has formed the eportfolio Working Group, which is comprised of graduate faculty members who are either using eportfolios or are interested in their implementation. We are proposing a panel presentation on eportfolios and the benefit of broad implementation at AU. The various implementations and possibilities for implementation of eportfolios across all disciplines and their applications will be covered, to inform the AU community and facilitate a discussion of how eportfolios fit into the AU Learning Framework.

#4 Living Up to its Name

Dougal MacDonald, Glynnis Lieb, Natalie Sharpe

"Disruptive education" refers to the notion of education which occurs without traditional constraints, which "goes beyond" the expected. In a similar context, well-known educator bell hooks refers to education as "the practice of freedom", which obviously includes freedom of speech and its use as a means of disrupting established educational praxis. Dr. Glynnis Lieb, Dr. Dougal MacDonald, and Natalie Sharpe MA propose a three-person panel discussion led by themselves and focused on the notion of freedom of speech, an issue much in the media these days and very relevant to post-secondary education, including in Alberta. We note that the provincial government has mandated that all PSEs must implement the "Chicago Principles" of free speech by December. Keyano College has already done so.

The title of our panel is, "Living Up to Its Name." Each panelist will present and then respond to audience participants.

Dougal will speak on the question of whether and to what extent free speech is being constrained and/or to what extent a free speech crisis exists in the context of post-secondary education. His presentation is titled, "Manufacturing Dissent."

Glynnis will focus on how freedom of speech manifests itself specifically within the context of the academy and how recent trends towards political populism have put academics under increased scrutiny. Her presentation is titled, "Critical Thought vs Social Conservatism."

Natalie will discuss freedom of speech and its importance to and intersection with marginalized groups such as students with learning difficulties. Her presentation is titled, "Voices from the Margins."
The presenters believe this panel will be a valuable contribution to the conference and to the forward progress of post-secondary education in Alberta.

#5 Create a Smart Learning Environment: Keep Analytics in the Loop when Designing Online Courses

Hongxin Yan, Oscar Lin

Learning analytics (LA) holds a great potential for online education. If used effectively, LA can support student's learning in an intelligent way, such as tracking learning progress, predicting performance, identifying at-risk students, facilitating intervention, assisting personalized learning, etc. Also, instructors can use LA to examine the effectiveness of the course design and make improvements accordingly. However, the current course design models and practices haven't considered LA in a systematic way. This usually results in the lack of learning data generated from a course for LA to use. Consequently, not only students learning but also course designing cannot take the LA advantages. Because learning data are the essence of analytics, this research is exploring what learning data should be generated in online courses for LA to fulfill its potential; and how online courses would be designed differently if including the LA in the design loop.

#6 Indigenous Educational Journey: University Retention

James Shawana, James Shawana

This is poster presentation about what can be done to help Indigenous students to succeed. I am Anishinabeg from Wikwemikong First Nation from my mother's side of the family. It is composed of a mixed methods approach of a quantitative survey of undergraduate university students and a qualitative survey that used a talking circle of university staff, professors, and Elders. There is a dramatic increase in Indigenous people obtaining a post-secondary education but there still is significant gaps compared to other Canadians. Aboriginal students tend to be older and have dependents. Identified challenges include transportation home to their home community, housing, daycare, distance and relocation, and cultural insensitivity. Several recommendations include hiring Indigenous staff and faculty (not limited to just Indigenous Studies courses), the importance of relationships between faculty and Indigenous students, Elders, support services, and mentorship programs. Many Indigenous students are motivated to achieve a post-secondary education to have a better life for them and to help their community.

#7 #DigiLit4All: Developing a User-Friendly Digital Literacy Tutorial Repository

Joanna Nemeth, Jennifer Rempel, Shauna Zenteno, Corinne Bosse, Hongxing Geng

Digital literacy (DL) proficiencies are vital to Athabasca University students' academic and professional success. In the interest of promoting uptake of these skills, AU Librarians and members of the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) have worked together to create a new FGS Digital Literacy Tutorial Repository. Using Digital Reading Room (DRR) software, we have created a collection of DL tutorials and assessment tools that can be easily embedded into any website or Learning Management Software (LMS). These tutorials are accessible and are mapped to both JISC's seven elements of digital literacies and AU graduate program outcomes. Our presentation will provide background information on the creation of this repository, as well as a demonstration of how faculty and learning designers can use it to embed DL tutorials into their courses.

#8 Showcasing Innovative Style Questions

Barbara Wilson-Keates, Rose Schroeder, Jacqueline Mann, Rick Order

Students and faculty in the Bachelor of Nursing program have identified a major challenge in creation of online theory courses that better prepare students to apply knowledge and skills in clinical nursing practice. The presentation will highlight different types of test questions that were created for learners enrolled in NURS326 (Health Assessment) in Faculty of Health Disciplines. We will showcase alternative format questions including the use of images, pictures, and audio files to support learner preparedness to apply knowledge to real patient situations. In addition, no test is the same as the question bank is randomized to limit the ability of students to share test content. The breakout session will showcase innovative style test question formats that could be effectively used in other courses and programs to help support their learners.

#9 Life-long Learning Healthcare and Evidence-based Education: An autonomous research

Vivekanandan Kumar, Shawn Fraser, David Boulanger

This research proposes a semi-autonomous research agent. This research agent will bridge the education and healthcare sectors through a "symbiosis" that will turn healthcare careers into life-long learning ones and metamorphose pedagogy into an evidence-based process. Primarily, the research agent will be empowered to understand research and review huge swaths of literature to garner and present evidences to healthcare practitioners and assist them in their decision-making process. More precisely, through the latest artificial intelligence techniques (e.g., deep learning and data science), the research agent will autonomously 1) automatically classify publications from research databases by research method (e.g., observational study, meta-analysis, systematic review, randomized clinical trial, cohort study, quasiexperimental, etc.) and by topic (e.g., health condition); 2) identify and extract key elements of studies such as research question(s), investigated variables (treatment, outcome, covariate), instruments, raw or summary data (i.e., means, standard deviations), methodology (e.g., ANOVA, RNN, PCA), outcome(s) such as the strength and direction of causal relationships/correlations, and ethical issues; 3) measure the quality/credibility of studies; and 4) continuously perform meta-analyses, systematic reviews, and/or causal analyses (e.g., Structured Equation Modeling, Potential-Outcomes) for each research question it investigates, as new data come in. The research agent will recommend unexplored or under-explored research areas to allocate energy and resources where they are most needed. The research agent will promote best practices by uncovering, aggregating, and networking dormant findings, thus optimizing benefits to the Canadian (patient) population. It will also serve as a platform to connect researchers pursuing common research goals to break the communication barriers hindering scientific progress. From the education perspective, the research agent will support educational research and assist teachers to ground their pedagogical decisions on evidences, conduct small-scale studies, and share outcomes and learning resources with the teacher community. Finally, it will map healthcare ethical issues to educational ones and train education professionals in applying the proper research design to address the ethical issues they face when conducting their own experiments in their classrooms.

#10 Balancing Academic Integrity and Accommodations

Lisa Boone, Carrie Anton

Under the Alberta Human Rights Act, post secondary institutions have a legal duty to accommodate students with disabilities to ensure equitable access to education. This duty to accommodate requires higher education to accommodate individuals with disabilities to the point of undue hardship, but what does this mean? How do we define undue hardship? Do we have to lower academic standards to accommodate students with disabilities? And why won't Lisa from Access to Students with Disabilities just accept my answer?

This session will explore how the duty to accommodate impacts course delivery and how we assess student learning. We will discuss Athabasca University's responsibilities under the duty to accommodate and you'll learn why ASD keeps asking you questions. We will also discuss how you can prepare for accommodation requests and avoid those questions using Bona Fide Academic Requirements.

#11 Understanding the student population dynamics of the B.Sc. programs at Athabasca University: A mathematical modelling approach

Gustavo Carrero

An important aspect to consider when assessing a University program is the dynamics of the student population within the program. Thus, this work aims at understanding the dynamics of the population of students enrolled in the B.Sc. programs at Athabasca University (AU). In particular, we develop a differential equation model to describe the temporal dynamics among four different classes of students within a program, namely passive, active, inactive, and graduated students. Fitting the solution of the model to the historical data of the B.Sc. programs since their inception allowed us to estimate the model parameters, be able to describe the history of the programs, and provide a prediction of the student population dynamics for the upcoming years. Moreover, this modelling approach can serve as a tool to identify new strategies to improve the students' experience in the B.Sc. programs at AU.

#12 Video in AU Distance Education – Experiences and Prospective

Martin Connors, Dietmar Kennepohl, Farook Al-Shamali

Our recent experience shows that video materials can be effective in Science teaching, mostly based on short clips about experimental experiences and procedures. We have also used videos as supplemental material, in recent times by streaming from the Library. An attempt to make a full video-based course based on MIT OCW materials must be considered a failure, in part due to naiveté about best presentation formats. We now suggest that professional video materials be used to make “wrapper” courses, and will show selections from a commercial vendor, some of whose products are at a suitable level to form the core of a credential course.

#13 Taking Stock: Inventories as Launchpads for Continuous Improvement

Rhiannon Rutherford, Mary Pringle

Over the past few years, the course development and production team in the Faculty of Business has adopted small but scalable improvements in the student experience by identifying opportunities for streamlining and consistency without impacting the unique qualities of each course. Many of these mini-innovations were grounded in an inventory project that helped spark productive discussion and collaboration within our team. At a time when so much is in flux, we have found insight and value in taking stock.

This workshop will begin by sharing our story, but the goal will be to prompt a robust discussion about ways to identify immediately actionable innovations in course design and revision processes across the university.

#14 The Neurolinguistic Approach to Teaching French On-line

Rose Ferronato

Learning a second language on-line can be a challenge, especially oral comprehension and production. Since contact with the instructor is limited, a student can have problems understanding what is being said as well as pronouncing what should be said. Further, the student cannot see the instructor's facial expressions or mouth which helps students in a classroom setting to improve their comprehension and pronunciation. An approach to second language acquisition which is currently popular in Québec is the Neurolinguistic Approach to teaching second languages began by two Canadian researchers, Dr. Claude Germain (UQAM) and Dr. Joan Netten (Memorial University). In this presentation I will propose a few ways the Neurolinguistic Approach can be adapted to improving students' comprehension and oral production in an on-line setting.

#15 Issues and Opportunities: OER development at AU

David Annand

A project was commenced in 2015 to develop open education resources (OER)to replace two commercial financial and managerial textbooks used in FMAC 503, a core course in the University's MBA program. The texts were implemented in the course in October, 2017. The rationale for development, costs and benefits to AU and its students, and issues encountered during the (continuing) process will be discussed. Many of the lessons learned can inform broader production, adaptation, and use of OER at AU as envisioned by the University's current strategic plan.

#16 Toward a Telepresence Robot Empowered Smart Lab

Qing Tan, Marc Denojean-Mairet, Hongxue Wang, Xiaokun Zhang, Frédérique Pivot, Roland Treu

In the context of distance education, lab and fieldwork are a considerable challenge for students, professors, and institutions. This paper presents a Telepresence Robot Empowered Smart Lab (TRESL) system as a new and emerging technology with the potential to overcome this challenge. The main focus of this paper is to propose a conceptual model, to define the ultimate goals of the proposed solution, and to present its system architecture and the modules to support the functions and features. A pilot project was conducted and is also presented in this paper. The pilot project includes the experimental implementation of a telepresence robot in a mock-up smart lab and the collection and analysis of survey data from users of the robot. The main findings of the pilot study are, 1) online users can easily operate the telepresence robot; and 2) operating the robot manually will increase the engagement of online users with the remote lab environment. The pilot study provides firm evidence that the proposed TRESL system is a promising and innovative approach for online students to conduct their lab work in a remote laboratory. The results also suggest avenues for further research and development of the system.

#17 Employing Blockchain Technology in Instructional Design and Learning Content Creation

Qing Tan, Frederick Ako-Nai, Enrique De la Cal Marin

Blockchain technology, a secure ledger of transactions distributed among a network of computers is the technology that enables value transaction on the Internet, which has the potential to create new foundations for our economic and social systems. Blockchains have widely been used in the finance and e-commerce industries for processing payments and smart contracts. Consensus algorithms, which are used to achieve agreement on data among distributed systems, are mostly determined by the type of blockchain, i.e. public, private, or federated, and are used for the verification and validation of transactions in such blockchain platforms. Current application of blockchain technology in the educational sector has mostly been for keeping student records, storing and validating diploma and degree certificate for academic credentials. Most of the available consensus algorithms for blockchain provide some form of reward to miners e.g. in the form of cryptocurrency. For blockchain to be adapted and used for other educational applications such as the creation of learning contents, the right consensus algorithm is needed. Since a Learning Content Creation will have little or no reward for participants and also not need “mining”, the consensus model chosen will need to treat participants fairly so to not push them away In this introductory paper, we briefly review the available consensus algorithms and provide our insight how the Blockchain framework can be adapted for instructional design and learning content creation. A proposed framework which will lead to further studies and the development of such a system is discussed here.

#18 Cryptology Empowered Trustworthy Open Education

Harris Wang

Open education provides all learners with access to education and opportunity to earn credentials regardless their ages and background; today's internet technology has further removed geographical barriers so that learners can access educational resources from wherever they want at any time they prefer. However, one major concern with the current online open education is the lack of trust. There is an urgent need to ensure online courses and programs, as well as the professors and tutors who develop and deliver the courses and programs are trustworthy for learners, to ensure the learners and the work they produced for assessment are trustworthy for the professors, tutors and course and program administrators, and the credentials received through online education are trustworthy for the general public and employers in particular.

In this paper we will present a cryptology-empowered trustworthy open education system. This integrated open education system shall open the door for every competent person to become a professor, a reviewer, an editor, a program director, a tutor, an examiner, a credential administrator, or a learner, regardless his or her location, educational background and language preference. The authenticity of an individual within the system will be based on a unique crypto PID, and the credibility of an individual is built on a point system. In the production and delivery of courses, programs and credentials, blockchain technology will be used to ensure the work generated at every step is trackable and authentic, and points can be reliably awarded to the owner of the work based on the quantity and quality of the work, measured through peer-review and analysis of performance data.

We will talk about the high-level structure and dataflow of the system, protocols for generating crypto PID, developing and delivering courses and programs, awarding credentials, interacting with graduates and employers for the analysis of market and performance of the system and individual players.

#19 Improving Meta-Cognitive Skills through the Educational Online Game OMEGA

Sabine Graf, Maiga Chang

While Canada is doing well in producing people with university, college and trade credentials, the actual skill levels in key areas like critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation, etc. are underwhelming [1]. Those skill deficits limit people's potentials, including their potential to learn and to conduct high quality work in their jobs. In this presentation, we introduce OMEGA, an online educational game that has been designed and developed in our research group and aims at improving meta-cognitive skills while people are playing. In OMEGA, players play against each other in a set of subgames, each focussing on implicitly improving a particular meta-cognitive skill. The game utilizes motivational techniques to encourage players to keep playing, uses learning analytics to increase players' awareness of their skill levels and progress, as well as personalizes the gaming experience to particular players and their preferences and skills.

Reference:
[1] Daniel Munro, James Stuckey, Cameron MacLaine (2014). Skills—Where Are We Today? The Conference Board of Canada.

#20 Gravité – a data analytics framework

Vivekanandan Kumar, Jeremie Seanosky, Rebecca Guillot, David Boulanger, Isabelle Guillot, Daniel Jacques, Claudia Guillot

Imagine an artificially intelligent software companion that calls your computer its home, helps you to study better and train sustainably, acts as your friend, and motivates you to act in your long-term best interests. Moreover, its actions are consistent with your own deepest values and your personal, social, and other standards. Gravité, a data analytics framework has been designed and partially developed to bring such companions to reality. Gravité leverages technologies to personalize the study environment for the individual, to globalize teaching contexts, and to optimize learning and training experiences. Analytics as an ethics-bound, semi-autonomous, and trust-enabled human–AI fusion that measures and advances knowledge boundaries in human learning. Analytics enables (a) the analysis and discovery of skill-acquisition traces from raw task-related data, (b) the discovery of new relationships among those traces, (c) the acquisition of new knowledge from networks of such traces, and (d) the use of such knowledge to direct training and instructional activities toward targeted outcomes.
Gravité has a central REST API-based hub, implemented in NodeJS, that handles all the data traffic to and from sensors (e.g., software sensors embedded within a text editor or hardware sensors embedded within a smart study room). The hub receives all learning events (in JSON format) from the sensors and stores them in a NoSQL database (MongoDB). Further, the events are also stored in a private permissioned blockchain where only learners' and persons authorised by learners can access the data. The analytics engines of Gravité query the hub for 'unprocessed' learning events or queued observational research queries. The output from the processing engines is then sent back through the hub and into the database from where dashboards (i.e., visualizations) query the hub for processed results and metrics.

Gravité also includes custom encryption to ensure security of the data in transit. This encryption is generic to work with different types of sensors. Gravité is quite modular in that new sensors can be added seamlessly.

Another key aspect of Gravité is its ability to act as an autonomous data exchange. Just because it stores student data does not imply that the data is readily available for consumption by others. Take the simplest case where a researcher invites some students to take part in a study and fill up questionnaires. Gravité creates private data space for each student that is accessible only to that student. Further, the researcher sets up a space to query for the types of inferences such as finding age groupings or correlating age grouping with coding competency. No one can see the raw data except the student. The researcher can only run inference functions that query the private data spaces of each student and compute the outcomes to offer the researcher the outcomes. Gravité's data exchange mechanism acts as a privacy barrier to ensure that spurious inference functions that lead to re-identification are not entertained. Since the private data space is fully in the control of individual students, they can withdraw their data at will. Also, they can screen which researcher can access their data. The only human interface

to Gravité's data exchanges will be with the Research Ethics Board (REB) that governs access and creation of inference functions. However, even the REB will require students' authorization to access the raw data.

This presentation will highlight learning analytic functionalities of Gravité that includes recording, processing, sharing, profiling, researching and predicting learning events and interventions.

#21 Designing a Data Science Program at AU

Vivekanandan Kumar, Stella George, Ali Dewan, Richard Huntrods, Larbi Esmahi, Xiaokun Zhang, Harris Wang, Dunwei Wen

Data Science is a multidisciplinary area that explores methods to procure, clean, maintain, process and infer from an abundance of data. Data Scientists are in great demand, among others, for their technological and subject-matter skills to work with data, communication skills to explain the outcomes of data analysis, and leadership skills to advance data-driven policies. AU offers a number of COMP, MATH and SCIE courses on topics related to Data Science as well as a Post-Baccalaureate Diploma in Data Analytics. Aligning with the Imagine and the Learning Framework, FST is investigating the possibility of a program in Data Science. The program will be truly interdisciplinary in nature, addressing overlapping themes from across computing, business, healthcare, education, humanities, social sciences, interdisciplinary studies, biology and environmental sciences. While the program looks to advance areas such as analytics, cognition and humanins, it also needs to offer perspectives on data science's impact on quality of life, social norms, privacy, security, politics, policy and the truth itself. This presentation will highlight these notions and seek critical feedback from the AU community to bootstrap the Data Science program.

#22 I Didn’t Know We Have A Library! AU Library Resources for Faculty, Tutors, and Learning Designers

Jennifer Rempel

Athabasca University Library aims to provide our students with all of the support that they need to successfully complete their studies at AU. But what value does the Library have for you as faculty, tutors, and learning designers? Our collections include both physical and electronic materials, from periodical databases to e-books. Our suite of instructional materials is ever-expanding, and we offer a range of items including tutorials, webinars, and course-specific learning objects. Finally, our Librarians and staff offer materials access support, reference assistance, and instruction in digital literacy and library use. This presentation will highlight these and other library resources, and will show you how to take full advantage of all that AU Library has to offer to you as researchers and educators.

#23 Educators as Learners

Rosemarri Klamn

In keeping with our Athabasca University (AU) Learning Conference theme, Disruptive Transformation, and commitment to lifelong learning partnerships with learners, this presentation will examine theories and possibilities for distance educators as distance learners. We continue to learn and evolve as educators so we can create an innovative, integrated, and inclusive learning environment for our learners and ourselves. Digital technology literacy, use of new media/video/social media, and communities of practice will be discussed, along with ways to transform theories into practice.

#24 Fostering student success through supportive instructor-student relationships

Ronnie Joy Leah, Mark Dimirsky

As we consider the future of digital learning at AU, we must not lose sight of the crucial role played by Instructors as the front line educators. How do instructors promote student learning with effective pedagogy? How do instructors build supportive relationships with students that contribute to student success? How do we support the social mission of AU by removing barriers that restrict student access to university education. This session encourages tutors and academic experts to share their stories as educators, to identify those practices which contribute to student learning, and to identify barriers which impede students' education. This session fits in Theme 1. It includes a panel discussion with brief presentations, group discussions, and sharing of participants' narratives and practices.

#25 Smart Home Labs in Introductory Physics Courses at AU

Farook Al-Shamali, Martin Connors

The widespread use of smartphones puts a HD camera and several built-in sensors in the hands of almost all students and instructors. We share our experience in utilizing this great device in the design of physics home labs and the elimination of costly lab kits especially in courses covering introductory classical mechanics. The technology also permits extending the use of smartphones into lab experiments covering topics in electricity, magnetism, and optics. We continue to advocate the adoption of low-cost experiments while maintaining a high quality lab experience.

#26 Don't Embrace the Future, Invent it: Leveraging the Exponential Economy in an Age of Disruption

Raza Hussain

Today's exponential economy is the result of the incredible technological advancements that have occurred in the recent past. UR has embraced this thinking and wishes to share their findings with the audience. Disruptive innovation is another biproduct of the exponential economy; where those that leverage this new world are able to invent the future (versus simply embracing it). This presentation will talk about the six D's of disruption in the exponential economy. This breakout will also provide examples and conclude with a disruption map exercise (attached) for the group.

#27 Educators as Learners Twitter Chat

Rosemarri Klamn

Contribute to a collective conference experience at Athabasca University (AU) Learning Conference. Choosing which events to attend at a conference is never easy with great choices from gifted AU colleagues. Using the Twitter hashtag #2019AULC we can augment our F2F sessions with a Twitter chat that profiles different presentations, workout/sessions, roundtable/panel discussions, and posters. We can learn collectively in a very informal community of practice by sharing our favourite sessions. This informal Twitter chat is a low risk activity; just click and share pictures using hashtag #2019AULC and sharing yours and others' Twitter handle. Tips on process will be shared before and during the conference with @KlamnJam. @2019AULC

#28 More than Moodle: Student Engagement and Assessment in the Arts

Liz Lawson

Finding opportunities for students to walk away from their screens and engage in creative and purposeful learning activities that do not cost any money or conflict with busy schedules is not easy. This presentation will explore possibilities for the incorporation of experiential learning in the online environment, with a particular emphasis on ways to engage students in more autonomous forms of assessable activities at the junior course-level. For example, students can write in theoretical terms about the local built environment, write object histories of ancient artifacts, and construct their own psychogeographies of place. By emphasizing the practice of critical looking, the student is provided a new vocabulary from which to discuss the social life of objects, histories of structures, and constructions of place Moreover, a focus on research in the humanities and social sciences that exceeds the library's resources can foster a sense of purpose and encourage students to view the familiarities of their world in a new light.

#29 Are learning styles real?

Sabine Graf, Jon Dron, Bob Heller, Vivekanandan Kumar, Dietmar Kennephol

As teachers most of us have come across the idea of learning styles with categories that include auditory, visual and kinaesthetic learners. In its simplest form the idea is to teach students according to their style, which will result in improved learning. But is there any evidence that this is the case? For decades learning styles have been an important part of the educational landscape. However, some researchers are concerned over the validity and reliability of the construct and the multitude of measures being used. They also warn that using the learning style approach may adversely limit both teachers and students in adopting a wider variety of learning strategies. Because there are so many other factors involved (e.g. motivation, environment, demographics, technology employed) it is not a trivial matter to assess if learning styles are fact or myth. Not only is the educational landscape complex, it is also rapidly changing. For example, the move to facilitated and guided learning rather than merely dispensing knowledge has been a massive game changer. It is an exciting if not chaotic time in education. In light of all this, is the learning styles construct still useful for the learner and teacher?

#30 A Seven Generations Teaching Applied in Two Life Worlds to Address Historical Trauma

Josie Auger

A phenomenon of attending a fire ceremony and being with a group of Indigenous women, this past spring in Kyrgyzstan, was intense. Learning of Kyrgyz people's experience during "Soviet Times," that lifted in 1991, and watching their application of a national identity created a sense of sisterhood amongst the women in attendance. It was discovered that Kyrgyz and Cree people believe in the Seven Generation Teachings; this teaching link will be used to trace the impact of being an Indigenous woman in Canada. Our culture forms our identity. Colonization in Canada continues to affect Indigenous identity and livelihood; this presentation shall focus on the Indian Act; this is the background segment to further research. The residential schools were a construct of the Federal Government's colonial policies coupled with the Church's practice aimed at the assimilation of Aboriginal people into the dominant society. Indigenous peoples' significant experience of historical trauma may be linked to the loss of relationship to land and abuse in residential schools with intergenerational impacts. Overcoming historical trauma involves decolonization and reconnection to Indigenous belief systems that include respect for Mother Earth; as practiced in ceremony. We are all one people.

#31 Available, Accessible, Acceptable, Adaptable: Human Rights, Promising Practices

Jane Arscott

Four general criteria – availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability – provide a framework for the human right to education. The 4A Framework (Tomasevski 2001) segments the demonstration of the right under the four criteria. The United Nations' right to education is the quality assurance standard generally agreed to by member states worldwide. Use of words such as access, Open and Flexible are already familiar to the Athabasca University community as is the community's intention to deliver the university's vision to transform lives and transform communities (Imagine 2017). The 4A Framework usefully elaborates the meaning of the right, and its associated obligations, which AU has been developing informally over time, and which now would benefit by being expressed more clearly and communicated more effectively than before. The intentional alignment of AU's performance measurements to the 4As Framework could then document evidence of progress (or lack thereof) toward the achievement of these standards. Moreover, collective rights to education expressed in the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, and the 4As Framework would model UNESCOs' four pillars of education (2000) and establish AU as a university beyond borders.

#32 Undergraduate Student Journey Mapping – Four Populations

Alain May, Jason Ponto

The University has undertaken two student journey mapping projects in the past – one focusing on prospective students and the early student journey, another focusing on students who have taken courses across multiple faculties. These projects proved useful in hearing our students' voices describing their learning journey at AU. It helped in identifying where learners felt supported and where they experienced challenges; these challenges represent important opportunities for improving how we support students in achieving success.

As we implement the Student Service Strategic Plan, we were interested in what a "welcoming" student experience looks like for different student groups. The Office of the AVPSAS, therefore, undertook a student journey mapping project for four learner groups – Indigenous learners, learners with disabilities, learners who have taken time out from academic pursuit, and learners who are first in family.

We will present highlights from this study from our vendor, Environics. There were areas of support and challenge that were consistent in the learning journeys described by the learners, but also some marked differences across groups. We look at the implications of these findings as we build and strengthen our personalized support for all AU learners.