



University of
Lethbridge

NEWS RELEASE

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ReSET on-campus resource a repository of innovative and effective teaching methods for all to access

What began as a working group focused on effective teaching methods during the pandemic has become an innovative resource to building a more inclusive post-secondary environment — and it's open to teachers in all sectors of education.

[ReSET \(Resources to Support Excellence in Teaching\)](#), a collaborative effort to support excellence in teaching on campus, is a first-of-its-kind initiative led by academic staff and supported by the Teaching Centre at the University of Lethbridge.

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, many businesses and public institutions were faced with restrictions to in-person gathering. ULethbridge was no exception. Academic course delivery pivoted to online instruction with an uncertain timeline as to when in-person classes could resume.



Specific focus was placed on teaching, particularly around accommodations, inclusivity and flexibility, explains Dr. Sheila McManus, history professor in the Department of History and Religion. Faced with these challenges, a taskforce of ULethbridge educators came together in 2020 to brainstorm ways to provide quality learning instruction in a blended environment. The initial goal was to create a plan for the Fall 2021 semester. Driven by the creativity they witnessed across the institution, the group agreed to continue the momentum.

"We wanted to seize the moment of heightened attention to teaching and create a baseline for excellence on campus," says McManus. "We all agreed to continue working to build something transformative for our colleagues, inspired by the excellence, innovation and inclusivity we had witnessed during the worst of the pandemic."

David Hinger (BFA - Multimedia '03; MEd '07), Executive Director of the Teaching Centre and Agility, says the original goal of the project was to highlight innovative teaching practices that were adopted during the pandemic.

“The ReSET project has become so much more under the leadership of Dr. McManus and the working group.”

What has emerged is a three-part project — defining the five features of excellence in teaching, sharing research to support these five characteristics, and an in-house repository of teaching resources. McManus says the ReSET project is unique to ULethbridge as it creates a shared baseline of language around teaching excellence and provides an open-access repository for academic staff professional development both internally and beyond.

“For a long time, there's been this notion that it's harder to specify what excellence in teaching looks like. That's not true. We know what excellence in teaching looks like. It's actually very easy to define. So, we hammered out easy, accessible language for our colleagues,” says McManus.

The five features of excellence delve into the importance of caring about students and their success, inclusivity, adaptivity, and creating engaging learning environments and effective assessments. Each feature is supported by a research and resource list with suggested readings and videos.

The repository is a way to discover methods of “extraordinary teaching happening on this campus,” says McManus, and is searchable by various features. “If you want inspiration and ideas around assessments, course outlines or in-class activities, or if you're new to teaching, or just want to see what your colleagues on campus are doing, we're slowly building this repository of knowledge to draw from.”

Submissions to the in-house repository are being encouraged from ULethbridge academic staff to grow the resource base. Everything shared is protected under a Creative Commons licence as part of Opus.

“Whether it's a course outline, a really neat assignment that you did in class, or maybe it's a conference paper that you gave about your teaching, we're widely encouraging submissions from people,” says McManus. “Anything to do with excellence in teaching on this campus, if they're willing to share.”

The nature of teaching can often be isolating, explains Hinger, so having an opportunity to share resources with like-minded peers can broaden the perspectives of educators and contribute to more successful outcomes for students.

“We don't typically spend a lot of time sharing with our colleagues what we're doing in our classrooms. This is an opportunity to share, which is really exciting,” he says. “It highlights for me the culture we have on campus as well, and that academic staff here are passionate about our students and passionate about teaching excellence.”

ReSET will be featured during two panels at the [SPARK Teaching Symposium](#) on April 24, 2024. At 11:45 a.m., members of the ReSET team will assist anyone wanting to upload their material to the repository. At 2:45 p.m., selected resources for first-year classes shared to the repository will be featured as part of a panel on teaching for retention.

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/reset-campus-resource-repository-innovative-and-effective-teaching-methods-all-access>

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Our University's Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University is located in traditional Blackfoot Confederacy territory. We honour the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land, as well as all Indigenous Peoples who have helped shape and continue to strengthen our University community.