

APPLICATION FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING BY A TEAM AWARD 2017

QUB TEACHING AWARDS

APPLICATION FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING BY A TEAM AWARD 2017

Dr Paul Murphy (AEL/Drama), Dr Gavin Davidson, Dr Joe Duffy and Dr Lorna Montgomery (SSESW/Social Work) and Dr Gerry Gormley and Mr Ian Walsh (MDBS/Medicine)

1. PREVIOUS TEACHING AWARDS (200 words maximum)

If you have ever previously won a Queen's Teaching Award, please note the year and category (eg Rising Star, Team etc) below. You should also provide a short explanation of how the work outlined in this application differs from the work for which you were previously recognised.

The premise for this application is based on the education provided in the 'Theatre and Social Intervention' (DRA3057) module offered in autumn semester of this academic year, that evolved from the 'Theatre and Social Justice' module for which Paul Murphy was awarded a Queen's Teaching Award in 2012 in the Student Nominated Category. The work outlined in this application differs from the work for which Murphy was previously recognised mainly because of the focus on the collaborative engagement with courses in Medicine and Social Work. The intersection between these subject areas involved the intellectual and practical dimensions of advanced approaches to role-play in challenging scenarios. Drama students were able to expand their understanding of the theoretical and practical aspects of character and role-play through their interactions with staff, students and service users in subject areas involving scenarios which they would not usually experience in traditional models of theatre and performance pedagogy. Where colleagues involved in the collaborative engagement have also been recognised with Queen's teaching awards in various categories, the interdisciplinary nature of this engagement has provided new insights and experiences for staff and their students as well as the service users involved in the collaboration.

2. CONTEXT FOR THE APPLICATION (500 words maximum)

Please provide a brief summary of your application and a context for your work. Examples of the information you should include are the subject you teach; the aims, objectives and rationale for the team's approach; the type of teaching/learning support activities you are involved in; the number of learners involved, ways in which the team has directly involved students.

This collaborative initiative, involving diverse academic disciplines, assists students from different professional groupings in grasping the importance of interdisciplinarity at a very early stage in their learning. Each member of this team application brings different sets of skills and experiences to this collaborative endeavour. An additional aspect to this eclectic team expertise is the focus on communities of learning and practice (Wenger, 1998)¹ which is now an established part of Social Work education. The reforms to Social Work education in Northern Ireland in 2003 introduced service user and carer involvement as a core element of learning and assessment for social work students. One of the team members, Joe Duffy, has been pioneering innovative ways of working with community partners to make the educational experience stimulating, innovative and enriching for students. His work was recognised in 2014 with a National Teaching Award by the Higher Education Academy. This team application reflects a continuing effort to make the curriculum experiences of our diverse student group enriching, partnership-based and dynamic, thus aligning with the University's current Education Strategy. Linked to the latter, we have also worked with students in an inclusive and partnership-based way to survey their views on the impact of our innovative approaches. For example, we surveyed the views of both Social Work students and Drama students through Survey monkey and focus groups respectively to assist us in evaluating our initiatives.

In addition to the academic requirements for the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree, the 112 BSW students are required to undertake two practice learning (field) placements in social work agencies. In preparation for these, students must complete the 'Social Work Theory and Preparation for Practice Learning Skills' module which includes a series of role-play examinations in order to assess students' interpersonal communication skills. Where service-user involvement has been an established feature of Social Work students' role-play assessments on the BSW, collaboration with the School of Arts, English

¹ Wenger, E. (1998) *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

and Languages, provided an opportunity to utilise and evaluate the BSW student experiences of working with both Drama students and service users. Team members also felt it was important to undertake a comparison of student learning using service users and Drama students as this was recognised as being a gap in current research.

Demonstrating and expressing thoughts and emotions relating to the human condition informs key professional attributes of a practicing doctor. Clinical practice includes expressing empathy and understanding key features of humanity, such as mortality and illness. All of these areas are poorly addressed in medical education deploying current resources. Collaboration with the arts and humanities allows expression and understanding of the human condition, flattens hierarchy in healthcare professional teams and opens up right-sided brain functioning, thus facilitating truly holistic clinical education and practice.² The intersectional focus on empathic interaction and immersive role-play enabled the development of this ground-breaking approach that has the potential to make a significant contribution to the field of medical education.

3. DISCUSSION SECTION (See overleaf for guidance notes)

(a) How the team is promoting and enhancing the learners' experience (1000 words maximum)

Please include discussion on how the team works collaboratively, how collaborative working has been advantageous and how it has enhanced student learning. Please also illustrate how the team has addressed at least one of the following themes:

Assessment and feedback; retention; employability; staff development; students as partners; technology and social media.

Assessment remained within the usual parameters of the respective subject areas however feedback was shared across disciplines with the Drama students in particular able to avail of feedback from lectures, seminars and workshops in Medicine and Social Work. Student attendance and participation was close to 100% with very high satisfaction recorded in all three subject areas, with the Drama students' evaluation of teaching provision scoring 4.9 out of 5 for DRA3057. Staff development in terms of new approaches to teaching and enhanced research potential was increased across all three disciplines. The module 'Theatre and Social Intervention' has been approved under the new title 'Drama, Health and Social Care' to be extended to a full year module in the next academic year. The extension will facilitate timetabling and related logistics with a wider range of modules in Medicine and Social Work available during the full academic year.

Within the medical undergraduate Patient Safety module (MED5018), teams of final year Medical students engage in simulated clinical scenarios, wherein patients and relative's roles are enacted by undergraduate Drama students, deploying the Stanislavski system of actor training. All simulated clinical scenarios are facilitated by team members from both Medicine and Drama. Assessment of team performance is via a ratified global scoring system and dynamic debriefing techniques. Drama undergraduates participate fully in the debriefing process, an integral aspect of simulated learning, again facilitated by team members from both drama and medical faculties.

The deployment of Drama students trained in the Stanislavski system significantly enriches Medical and Drama student experience and performance. Medical undergraduates report 'suspension of disbelief' and an enhanced immersive experience within safe, simulated learning environments. At the same time,

² See Batt-Rawden SAI, Chisolm MS, Antonn B, Flickinger TE. 'Teaching empathy to medical students: an updated, systematic review', *Academic Medicine* 2013; 88(8):1171-7.; Tavakol SI, Dennick R, Tavakol M. 'Medical students' understanding of empathy: a phenomenological study', *Medical Education* 2012; 46(3): 306-16.

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Drama undergraduates report increased challenge and immersion within their given roles. Medical and Drama faculty, together with extant standardised/simulated patients report positive utility and value for this interdisciplinary approach. Qualitative and quantitative data further demonstrated the merit and utility of such interdisciplinary learning. Statistical analysis (paired Student t-testing) demonstrated that clinical team assessment scores of Medical students' team performance increased by 47% ($p < 0.05$) with this intervention.

Feedback from all faculty, standardised patients and especially students is uniformly positive with this interdisciplinary approach:

'I found the interschool learning with the drama students invaluable. It added another dimension to the scenarios with some fantastic acting.' – PT, Medical student

'The drama students were great. They made scenarios realistic and gave us the opportunity to interact in a professional capacity with people of our own age group. It would be great to have more of this throughout the 5 years.' – FW, Medical student

'I think as drama students we can learn a lot about improvisation and naturalistic acting by working alongside the medics in their OSCE assessments. Thanks so much for the opportunity! Very beneficial.' – SD, Drama student

Both student groups and faculty appreciate the value of the activity and described enhanced learning. Collaborative dynamic debriefing following clinical scenarios allows for a continuation of the immersive experience and for exploration of experiential phenomena, such as empathic engagement.

The learning outcomes for the BSW 'Preparation for Practice Learning' module aim to prepare students for practice placements, focusing on the development of knowledge, skills and values with which to inform practice. Learning outcomes include: equipping students to develop interpersonal communication skills for engaging with services users and caregivers; supporting reflective practice to promote student self-awareness and enhanced skill development; and fostering an anti-oppressive approach to practice. All 112 BSW students conducted their series of role-play examinations with, on one occasion, Drama students taking on the role of service users, and on other occasions, with service users or carers. This innovative and unique approach provided students with excellent opportunities for developing their interpersonal skills within a board range of scenarios. Following each role-play, Drama students offered constructive feedback to the BSW students, commenting on the BSW students' communication skills, self-awareness and ability to convey empathy. This process enriched the BSW students' learning experience and also provided new and important insights in the assessment of each student. BSW students evaluated the module very positively with a score of 4.6 out of 5, comments included:

'The skills workshops were tough but definitely helped to build my confidence, it allowed me to reflect and deal with issues on a personal level that will allow me to become a better Social Work practitioner.'

'I felt as though it was more beneficial to work with the drama student first, in order to fine tune our skills before working with a real service user. (The Drama student provided a good practice context).'

This collaborative approach was underpinned by the development of an interdisciplinary teaching team. The team met frequently to support each other in this innovative approach, to ensure that the system ran smoothly, and to promote constructive alignment of the course content, assessment and learning outcomes, for both BSW students and Drama students. A formal evaluation of the project was completed, utilising a Crossover design, and gathering feedback from BSW students, Drama students, colleagues teaching on this module, and service users. The findings from this evaluation will inform the ongoing development of this collaborative model.

(b) How team members support colleagues and influence student learning approaches
(350 words maximum)

The team greatly values the development and support of their colleagues involved in our educational endeavours. A collaborative approach underpins our teaching approach, right from course design through to delivery and development. The collaborative nature not only enables staff and students to gain insights on their respective roles but can assist in identifying personal strengths and mechanisms for mutual support. We believe that this collaborative approach in itself acts a strong role-model for students who we encouraged to work in an inter-professional fashion. Students have provided positive comments to this effect, for example:

'It was a fantastic experience to bring our art into real life situations which in turn assisted the medical students' – CH, drama student.

'It was helpful to deal with people the same age as ourselves, and who offered a fresh take on the roles they were playing. Including more of the same in future events would be a real bonus.' – PF, medical student

The process has also involved new opportunities for teaching across disciplines. For example, Paul Murphy has developed and presented a lecture to Social Work students on important aspects of the Stanislavski approach which are immediately relevant and transferable to how they approach interactions with service users and carers. Gavin Davidson has also developed and presented a lecture to Drama students on the use of self in social work and how self-awareness is central to understanding some of the complex interactions involved in practice. Gerry Gormley developed and presented a lecture to Drama students in which he explained the complexities of simulation-based teaching in light of his own research and professional practice. This collaborative process also involved developing the use of technology across disciplines to record, review and analyse how students apply their learning to practice. The inter-professional cooperation has therefore had direct benefits for all of the students involved as they have had the opportunity to explore different and stimulating perspectives on their learning and had access to expertise and experiences from staff and students from across subjects and faculties.

(c) Professional development activities undertaken by the team members and the impact of these activities on student learning (350 words maximum)

Members of the team are fully committed to their on-going professional development and are actively engaged in academic appraisal and mentoring. They seek feedback through: student feedback, student quality assurance meetings and peer review. Members continually reflect on their practice and critically review how best they can improve student learning experiences. Several members of the team have undertaken postgraduate qualifications in educational research. They regularly attend educational development activities at Queen's and further afield. Team members have in recent years developed a portfolio of simulation-based educational research projects and have published in leading medical education journals. Members of the team are also of a number of learned societies including: HEA, Association for the Study of Medical Education (ASME) and Association of Medical Education in Europe (AMEE).

The work of the team has also generated a number of presentations at conferences with a focus on professional education. These include: a presentation at the 6th European Conference for Social Work Research which was entitled the 'The space in between: preparing students for social work practice'. It explored some of the complex issues involved in simulating practice scenarios to prepare students for practice. A further presentation at the 11th International Conference on Practice Learning and Field Education focused on some of the developments in the use of technology and was entitled 'Comparing Social Work Students' Perceptions of Risk Using Online Discussion Fora: Lessons Learned from a European Pilot Project'. A further example was at the North South Social Work Educators' Forum and

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involved a presentation specifically on 'Interdisciplinary Education in Action'. There has also been impact on student learning beyond Queen's, for example Goldsmiths College, University of London has adopted the Preparation for Practice model and introduced it into their MA in Social Work.

**Teaching Awards 2017
Guidance**

The following are suggestions of the type of information you might wish to include in your analytical application - it is not an exhaustive list. You may also wish to draw upon educational literature within your application.

<p>How the team is promoting and enhancing the learners' experience</p>	<p><u>Evidence of</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the team stimulates and inspire learners • how you develop, organise and present resources • how you assess learners appropriately
<p>How team members support colleagues and influence student learning approaches</p>	<p><u>Evidence of</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ways in which the team contributes to the development of colleagues within your area e.g. mentoring, membership of Working Groups/Committees, developing policies etc. • how the team has contributed to institutional initiatives • the team's contribution to regional/national/international initiatives
<p>Ongoing professional development</p>	<p><u>Evidence of</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • professional development activities undertaken by team members • how team members have used learning from these activities to review and enhance practice • how this has led to improvements for learners i.e. impact