

ROLE AND IMPACT OF RESEARCH IN THE COLLEGES

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As I stand here tonight, I realise that this is supposed to mean that I am a successful researcher_ and that I am supposed to share my success story with you. This feels very awkward. We Cegep researchers are not in the habit of advertising our accomplishments to our peers and colleagues. It is not the way... in the Cegeps.

And yet, I feel that in the future, this must be. That we must publicise our successes and trumpet our accomplishments. For we have accomplished, we have constructed knowledge, and we have made important advances in our fields. We have made a difference in the lives of our students, in the intellectual atmosphere of our departments and colleges, and in the larger scientific community.

WE CEGEP RESEARCHERS MUST PUBLICIZE OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In this era of downsizing, of shrinking budgets, disappearing released time, and general malaise in the system, we must inform our own communities about the value of our work and about the importance and significance of our accomplishments. If we fail to effectively sell ourselves and the value of the research agenda to our Cegeps... if we fail to promote the research agenda "at home"... research as we know it has a good chance of disappearing from the Cegeps .

There are so many priorities, and so many demands. Here, as in many other realms, the squeaky wheel gets the grease .Those who speak out most vocally about the importance of their domain will prevail.

So, having said this much, let me go a little farther. I want to stress that we must inform our administrators, our colleagues, and the media about what we have learned, what we have accomplished, and about the knowledge we have constructed.

We must give credit to our colleges. Without the active support of my Cegep - Dawson College - my research could not have been carried out. In this regard, I'd like to "paraphrase" a famous quote from John Kennedy, "Ask not what your college can do for you, but ask what you can do for your college!" By giving us space, by administering our

finances, by signing reports and authorising a variety of special requests, many of our colleges have been very good to us.

We must ensure that those responsible for making research possible at the colleges are aware of our contributions, our appreciation and our gratitude. We must make sure that we speak to them about our successes - not only about our complaints when things go wrong. We must let our colleagues know about the benefits of our research for our students, for our departments and sectors, for our colleges and for the CEGEP system as a whole.

Also, those of us who belong to Cegep-university teams and have university affiliations must make a special effort to publicise the important roles of our colleges in making the research possible. This includes putting the Cegep's name on publications, acknowledging the Cegep's contribution to resources such as computer access and released time, and putting the Cegep's logo on lab groups' web pages.

CEGEP RESEARCHERS ARE SPECIAL

Bear in mind that we who chose to pursue research in the Cegeps are a very special breed. We get a kick from science. There are no perks or financial incentives. We will not get promoted or earn tenure because we do research - we do it because we want to, not because we have to. We work longer hours than we used to when our sole task was to teach. Research does not end in June and resume in the fall - nor does it respect weekends and holidays. We do not get paid extra for working throughout our "vacation" period.

For example, I was doing research well before the possibility of funding existed. In the not-so-good old days, I simply recruited anyone who would volunteer to punch a hot computer - well, it was a calculator in those days - during the summer. I had a key to the campus, and was frequently the only person around in the summer.

Well, fortunately, since those early days my research has been continuously funded by a large variety of granting agencies - both provincial and federal. By now, I best re-

member them as acronyms: FCAR, SSHRC (CRSH), CQRS, NTIC, NHRDP (PRNDS), and PSCC.

I got my first official grant in 1982 from FCAR. In those early and heady days, when funding organisations were actively looking for new scientific talent, it was a different world. Those of us who were around were carefully nurtured by FCAR. For example, we were invited to participate in grants juries - this not only got FCAR's job done, but it also taught us about grantsmanship. There is nothing like reading 50 or so grant applications year after year, and then hearing others' commentary about what was good and bad about them to help sharpen one's grant writing skills.

One thing I have learned during the past 15 years of reviewing for various granting organisations... we must respect the granting organisation's goals and objectives, and we must give them what they want. This is not to say that we cannot accomplish our own research agendas. If we couldn't, what would be the point? But we must do this in the context of the funding agency's priorities. It is well to remember this as we explore new funding sources and look to new organisations and structures to keep our research going.

MY RESEARCH ENRICHES MY TEACHING AND MY STUDENTS

I have been really fortunate - I am clinical psychologist, I have a Ph.D., and I do fundamental research in three distinct areas: (1) social integration of people with physical disabilities, with an emphasis on postsecondary education, (2) sleep and insomnia, and (3) sexual adjustment and functioning. I am particularly lucky because my research areas correspond to the courses I teach: Social Psychology, Abnormal Psychology, and the Psychology of Sexual Behaviour. So my research and my teaching complement and enrich one another, and are always in harmony.

This also helps with involving my Cegep students in my work. As have many of you, I, too have worked on research with both Cegep and university students. It never ceases to amaze me to what extent native smarts and enthusiasm can offset Cegep students' lack of expertise and experience with research!

COLLABORATIONS

Recognising the accomplishments of others in furthering my research objectives has always been a plus, and I have published and presented with my own students - both while they were at Dawson as well as afterwards - with my

Dawson colleagues - both faculty and professionals - as well as with colleagues from other institutions.

Research at a Cegep is exciting, but also quite arduous. For example, I am currently a member of an FCAR team that spans Université Laval, Université de Montréal, and Université du Québec Trois-Rivières. I have also been part of the research team of the Jewish General Hospital's Behaviour and Sex Therapy Service for many, many years, and, in this context, have worked with colleagues from Concordia University. I have also been really fortunate to have a longstanding affiliation with McGill University's Psychiatry Department and to have a very productive collaboration with a McGill University statistician.

I am also a principal investigator in a SSHRC-funded Canada wide research network (EvNet), and its Québec component (QuEvNet) - which includes both a Dawson colleague as well as Education Technology faculty from Concordia University.

Israel. The Internet has also been a terrific stimulus and tool for me, as it has allowed me to forge collaborative research with psychologists in Bar-Ilan University in Israel. We work on sleep, insomnia, and aging and exchange data sets as attachments in e-mail. We are currently writing a paper together, and we have already had two joint conference presentations. We will make another joint conference presentation in Dublin in July.

Australia. I am also involved in a series of collaborative studies with a scientist at the University of Sydney in Australia. We have already presented a paper on disabilities jointly, and the principal Australian team member will be coming to Ottawa next week, when we plan to get together to refine our plans.

Japan. I have a third, very exciting - but rather scary - collaboration with a psychologist at Keio University in Japan. This is very exciting, because Japan's way of dealing with people with disabilities is very different from the European or North American models. But it is also very scary, because this time it is I who will be going to Tokyo in July to make a series of presentations.

MY RESEARCH BENEFITS DAWSON COLLEAGUES AS WELL AS DAWSON STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT "MY" STUDENTS

As you may have gathered, I do a lot of research. I firmly believe that as a teacher, one should practice one's craft and ply one's trade. In psychology, this means doing research and being engaged in clinical practice.

In a discipline where course content is based on research conducted by psychologists, it is helpful to use one's own work as a vehicle for teaching scientific method. Because I do research, I have been able to incorporate descriptions of my studies as concrete examples of how research is done and how knowledge develops in the field. This helps students to better understand abstract concepts and allows them to relate to the course material on a more personal level. In fact, my work is cited in several Psychology textbooks.

Because I am a teacher as well as someone who does research on students with physical disabilities, I am frequently consulted by members of the college concerning integration issues. Indeed, an instructional guide, which I and my team developed at Dawson College, is routinely sent to all teachers who have a student with a disability in their class. Because of my expertise in this area, I also serve on the Dawson Task Force on Services for Students with Disabilities. There is nothing like a bunch of data - facts- to help in decision making when opinion is split. In this regard, I have written numerous articles intended for teachers and for student services professionals in postsecondary education. These have appeared in mainstream education journals as well as in local publications in both English and French (e.g., *Factuel*, *Ensemble*, *Prospectives*, *La Psychologie et Son Enseignement*).

MY RESEARCH PROMOTES DAWSON'S IMAGE AS AN ACADEMIC INSTITUTION.

I think research is fun, and I am involved with many of the scholarly activities in the international scientific community. I review for numerous journals and I am on the Editorial Boards of several. I serve on conference planning committees, and was involved in planning this Colloque of ARC. I also serve as an external examiner for master's and Ph.D. theses.

I am also a firm believer in publishing my findings. What's the good of answering all of those exciting research questions, and collecting all that data if the only one to know the answers is me? So I present and publish my findings in both the scientific and in the popular press. I have written more than 100 journal articles and book chapters and have made many, many conference presentations. I have written several magazine and newsletter articles and my work has been reported in major newspapers, such as the *Gazette*. I have been interviewed on radio talk shows, and my work has been the subject of several magazine articles. My research on insomnia was the focus of a recent article in the French science magazine published by ACFAS: *Interface*.

I am proud to work at Dawson and grateful to the College for the support that I have received over the years. I have publicly thanked the College in several articles, both acknowledging the College's support of research and praising our innovative approach to the integration of college students with disabilities. Needless to say, along with my own, Dawson's name appears on my publications.

This conveys the message that Dawson College is an institution of higher learning which not only provides high quality postsecondary education but also values scientific achievement, promotes scholarly activities, and contributes to the construction and dissemination of knowledge.

RELEASED TIME

Unfortunately, there are only 24 hours in a day! This brings me to my final point - the issue of release time! Several of you have asked me how do I do all this... how much released time do I have for research? The answer for the 1996-97 academic year is that I had .375 release applied science, invention, and technological accomplishment. Technological researchers are involved with advances in the world of science now, rather than in the future. Their research is relevant to the training of applied researchers and future practitioners the Cegep is unique! Our pedagogical needs and concerns, our populations, curricula, and objectives are atypical in North America. It is vital that pedagogical research that is relevant to the Cegeps go on. Needless to say, this is best done in the Cegeps!

The current buzzwords in research are "multisectorial and pluridisciplinary team projects with partnerships and geographical diversity". In particular, partnerships with industry and the private sector are encouraged, as are collaborations from different geographical areas.

We Cegep researchers have succeeded against formidable odds in the past. We have been pioneers. We have learned how to make precedents and have experience in organising and executing sophisticated, multi-layered projects. We have forged important links and have persevered in the face of formidable odds. Survival as a researcher in a Cegep is not an easy task - nor is it an activity for the fainthearted.

So, In the current era of "coupures" we must all, once again, regroup and exercise the creativity that has made us pursue a career in science. As fundamental, technological and pedagogical researchers we must celebrate our accomplishments, explore our common goals and resources, and collaborate and cooperate to maximise our potential!

We must do this to survive. To this end, I urge you to use the opportunity of this Colloque to get to know research-

ers from other areas, regions and fields. Work hard at overcoming discipline, geographic, and linguistic barriers. Learn to love technology. Get together with others, both formally and informally. Form partnerships with each other and with people and organisations from other milieus.

There is power in diversity and strength in numbers. Publicise your accomplishments and become a spokesperson for the importance of research in the Cegeps. Get involved and advocate for needed changes. It's your future, after all. Go for it!

Enjoy the conference!