Submission’s title: Multimodal Adventures in Teaching: Individualized Learning, Relationship-building, and Nurturing a Sense of Belonging through FSD’s Student Life and Writing Centre videos.

Proposal type: regular presentation
Alternative proposal: speed presentation
Technology required: computer and projector for PPT and video montage

Abstract:

The results of the recent Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC) survey indicate that, compared to equivalent institutions, TRU students lack a feeling of connection to the campus; thus, growing and nurturing a sense of belonging within our increasingly diverse student body is vital. How does one create or facilitate connection or belonging to places and spaces of learning?

Teaching and learning do not always take place in the traditional way within a classroom; in fact, sometimes the best “learning” takes place in unique and unanticipated ways. TRU’s Writer & Storyteller Alicia Ashcroft uses Faculty of Student Development’s Student Life and Writing Centre videos to not only create opportunities for individualized learning and relationship-building with students outside the classroom, but to contribute to a sense of belonging through both the viewing and the making of the videos.

In terms of viewing, the videos employ physical, self-deprecating, and observational humour and the superiority theory strategically: the bumbling character of “the ridiculous Ms. Alicia Ashcroft” allows students to gain confidence to reach out and connect (“well, at least I could do this better than her!”), emphasizes that learning often occurs through making mistakes, and de-stigmatizes accessing supports. There is also an element of assess before access: the visual accessibility of spaces, people, events, or services allows students to feel a connection and establish expectations prior to seeking out a service. Creating the videos facilitates a sense of ownership, autonomy and recognition within student participants – all key elements of nurturing a sense of belonging.

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