

**Signature  
Pedagogies:  
Beyond  
Content,  
and toward  
understanding  
how we teach  
our disciplines**

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# Acknowledgements



**UBC Point Grey (Vancouver) campus sits on the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əy<sup>ə</sup>m (Musqueam) First Nation**

“Educational and Career Outcomes for UBC Arts Students: Towards a new Paradigm.”  
The large TLEF spanned 2015-2018.



# Agenda

- Introduction to the concept of Signature Pedagogies
- Exploring signature pedagogies in your discipline
- Sharing your ideas with students



# Signature Pedagogies in the disciplines

*"Signature Pedagogy is a central form of instruction and learning to socialize students to perform the role of practitioner – it contains pedagogical norms with which to connect and integrate theory and practice."*

Familiar and distinctive examples include:

- Socratic method of case analysis in law
- Clinical rounds in medicine
- Studio pedagogy in art, design, and architecture

Signature pedagogies also “nearly always entail public student performance” through dialogue, presentations and/or group projects.



# What are signature pedagogies?

Educators who embarked on identifying signature pedagogies in their fields identify them as:

- Representative of central forms of instruction
- Allowing socialization of students in performing the role of practitioners
- Referring to common, pervasive teaching approaches in specific disciplines
- Involving "public performance" which are active and interactive – encouraging an atmosphere of "risk-taking" with instructors/peers (not passive)
- Distinctive to a “profession” and pervasive across courses & institutions (eg. *Law* –Lawyers, Judges; *Medicine* – Medical Professionals; *Engineering* - engineers)



# Disciplinary Habits of Mind, Hand, Heart



**Mind (Cognitive):** pedagogical strategies that inform and ultimately push students to “think” like a ...



**Hand (Psycho-motor):** pedagogies that enable students to practice and ultimately “perform” like a...



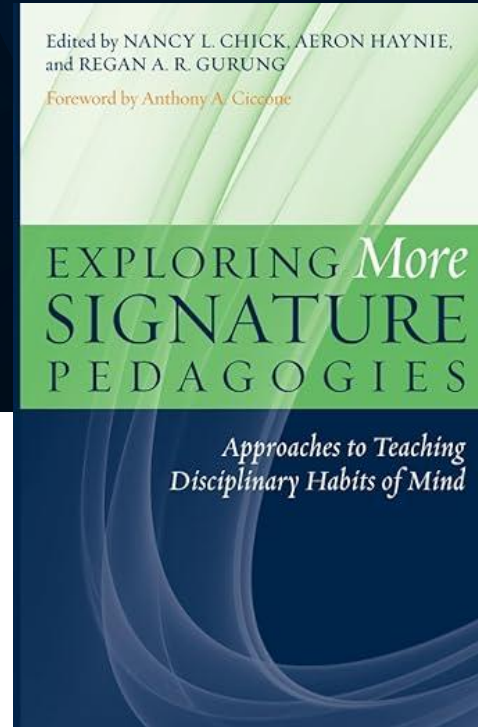
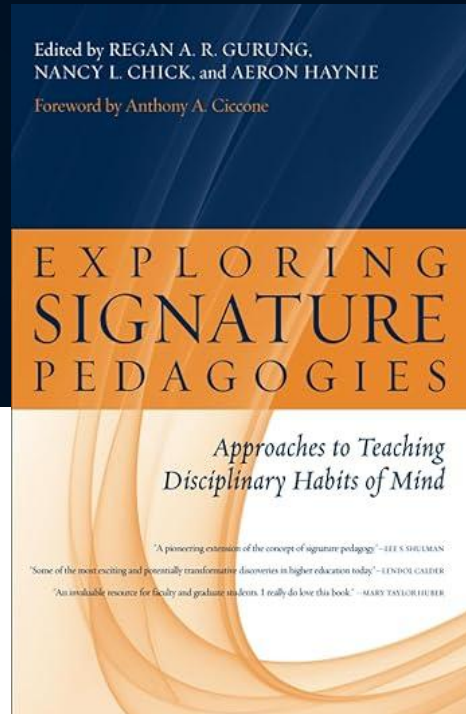
**Heart (Affect):** instructional opportunities that prepare students to “value” and “feel” like ... with a strong moral compass.



# Why do we teach the way we do?

- *Do psychologists teach in ways to make their students more likely to think like psychologists?*
- *Does a professor of literature teach their students to read literary texts as literary scholars do?*
- *Does the art and design instructor employ strategies to ensure their students will value the world of art?*

# Attention to disciplinary-specific pedagogy in liberal arts and sciences



## **Activity (10 minutes)**

### **Exploring Signature Pedagogies in Your Discipline**

#### **1. Brainstorm! (5 mins)**

- What types of teaching approaches and techniques are used "across the board" in your discipline?  
(eg. Socratic method, lectures, simulations, case studies, problem-based learning, etc.)
- What kinds of "public student performances" are used?  
(eg. Projects, presentations, experiential opportunities, etc.)

#### **2. Write each type on a new sticky note and place on wall (2 mins).**

#### **3. Read, sort, cluster (3 mins)**



Consider the techniques and approaches on the wall.

**4. Which of these hold the most potential for student's development of disciplinary habits of mind, hand, and heart?**

**Why?**

- What are students gaining from those activities?
- What are they learning about the discipline that is beyond the content?

**Group discussion  
(10 mins)**



**Reflection  
(10 mins)**

## Signature Pedagogies

### **surface structure**

concrete, operational acts  
of teaching and learning

### **implicit structure.**

beliefs about professional  
attitudes, values, and  
dispositions

### **deep structure**

assumptions about how best  
to impart a certain body of  
knowledge and know-how



# Meta-cognition and self-efficacy

When students' varied undergraduate courses are taught with explicit attention to discipline, they gain “meta-disciplinary awareness”:

- Empowers them to see beyond specific course-content - helps them recognize competence and skills
- Encourages them to see connections between thinking, knowing, and doing through a disciplinary lens
- Builds self-efficacy in articulating their learning to audiences inside/outside the discipline



# Sharing with our students

If we are using these ideas to support students' meta-cognition about the discipline and self-efficacy, in what ways can you share their signature pedagogies with them?

Syllabi examples:

- SOCI 102: Inequality and Social Change (Dr. Neil Armitage)
- ENGL 392: “Down the Rabbit Hole”: Child, Nation and British Fantasy Literature (Dr. Sarika Bose)
- Poli 395: Professional Skills in Political Science (Dr. Richard Price)



# Strategies for sharing: In the classroom

## In the classroom

- Be explicit about why particular teaching/learning approaches are used in your discipline – be explicit about the disciplinary habits of mind, hand, and heart students are gaining competence in [beyond content]
- Be explicit about how these attitudes, values, norms of your discipline translate across contexts inside and outside the university (encourage meta-cognition)
- Formative assessment: invite students to tell/write to you about what they are learning about their discipline (encourage self-efficacy)



# Strategies for sharing: Written

## On your Syllabus

- Include a pedagogical statement on your syllabus
- Revise your course description and include the disciplinary habits of mind, hand, heart they will gain from the course
- Revise learning outcomes to align with your discipline's signature pedagogies

## Program Description

- Integrate descriptions of these signature pedagogies and how they support students in gaining competence in disciplinary habits of mind, hand and heart [beyond content].



# Arts Alumni 10+ Year Out Survey: Cohort Experiences Effect

Small cohort experiences:

- > More belonging
- > Higher income

Being part of *any* small cohort experience or participating in *any* experiential learning option had significant positive effect on sense of belonging.

Specific individual small cohort experiences:

- serving on residence council
- being a part of a varsity team
- serving in student government

Specific experiential learning practices:

- research intensive experiences
- student leadership experiences
- international exchange programs
- community service learning
- practicums/co-op terms



## Wrap Up

### References:

- Shulman (2005) article
- Select articles from Gurung, Chick and Haynie (edited volumes)
- Arts ISIT [Signature Pedagogies](#) site
- Arts ISIT [Practical Learning](#) site

**For post-workshop contact, or workshops for your department:**

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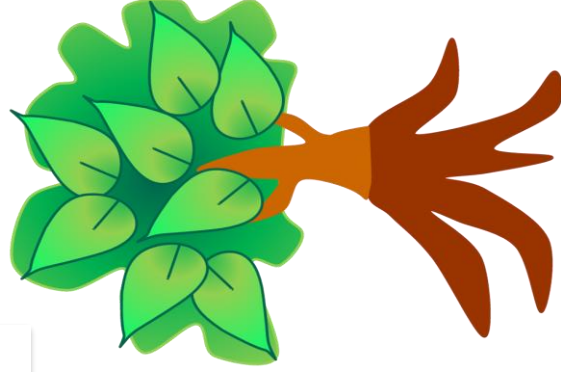
**Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology**



**Exploring Signature Pedagogies in Your Discipline: Imagining the metaphor of a tree with deep roots, a structural trunk, and its showy leave, what are examples of the following in your discipline?**

Surface structure:

Concrete, operational acts of teaching and learning



Implicit structure:

beliefs about professional attitudes, values and dispositions

Deep structure:

Assumptions about how best to improve a certain body of knowledge and know-how