

## Women's Faculty Colleague (Brantford Campus) Report 2019-2020

Michelle Skop

This report describes the events I organized, as well as the activities I participated in, as the Women's Faculty Colleague in 2019-2020.

### Events:

**Event 1:** On October 23, 2019, I hosted a *Coffee, Cookies and a Creativity Chat*. The event was located at the Yellow Brick Wall Art Gallery at 97 Dalhousie Street. The purpose of the event was to foster community and to ask women-identified faculty what type of programming they would like me to organize at Laurier Brantford. We began the event by viewing participant artwork from an arts-based research study and then I asked participants to identify strategies for including creativity in their work (see appendix A for email invitation).

**Event 2:** On January 16, 2020, I co-organized and co-facilitated a panel presentation in partnership Lauren Burrows, Education and Inclusion Coordinator, Centre for Student Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. Wilfrid Laurier University, Brantford Campus. The event was entitled *Worst Practice Session: Community Engagement*. We held the event at Hudson Public, a restaurant adjacent to the Brantford Campus. We invited four panelists to share their experiences of involving community in their research, teaching and service work. Afterwards, there was a Q&A session and robust group discussion. This event was well attended, and participants included faculty, staff, students and community members (see appendix B for email invitation).

### Activities:

**Coffee Chats:** During the summer and fall semester, I met faculty for coffee to build connections and rapport on an individual basis.

**Zoom Group Drop-in Support:** In response to the pandemic, I offered weekly group-based chats to support women-identified faculty regarding the transition to remote teaching as we finished the winter semester (see Appendix C).

**EDI Community of Practice (CoP):** As a member of the CoP, I have been attending biweekly meetings to discuss the work faculty and staff are engaged in to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion on campus.

**Collaborations:** I have collaborated with the Waterloo Campus WFC to explore and discuss strategies and policies for supporting women-identified faculty who are both parenting and working from home during the pandemic.

I also had several meetings with the EDI Faculty Colleagues to discuss opportunities for collaboration across our campuses.

## Appendix A: Email Invitation for Coffee, Cookies and a Creativity Chat

Dear Colleagues,

I hope you are having a good week. This is a friendly reminder to please join me today (Wed Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup>) for **Coffee, Cookies and a Creativity Chat from 1:30pm until 3:00pm at 97 Dalhousie Street, Room 105**. This building is the new home of the Bachelor of Social Work Program, and the first floor also has an art exhibit space called the Yellow Brick Wall. This semester the Yellow Brick Wall is exhibiting body map artwork created by participants from my arts-based research study about healthcare experiences (<https://wlu.ca/news/news-releases/2019/sept/new-yellow-brick-wall-exhibit-examines-healthcare-experiences-of-people-with-fibromyalgia.html>).

This event will give us a chance to (re)connect, chat, enjoy refreshments, and view artwork together. At that time, I would also like to ask for your help identifying some professional development and/or learning opportunities you would like to see organized this year, through the WFC. I also hope that we can use this art exhibit as a jumping off point to discuss strategies for fostering creative collaborations and supporting our community of women-identified faculty and staff at Laurier Brantford.

Please let me know if you have questions, and I look forward to seeing you this afternoon!

Sincerely,

Michelle

## Appendix B: Email Invitation for Worst Practice Session

Dear Colleagues,

This email is a friendly reminder about this afternoon's event:

Worst Practice Session: Community Engagement

Hosted by The Women's Faculty Colleague, Brantford Campus and The Centre for Student Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

In response to inequities in education, faculty members engage in practice to problematize neoliberal notions of teaching and research. Some of these strategies include community-based teaching, which invites community partners to join in the co-development and co-teaching of courses, community-based research, and collaborative programming.

Despite our best intentions to honour the many forms of expertise that the community contributes, in practice, there may be barriers, tensions, and even failures. We want to reflect on these difficult moments and have a transparent dialogue on the lessons and insights that motivate us to do better.

Welcome to The Worst Practice Session: Community Engagement. We invite you to join Laurier Brantford stakeholders and community partners to discuss the challenges of collaboration and the opportunities for us to do this work with more transparency, integrity, and inclusivity.

We invite faculty, staff, community partners, and graduate students to join this critical conversation.

- Thursday, January 16th, 4:00-6:00 pm
- Hudson Public, private room in the back (formerly Devlin's Advocate)
- Cocktail Hour
- Refreshments Served

Please RSVP at [lbworstpractice.eventbrite.ca](http://lbworstpractice.eventbrite.ca) and let us know if you have any questions. We hope to see you later today!

Kind Regards,

Michelle Skop and Lauren Burrows

## **Appendix C: Email Invitation for Zoom Drop-Ins**

*Sent on behalf of Michelle Skop, WFC - Brantford*

Hello Colleagues,

This is a friendly reminder to please join me today at 1:30pm for a weekly virtual coffee/tea time via Zoom. I will host these virtual chats every Thursday from 1:30-2:30pm for the next three weeks. This is a drop in format so feel free to connect for 10 minutes or the whole hour. The info for how to connect is at the bottom of this email.

These virtual chats are for all staff and faculty on all campuses.

I hope to “see” you this afternoon!

In solidarity,  
Michelle