

# **TEACHING DOSSIER**

**of**

## **ELIZABETH SLED**

**PhD Candidate in Rehabilitation Science,  
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## TEACHING DOSSIER: Elizabeth Sled

### 1. Brief Biography

I first began teaching as a Master's student at The Ohio State University in practical Physical Therapy laboratories. While at Queen's University I have had a variety of teaching opportunities in my roles as Teaching Assistant and Teaching Fellow. Anatomy has been the major focus of my teaching. I have taught both musculoskeletal anatomy and neuroanatomy and was actively involved in the development of these entry-level Master's courses in Physical Therapy at Queen's. My clinical background in orthopedic physical therapy has also enabled me to relate the foundations of anatomy to functional applications in clinical practice. As outlined in this dossier, I enjoy teaching and look forward to developing my skills further as I pursue my academic career.

### 2. Teaching Philosophy

My philosophy of teaching was founded on family influences. I grew up surrounded by teachers – parents, grandparents, aunts and great aunts, uncles and great uncles – and, at a young age, I sensed that my relatives were excited about teaching and the opportunities to interact with their students. These early impressions shaped in me a passion for teaching and a desire to influence the lives of students as a caring, compassionate and encouraging teacher.

As I began teaching in the university setting I experienced the joys and rewards of connecting with students and supporting them in the learning process. It became clear that teaching university students would be a very fulfilling career path.

My current philosophy of teaching has developed from my experiences as a learner, a teaching assistant and a teacher. There are three key principles that guide my teaching practice:

1. *Valuing students as individuals:* I seek to demonstrate to my students that I care for them and will do my best to help them learn. Personal contact with students is essential to my approach. I find great satisfaction in interacting one-to-one or in small groups with students and in clarifying technical and practical material so that in-depth learning occurs. I try to respond promptly to questions posed by students via email and to make myself available to meet with students as needed. I work hard to provide prompt and detailed feedback to students regarding their grades on formal evaluations.

2. *Creating a positive, active learning environment:* A second principle that guides my teaching is to strive to stimulate a positive learning environment where students feel comfortable to ask questions and participate in classroom activities. The learning atmosphere I seek to promote is also an active environment in which active learning strategies are incorporated into each of the classes to facilitate

learning. I try to consider students' different learning styles and to create learning activities which reinforce key concepts pertaining to the heavy content of the Physical Therapy curriculum.

3. *Linking theory and practice:* Thirdly, I strive to relate foundational information to relevant practical applications. For example, in teaching Physical Therapy students I purpose to draw on their previous experiences in volunteer/employment positions and clinical placements so that connections and extensions can occur to enrich students' learning. Through information solicited from informal questionnaires pertaining to the students' backgrounds and expectations, it has become apparent to me that learning will be facilitated in these mature and highly motivated students when scientific information and theory are applied to clinical practice.

As I have applied these principles to my teaching practice I have been encouraged by the positive responses from students in my classes and the enjoyment I receive from interacting with students.

### **3. University Teaching Experiences**

#### **3.1 Queen's University: Teaching Responsibilities – Course Instructor**

I) PT 850 Functional Anatomy (Fall, 2006; Winter, 2007; Fall, 2007)

PT 850 is a required course for 46 first-year students enrolled in the Master's program in Physical Therapy. The course involved a two-hour class once per week and 5 anatomy laboratories over a 12-week period. Course content included musculoskeletal anatomy of the peripheral joints, spine and temporomandibular joint (Fall Term) and visceral anatomy (Winter Term).

This course was offered for the first time in 2006 as an addition to the entry-level curriculum for the Master's program in Physical Therapy. I was responsible for developing the course curriculum with input from faculty in the Physical Therapy program of the School of Rehabilitation Therapy. I acted as the primary instructor in the classroom and the anatomy laboratories.

II) Musculoskeletal Anatomy Elective (Winter, 2006)

An elective in musculoskeletal anatomy was offered to 46 students in both the first and second year Master's Physical Therapy program. I taught four 2-hour classes on the anatomy of the spine.

III) PT 856: Neuromotor Control and Limitation I (Winter, 2005 and 2006)

PT 856 is an intensive 52-hour, six-week course offered to 46 Master's level Physical Therapy students, which focuses on the anatomical and physiological bases of neuromotor performance across the lifespan. A major component of the course is neuroanatomy. The course is taught through a combination of classroom lectures (6 hours/week), structured self-directed learning in anatomy laboratories (2

hours/week) and practical laboratories (2 hours/week for the final three weeks of the course).

This course was offered for the first time in 2005 as part of the new entry-level Master's Physical Therapy curriculum. I was responsible for developing the course curriculum in collaboration with a faculty member in the School of Rehabilitation Therapy. I acted as the primary instructor in the classroom, the anatomy laboratories and the physical therapy laboratories. I also coordinated 6 guest lectures by medical speakers during the last half of the course.

II) PT 416: Neurology II (Fall, 2005)

This course was required for 46 students in their third and final year of the Bachelor of Science program in Physical Therapy. The course included two 90-minute classes and one 2-hour practical laboratory per week. I was responsible for teaching the first 6 weeks of the 12-week term course.

**3.2 Queen's University: Small-Group Learning Sessions**

PT 315 and PT 859: PT Logic Group Sessions (Fall, 2003, 2004 and Spring, 2005)

I acted as a facilitator for small group learning sessions which exposed the Physical Therapy students to clinical reasoning scenarios with guidance from experienced physical therapists.

**3.3 Queen's University: Teaching Assistant Experiences**

I) Fall, 2005: I coordinated a 3-day advanced manual therapy course and organized a one-day practical examination (OSCE) for third year Bachelor's students in Physical Therapy.

II) PT 859: Spinal Disorders (Spring, 2005)

I served as a teaching assistant in the laboratories for this required 6-week course for 46 first year students enrolled in the Master of Science program in Physical Therapy. I also acted as a guest lecturer and taught two 90-minute classes.

III) PT 315: Musculoskeletal Management II (Fall, 2003; Fall, 2004)

I served as a teaching assistant in the laboratories for this required 12-week course for 46 second-year students enrolled in the Bachelor of Science program in Physical Therapy. I assisted students with practical techniques and answered questions. I also acted as a guest lecturer and taught two 90-minute classes during the term.

**3.4 The Ohio State University: Teaching Assistant Experiences**

For two years I assisted and instructed in first year Physical Therapy laboratories focused on biomechanics and orthopedics. During both years of my Master's studies I coordinated a course on Musculoskeletal Diseases for the combined

Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy classes which was comprised of guest lectures by physicians and therapists.

#### 4. Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness

##### 4.1 Formal Student Evaluations

The following summary USAT scores are based on a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Statement	Course	Mean for this Course	Departmental Mean
1. Overall, this instructor is an effective teacher.	PT 850, Fall, 2006-Winter 2007	4.8 / 5	3.9 / 5
	PT 856, Winter 2006	4.7 / 5	4.0 / 5
	PT 856, Winter 2005	4.2 / 5	3.9 / 5
	PT 416, Fall, 2005	4.0 / 5	4.0 / 5
2. The instructor in this course showed a genuine concern for students.	PT 850, Fall, 2006-Winter 2007	4.9 / 5	4.1 / 5
	PT 856, Winter 2006	4.9 / 5	4.2 / 5
	PT 856, Winter 2005	4.9 / 5	4.2 / 5
	PT 416, Fall, 2005	4.6 / 5	4.2 / 5
3. The instructor showed sensitivity to the needs and interests of students from diverse groups.	PT 850, Fall, 2006-Winter 2007	4.9 / 5	4.1 / 5
	PT 856, Winter 2006	5.0 / 5	4.2 / 5
	PT 856, Winter 2005	4.8 / 5	4.2 / 5
	PT 416, Fall, 2005	4.5 / 5	4.1 / 5
4. The instructor created an active, positive class environment.	PT 850, Fall, 2006-Winter 2007	4.8 / 5	4.0 / 5
	PT 856, Winter 2006	4.9 / 5	4.1 / 5
	PT 856, Winter 2005	4.7 / 5	4.0 / 5
	PT 416, Fall, 2005	4.2 / 5	4.1 / 5

In 2006, I was nominated for the Health Sciences Education Award at Queen's University. The award was only open to Health Sciences faculty and as a graduate student I was not eligible to be considered for the award. A copy of the letter from the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Queen's University, is included in the Appendix.

## **4.2 Informal Student Evaluations: Representative Student Comments**

### Valuing students as individuals:

"You cared about whether we understood the material."

"The instructor was very receptive to student needs and was able to clarify ambiguous concepts as needed."

"Elizabeth is caring and understanding and respects her students."

### Creating a positive, active learning environment:

"What I like best about the course is that every 15-20 minutes in class we take a few minutes to go over things with an activity!! This is so helpful and keeps us all alert and interested throughout the 2 hours...love it."

"I really believe the reason I am doing well in this course this year is because of the hard work you have put in, making up surface anatomy sheets and weekly quizzes etc., and your positive attitude."

"Your easily approachable and helpful teaching style allowed me to finally get over my fear of neuroanatomy. You created a very positive classroom environment."

"The learning activities included in the lectures are very helpful. The little quizzes, labelling of diagrams and exercises help us to review and internalize the material."

### Course organization / linking theory and practice:

"You present the clinical relevance of the material."

"This course was very well-organized. I found that the material flowed nicely and I was able to integrate the information from each week."

"The organization of the course was exceptional. All lectures were organized in a way that made the concepts more understandable."

## **4.3 Peer Evaluations: Representative Comments**

### I) PT 856, Winter, 2005 and 2006:

An Educational Developer from the Centre for Teaching and Learning at Queen's University, Dr. Andy Leger, observed my teaching on three occasions and offered constructive feedback about my teaching after each in-class observation. A copy of

a letter from Dr. Leger providing comments on his classroom observations and teaching evaluation is included in the Appendix. In Dr. Leger's letter I was described as "a dedicated and enthusiastic teacher who is eager to try and learn new things and who is ultimately concerned about her students and how they are learning."

II) PT 315, Fall 2004:

I received a formal evaluation of my effectiveness as a teaching assistant and guest lecturer from the Course Instructor, Dr. Alice Aiken, for PT 315. In her letter Dr. Aiken made the following comments: "She has developed two excellent and very thorough lectures for the courses, and has included different learning styles and teaching strategies when presenting them." A copy of the Teaching Assistant Evaluation Form and a letter from Dr. Aiken are included in the Appendix.

**5. Curriculum Development**

I) Course Design:

*PT 850, Functional Anatomy:* With input from Physical Therapy faculty at Queen's University, I developed the course curriculum for the Functional Anatomy (musculo-skeletal and visceral anatomy) course. In addition to development of the class content, I was responsible for the development of the structured, self-directed anatomy laboratories which were an integral part of the course.

*PT 856, Neuromotor Control and Limitation I:* With input from a faculty member in the Physical Therapy program who has expertise in Neurology and a professor in the Anatomy Department at Queen's University, I developed the course curriculum for PT 856. I was responsible for the development of the class content, the physical therapy laboratories on neurological assessment and the anatomy laboratories.

As a teaching assistant at The Ohio State University I assisted the faculty in the Division of Physical Therapy in revamping the format and content of the professional program's curriculum evaluation.

II) Teaching Innovations:

- Developed crossword puzzles, word scrambles and diagrams requiring labels to reinforce key concepts taught in class
- Developed numerous case studies to link theoretical and clinical material

## **6. Professional Development**

### **6.1 Education Courses**

SGS 901: Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Queen's University  
(Winter, 2005) <http://www.queensu.ca/ctl/community/students/sgs901.html>

This term length, credit course is intended for graduate students across the disciplines who want to become skilled, thoughtful and confident teachers in higher education. The goal of the course is to foster understanding and reflection about learning approaches and effective teaching in a university setting.

AM 753: Teaching in Allied Medicine, The Ohio State University  
(Winter, 1994)

### **6.2 Teaching Workshops and Conferences**

#### I) Workshops for Teaching Assistants, Centre for Teaching and Learning, Queen's University.

I attended numerous workshops from 2003-2008, a selection of which includes the following:

- Lecturing and Presenting Information
- The Consequence of Setting and Maintaining Good Classroom Tone
- Techniques for Encouraging Active Learning and Overcoming Barriers
- Skillful Questioning for Effective Teaching and Learning
- An Introduction to Team-Based Learning
- Assessing Student Work
- Student Learning
- Receiving Excellent Student Feedback
- Just Talk: Initiating Classroom Discussion
- Fear of Teaching
- Time Management
- Teaching First Year Students
- Preparing a Teaching Dossier
- Knowledge Development: The Bridge between Research and Teaching
- The Transition Year: Challenges of the Change

#### II) Professional Development Day for Teaching Assistants, Queen's University.

I attended this one-day conference each September from 2004-2007

#### III) Focus on Foundations Workshops for Faculty, Centre for Teaching and Learning, Queen's University.

I attended several workshops from 2004 to 2007, including the following:

- Teaching Scholarship
- Lecturing



- Course Planning
- Assessing Student Learning
- Teaching for Active and Deep Learning
- The Teacher's Voice
- Assessment for Learning: Introduction to the ICE Approach

### 6.3 Other Professional Development Activities

I) Program in University Teaching and Learning  
<http://www.queensu.ca/ctl/community/students/putl.html>:

I have completed the requirements for the three certificates in the Program in University Teaching and Learning offered by the Centre for Teaching and Learning at Queen's University:

- Scholarship (requirements – acquire an understanding of: 1) general principles of teaching and learning in higher education; 2) principles of teaching and learning in your discipline, 3) diversity and equity issues in higher education)
- Practical Experience (requirements: 1) acquire teaching experience; 2) collect feedback and reflect on your teaching)
- Professional Development (requirements: 1) promote effective teaching and learning in your discipline; 2) provide evidence of your teaching effectiveness)

II) Micro-teaching: I have participated in two micro-teaching sessions offered by the Centre for Teaching and Learning at Queen's University (December, 2003 and March, 2005).

III) TA Mentor / Liaison program: From 2004-2005, I served as the TA Mentor / Liaison for the School of Rehabilitation Therapy, making programs and resources available to other teaching assistants in the department and encouraging involvement in these programs.

A final principle that guides my practice of teaching is the desire to improve my teaching skills and learn new and creative teaching strategies. I regularly seek opportunities to participate in workshops, conferences and micro-teaching experiences. The chance to observe several award-winning teachers, particularly those with a quieter personality similar to my own, and to learn from their teaching styles, has been particularly helpful and encouraging for me as I begin to develop my own approach to teaching.