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Two Dawson Researchers Awarded Prestigious SSHRC Community and College Social Innovation Fund Partnership Grants

The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) announced last year an exciting new partnership program aimed at fostering social innovation and collaboration among Canadian colleges, industry, and community organizations to find solutions to social challenges, with a funding envelope of \$15 million. Social innovation entails an initiative, product, process or program that creates positive social outcomes for societies. It can result in more effective, fairer and more durable solutions to complex social problems. It aims at producing benefits for the entire society, not only for some individuals. It increases the ability of communities to act collectively. It also promotes the development of innovative solutions to accelerate technological innovation. Dawson was awarded two of the 27 grants that were funded in 2015-16.



Dr. Elizabeth Charles has started her project entitled “Leveraging New Paradigms and Disruptive Technologies to Successfully Orchestrate Pedagogical Change” with a large multidisciplinary team composed of Rob Cassidy (Psychology and OID, Dawson College), Nathaniel Lasry (Physics, John Abbott College), Bruno Poellhuber (Education, Université de Montreal), James Slotta (OISE, University of Toronto), Kevin Lenton (Physics, Vanier College), Silvia d’Apollonia (Biology, Dawson College), Michael Dugdale (Physics, John Abbott College), Chris Whittaker (Physics, Dawson College), Katherine Davey (Lester B. Pearson School Board), and Ethan Danahy (Computer Science, Tufts University).

This project will provide evidence-based recommendations to inform the wider research community as it investigates how to best deliver knowledge and skills required for 21st century learning. Specifically, it will address the challenge of changing educational practice from the longstanding magisterial tradition to evidence-based teaching practices, known generically as active learning. For more information on Liz’s work, check out the Supporting Active Learning & Technological Innovation in Studies of Education (SALTISE) website www.saltise.ca.



Dr. Gisela Frias’ project is called “Sustainable Campuses: A North-South International Research and Action Community”. She is working with an international team including: Chris Adam (CRLT, Dawson College), Maria Luisa Montes (Centro de Estudios Superiores Lic. Benito Juarez Garcia, Mexico), Juan Nambo de los Santos (Centro de Estudios Superiores Lic. Benito Juarez Garcia, Mexico), Jorge Dominguez (Universidad Pedagogica Nacional, Mexico), and Margarita Hurtado (Ciudades Verdes, Mexico).

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The Sustainable Campuses Project supports a process of institutional transformation, a path towards sustainability in post-secondary educational institutions and the establishment of a process of knowledge generation and sharing among cross-sectorial and cross-cultural educational institutions of the North and South. Using an institutional partnership as a case study, the team will describe and evaluate campus sustainability in the context of North-South partnerships and identify factors that support it. This knowledge will be particularly relevant to the institutions participating in this initiative and the emerging body of sustainability professionals and those faced with the challenge of establishing institutional partnerships for sustainability.

Congratulations to Gisela and Liz! We look forward to hearing the results of these exciting projects.

For more information on this funding opportunity, please visit: http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/programs-programmes/social_innovation-innovation_sociale-eng.aspx

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