

## Editorial – Signature Pedagogies

This issue was a call for signature pedagogies. Some of you asked “what are signature pedagogies?” Let me explain, usually those who teach in universities are hired for their content expertise and not their teaching expertise. In many post-secondary institutions, the norm is for faculty to lecture regardless of the learning outcomes for students. (This is not to be personalized, but is a broad statement of how we do our business, teaching.) What signature pedagogies literature tries to do is ask the educator think about their discipline. This concept is not new, Lee Schulman (2005) wrote Signature pedagogies in the professions almost a decade ago, but it is still not common language amongst educators.

Let me first start by defining pedagogy. Loosely it is the learning environment that is created in the classroom, laboratory, studio, or community or organization. Pedagogy is about purposeful manipulation of the elements that influence learning. It includes the physical environment and the cultural/social environment.

Signature is the most important way to perform in your discipline, to be and do. The educator asks the questions, “What it means to do discipline in my work” or “What is it like to be (think) in my discipline? This then informs the creation of the learning environment or pedagogy of teaching.

In my discipline, nursing, it is key to be caring and respectful and be able to practice nursing, do clinical work. That means a key signature pedagogy would be decision making. In the nursing profession, practitioners need to be able to collect pertinent data, identify the issue, consider alternative actions and take action in the best interest of the patient. This may best be learned in clinical practice or simulation. Another key element is respect and caring, I need to create a culture of respect and caring in the classroom, laboratory, community, or anywhere else where I interact with students or where they interact with patients. For the classroom, I have students create rules of engagement for our class, decide on what we are going to learn, listen carefully and try to include diverse opinions. I role model the caring of my discipline.

For this issue, we asked Dr. Nancy Chick, one of the editors of *Exploring Signature Pedagogies: Approaches to Teaching Disciplinary Habits of Mind* (2008) to write a guest foreword from her experience. Also in this issue you will find the submissions for our call for signature pedagogies.

**Dr. Balbir Gurm**