Office of Research in Education

2020 Tri-Agency Awards & Affiliated Fellowships Information Panel (Doctoral)

Monday, July 13, 2020, 10:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. Remote attendance via Zoom.
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Tri-Agencies and Affiliated Fellowships Application and Adjudication Process Overview

**SSHRC, NSERC, or CIHR?**

- **No**
  - Eligible for Affiliated Fellowships?
    - **Yes**
      - Complete and submit online Affiliated Fellowships application by the UBC deadline
    - **No**
      - Check with your Dept. to determine if hardcopies are required

- **Yes**
  - Eligible for SSHRC, NSERC or CIHR?
    - **Yes**
      - Complete online forms at chosen agency’s web site
    - **No**
      - Complete and submit online SSHRC and NSERC applications by the UBC deadline
      - Check with your Dept. to determine if hardcopies are required

  **Dept. ranks Affiliated Fellowships & Tri-Agency applications and recommends top candidates to G+PS**

  **G+PS’s Scholarship Committees rank Affiliated Fellowships & Tri-Agencies (SSHRC, NSERC & CIHR) applications and send recommended Tri-Agencies applications to Ottawa**

  **Tri-Agencies adjudicate and inform UBC and awardees in late April of the results**

  **G+PS’s Scholarship Committees award Affiliated Fellowships in late April, early May**

  **CIHR Doctoral requires UBC ORS to electronically approve applications via ResearchNet. Vanier must submit separate Affiliated Fellowships applications.**
Writing for Tri-Agencies: Key Considerations

SSHRC, CIHR, and NSERC are different agencies with different cultures, policies, and mandates. To be successful, it is important that you target your application specifically to one of the three funding agencies. Below we have highlighted a few key areas to consider and keep in mind as you craft and review your application:

- **Make sure your proposal (topics and impacts/outcomes) aligns with the agency’s mandate.**
  - If you are applying to CIHR, you must explicitly demonstrate how the results/outcomes of your proposed research will improve or have an impact on health, produce more effective health services and products, and/or strengthen the Canadian health care system. To be funded by CIHR you must be seeking to complete research that will have an effect on or improve the health of Canadians.
  - If you are applying to SSHRC, you must demonstrate how your research will help improve our understanding and knowledge of individuals, groups, and societies – what we think, how we live and how we interact with each other and the world around us. Health may be a subsidiary element of your research but it must be clear to reviewers that health is not your primary interest.

- **Use language carefully**
  - When writing for SSHRC avoid using terms that might suggest you are conducting health research, including the following: health and well-being, therapy and/or counselling, sexual education, suicide, biological and physiological changes and impacts.
  - When writing for CIHR use agency-friendly language including terms such as therapies and intervention strategies, health outcomes, health care delivery, and knowledge translation (vs. knowledge mobilization).

- **How you discuss your research methods**
  - CIHR supports qualitative, quantitative and mixed designs as well as randomized controlled clinical trials. Whatever methods you are proposing to use, be sure to justify their use, demonstrate rigor, and provide details (sample size, recruitment details, interview guide etc.) While it is important to describe your conceptual framework, your emphasis should be on how you intend to do the research and how your proposed method supports the proposed outcomes.
  - SSHRC supports qualitative, quantitative and mixed method designs but does NOT support clinically oriented research or clinical trials. Be sure to demonstrate how your work will advance theory and provide a detailed description of your conceptual framework.

For detailed information on application and proposal guidelines, refer to the information posted on the CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC. See also the Canada Graduate Scholarships - Doctoral (CGS D) program website.
Tri-Agencies Subject Matter Eligibility

Overview

The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) support and promote high-quality research in a wide variety of disciplines and areas. This includes research that bridges more than one discipline or that requires the skills of several disciplines.

SSHRC collaborates closely with the other granting agencies to encourage and support the full range of social science and humanities research and research training, including collaboration across disciplines and subject areas. The following guidelines have been prepared to assist applicants in directing their proposals to the most appropriate funding agency. These guidelines apply to research, research training, and related activities such as conferences or scholarly journals. In any given application, applicants should apply to the agency that is responsible for the dominant research discipline or area. A researcher, research team or student may not submit the same application to more than one of the three federal research granting agencies.

Applications submitted to SSHRC that would be more appropriately evaluated by NSERC or CIHR will not be accepted.

Applicants working in research areas where boundaries overlap are advised to state clearly in all applications for funding why they believe their proposals are primarily appropriate for support by the agency to which they are submitting their application.

Such applicants should contact the research services office at their institution for guidance. In addition, they should seek the advice of the appropriate program officer in charge of the program to which they are applying.

Complete guidelines on selecting the appropriate federal granting agency are available at www.science.gc.ca.

General Guidelines for the Eligibility of Subject Matter at SSHRC

Applications to SSHRC as the primary source of research or research training support must meet the following two criteria:

- The proposed research or related activities must be primarily in the social sciences and humanities (i.e., aligned with SSHRC's legislated mandate).
- The intended outcome of the research primarily must be to add to our understanding and knowledge of individuals, groups and societies—what we think, how we live, and how we interact with each other and the world around us.

Guidelines for the Eligibility of Applications Related to Health

New guidelines regarding subject matter eligibility for health-related research came into effect in 2017. The following are considerations when preparing or assessing the eligibility of the subject matter of applications related to health:

- Investigators whose proposed research is health-related fields should consult CIHR's mandate first to explore eligibility. CIHR has policies and procedures in place to adjudicate the full range of social sciences and humanities research proposals related to health research.
- The use of social science or humanities theories, methodologies and hypotheses is, in and of itself, not sufficient to make a proposal eligible for SSHRC funding.
Ineligible for SSHRC Support

Social science or humanities research that is primarily intended to improve and/or increase knowledge of health, health care and health-care systems in Canada or internationally is not eligible for support from SSHRC. Examples of ineligible research include:

- clinical education for health care professionals
- psychomotor research and kinesiology
- clinical research (e.g., treatment, prevention or diagnosis of a condition, disorder, or disease; testing or evaluating the impact of interventions, medication, or medical aids)
- therapy (e.g., counselling, interventions, psychotherapy, rehabilitation, speech and occupational therapy, validation/testing of diagnostic tools)
- epidemiology

Decision-Making and Consultation Process to Determine the Eligibility of Applications Related to Health

Decision-making with regard to eligibility is entrusted to SSHRC staff and management, rather than to the peer/merit review committees, which focus on assessing the excellence of proposals. Potential applicants are encouraged to contact SSHRC staff in advance of submitting their application if there are questions regarding subject matter eligibility. Staff will endeavour to provide advice to applicants. However, a final decision on eligibility can only be made following submission of a full proposal.

SSHRC staff also consult, as required, with outside experts and/or with officials at CIHR for assistance in arriving at a recommendation. Applicants whose proposals are deemed ineligible are informed via a formal letter. Please note that SSHRC does not permit appeals on grounds of subject matter eligibility.

Guidelines for the Eligibility of Applications in Psychology

Notwithstanding the above guidelines for research related to health, applicants should consider the following guidelines in their decision to apply to a federal granting agency if their research is in the field of psychology:

- SSHRC considers eligible applications within the broad areas of social, developmental, personality and educational psychology. SSHRC also considers eligible proposals related to theory and methods in these areas. SSHRC does not support clinically oriented research with a health intent, or research involving clinical trials.
- NSERC considers eligible applications that relate to fundamental psychological processes, their underlying neural mechanisms, their development within individuals, and their evolutionary and ecological context. Fundamental processes are understood to include:
  - sensation and perception;
  - sensorimotor integration;
  - motivation, emotion and reward;
  - Learning and memory;
  - cognition and language;
  - sleep, arousal and the chrono-biological modulation of behaviour; and
  - statistical methods for analysis of psychological data.
- NSERC does not support clinically-oriented research.
- CIHR supports all research in psychology that has direct relevance to, or ultimate impact on, human health.
Online Resources

Application Deadlines

2020 deadlines for most awards had not been published at the time of the writing of this document. We expect the 2020 deadlines will be similar to the 2019 deadlines (mid-September). Deadlines for all awards will be published on the GPS Awards Opportunities page as soon as they are available.

The Vanier Scholarship deadline is Thursday, 3 September 2020 at 12:00 noon PDT

Tri-agencies Awards Pages

All information about these awards, including eligibility, selection criteria, and the application process, are published on the award website. (Note: At the time of writing, some agencies still had 2019 deadlines published. Confirm deadlines with your unit.)

CIHR
NSERC
SSHRC
Canada Graduate Scholarships - Doctoral (CGS D) program website

UBC Affiliated Fellowships

https://www.grad.ubc.ca/awards/affiliated-fellowships-doctoral-program

FAQ

https://www.grad.ubc.ca/scholarships-awards-funding/awards-faq

Tips and Best Practices

https://www.grad.ubc.ca/scholarships-awards-funding/resources-award-applicants/tips-best-practices

Proposal Guidelines

SSHRC (proposal guidelines can be accessed when you login to the application form):

CIHR:
http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/38887.html

NSERC:

Harmonized Canada Graduate Scholarships Doctoral Program Main Webpage:
Tri-Agencies + Affiliated Awards Help Contacts

**SSHRC**
Email: fellowships@sshrc-crsh.gc.ca

**NSERC**
Email: schol@nserc-crsng.gc.ca

**CIHR**
Email: support@cihr-irsc.gc.ca

Departmental Help Contacts

Contact the Graduate Program Assistant in your department:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
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Sample Proposals

Proposal 1

Program of Study: Socialized to succeed? Chinese graduate students’ negotiation of academic discourse practices at a Canadian university

Description of Study: Very little research has been conducted on the academic discourse socialization of international students in graduate programs despite the potentially career-altering consequences of failure versus success (Cho et al., 2010). Academic discourse socialization refers to the processes of enculturation that novices experience vis-à-vis oral and written textual practices in the academy. Learning to understand, generate, and disseminate new knowledge through publications and the ability to obtain (high-status) fellowships have become increasingly important for doctoral students across disciplines (Duff, 2006). Despite such growing pressures, the nature of academic learning processes at the doctoral level has been vastly under-researched. While some previous studies have investigated the socialization of graduate students attempting to publish in academic journals in their second language (Huang et al., 2004; Han, 2006), little research has been conducted on comprehensive examinations, fellowship applications, proposals, and dissertation writing at different stages in North American contexts.

This year-long case study will investigate the trajectories of 10 Chinese Ph.D. students in years one to five of their programs in the Faculty of Education at a major Canadian university. This study will explore the various struggles and adjustments students encounter with academic writing and their attempts to achieve personal goals and program requirements. With the shared linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the students, complemented by each one’s unique academic context, this study will provide valuable insight demonstrating the trials and tribulations of producing scholarly English discourse and the impact this has on students’ academic lives and the (re)construction of an academic identity in another language and culture. In today’s highly competitive, typically English-dominant world of academic scholarship, achieving success with academic writing in English is paramount.

Rationale for Study: The importance of attracting international graduate students has become increasingly evident in North American post-secondary contexts (AUCC, 2010). Of notable interest is the strong contingent of students from the People’s Republic of China who comprise the largest group of international non-native English speaking students at North American universities, with the vast majority (almost 80%) being graduate students (Lu et al., 2011). This number continues to increase yearly (Lu et al., 2010) and the resulting economic, social, and intellectual impact of maintaining this flow of graduate students is of critical importance to Canadian universities. Yet there is compelling evidence to suggest that Chinese graduate students often have trouble adjusting to North American academic settings (Qian & Krugly, 2010) and struggle to produce written academic discourse (Cho et al., 2008). How these students navigate success or failure is therefore of vital importance to their continued enrolment in Canadian universities and the programs they take part in; their degrees of success also reflect on the quality of mentoring and socialization provided by the host universities. Examples of students’ successful development as scholars can in turn benefit teachers and universities in helping students become socialized more effectively into their respective discourse communities.

Research Questions:
1. What constitutes effective English academic discourse, according to local standards, in doctoral students’ term papers, written proposals, comprehensive examinations, articles, and dissertations?
2. What are the social, cultural, and academic processes, practices, and communities that contribute to optimal discourse socialization for these students?
3. How does effective socialization into academic discourse impact the lives and communities of international graduate students?

Theoretical Framework: The proposed study is based on two related theoretical foundations. The first, language socialization (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986), views language learning as a complex process of social and cultural experiences where novice learners negotiate membership in the target language
community through interactions and mentoring with others with more expertise. The production of academic discourse is therefore not a static process but a process of enculturation with a variety of explicit and implicit expectations (Duff, 2007; 2010) and “ever-changing social practices” (Miles & Huberman, 1998), which explores enculturation based on shared interests and membership in a particular domain, the co-constitution of meaning, and issues around guided participation in culturally important activities. Both theoretical perspectives conceive of language as a dynamic, socially situated practice (Duff, 2010; Duff et al., submitted) where meaning is formed based on shared histories and is rooted in issues of culture and power (Norton & Toohey, 2010, p. 2). The second theoretical framework draws on the notion of communities of practice (Ochs, & Schieffelin, 1998), which explores enculturation based on shared interests and membership in a particular domain, the co-constitution of meaning, and issues around guided participation in culturally important activities.

Methodology: This research will use a longitudinal multiple-case study design combining participants’ perspectives and the researcher’s interpretations. The benefits of a case study design include the ability to capture and contextualize the unique voices and experiences of various people over a sustained period of time as well as allowing for an analysis of students’ own texts and associated feedback. Focusing on a limited number of participants, case study also allows phenomena to be investigated in depth longitudinally and in naturally occurring contexts (Barkhuizen, 2010; Norton & Toohey, 2002). Data collection procedures follow:

(a) Semi-structured interviews with doctoral students and supervisors will be conducted to inquire into the participants’ feelings, attitudes, prior experience, and practices regarding their academic writing. Interview data will be analyzed thematically using discourse analysis to identify key themes related to the negotiation of academic discourse and will also take into account the written texts referred to in the interviews and feedback received on them (Duff, 2010).

(b) Narrative inquiry will allow for the participants’ voices and stories to be solicited and analyzed. As a methodology, narrative inquiry is gaining credibility and attention in second language/literacy acquisition research (Clandinin, 2011). Participants will be asked to keep weekly journals charting their experiences as writers in the academy. The journals will be analyzed using discourse analysis, focusing on critical incidents and students’ affective responses to them.

(c) Reviewer feedback from submitted journal articles, fellowship applications, comprehensive examinations, term papers, and drafts of dissertations will be analyzed to detail important instances of discourse socialization in terms of critique, support, and guidance for improvement.

(d) Evaluation of student success in fellowship applications, academic publications, term papers, comprehensive examinations, and dissertations will track progress in students’ academic discourse socialization. Success will be determined by participant self-report, acceptance, funding, and other indicators of positive assessment, such as comments on drafts.

Preparation and Progress to Date: I hold bachelors’ degrees in English and Education (with distinction), as well as an M.A. in Modern Language Education from the University of British Columbia (UBC). The research outlined in this proposal will build on my M.A. thesis, which investigated the impact of feedback on international students’ written discourse. I am currently in my second year of a doctoral program in Language and Literacy Education at UBC under the supervision of Dr. Duff, an expert in the area of language socialization and case study research, who has a program of SSHRC-funded research in this area. I am taking qualitative research methods courses this year and currently hold various research and teaching assistantships. I plan to advance to candidacy by the end my second year in the program in order to commence my dissertation research in September.

Prior to my Ph.D. studies, I spent several years in Taiwan, teaching English and studying Chinese. I will select Chinese graduate students for this study for that reason and also because of worldwide graduate school demographics. I have also been a co-researcher in a multi-year research project with investigating issues surrounding the language socialization of five learners of Chinese as an additional language. Our co-authored book is entitled. SSHRC funding will allow me to devote more time to my proposed research and continue to make conference presentations and publications in second language education, applied linguistics, and academic writing, all aspects of my own discourse socialization in preparation for a professorial career in this area.
Proposal 2

“Politics is communication”: Learning a New Definition of Credibility from Transnational Peoples’ Journalism Education Programs

Background and Research Questions: Although it is recognized that media and communication are an inherent part of political struggles for self-representation, much of the academic research is limited to the role of the media in state formation (1983/1991) or media reform in post conflict areas such as Rwanda or the former Yugoslavia (2002). My research, however, evaluates the role of journalism education as a political project for transnational peoples, i.e., peoples who identify as belonging to the same nation yet span two or more states. Transnational peoples may identify as Indigenous (e.g., the Saami people, who have traditionally inhabited land currently located in Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia along) or may not (e.g. the Roma people) and often have an ambiguous, if not contested, relationship with these states. The central questions guiding my research are two-fold: (1) What are the structures, curricula, pedagogical techniques, funding, and marketing of journalism programs offered for, by and with transnational peoples? (2) What beliefs in social change and advocacy guide these journalism programs? I will conduct field-based research at journalism education programs at three locations: Saami University College (in northern Norway but serving the Saami population throughout Sapmi), the Roma Mainstream Media Internship Program (located in Macedonia in addition to other states in Central and Eastern Europe) and the Underrepresented Peoples and Nations Organization (located in the Netherlands but serving a large array of self-identified transnational peoples). Based on nearly a decade of work with Romani media (including my MA thesis), I bring to this research the hypothesis that transnational peoples, based on their experience and portrayal in the mainstream media, question both the reality and the ideal of presumed “neutrality” of the media. Put simply, many transnational peoples who use the media as a form of political and social advocacy (2005) contest the notion that “un-biased” journalism is the only form of “professional,” and thus credible and valued, journalism (2005). Theoretical Framework: I will approach my research from the constructivist school of international relations, which focuses on norms, norm emergence (1998) and productive power (2005). Additionally, I will make use of work in comparative politics that explores the framing (2003), marketing (2005) and emergence of issues (2007). As (1998) state, the influence of transnational advocacy networks is directly related to the information they can offer on a given issue or in a given area, but this information must be recognized as credible. Thus great effort is put into creating and maintaining the perception of credibility. That said, those creating and consuming such media recognize that the information is selected, framed and portrayed to substantiate a particular view of a given situation. Thus influence is gained when information is recognized as legitimate and credible, but not necessarily neutral or unbiased. It is this definition of influence, which (2005) coined as “productive power,” which I will use in my research. Recognizing that these programs are created to help shape and disseminate information to multiple audiences who can effect change, I borrow definitions of both global framing and diffusion of information, ideas and influence by activists, academics and media makers and expand this to examine journalism education. However, my theoretical perspective is both constructivist and critical, as I am interested in how those who have been marginalized are taking power to shape their own image and frame problems and solutions. I view journalism education programs for, by, and with transnational peoples as a strategic use of self-representation and framing (2008). From this perspective, these journalism programs are a sign that traditionally excluded or “subaltern” peoples are asserting their power and agency (2007) and are taking steps to “rewrite the rules and change the game” (2008, p. 158).

Methodology: I will conduct a comparative case study of three journalism education programs that work by, for and with self-identified transnational peoples. I will work with people who self-identify as transnational: the Saami, Roma and those who seek the assistance of the Underrepresented Peoples and Nations Organization, rather than with organizations that work on behalf of transnational peoples. The three organizations differ not only in their socio-political and cultural contexts but also in terms of structure and funding: Saami University College is an accredited post-secondary institution with a
recognized degree in Journalism; the Roma Mainstream Media Internship Program is a donor-sponsored nine-month program with international instructors; the Underrepresented Peoples and Nations Organization offers targeted professional development and consultancy in media and public relations. My approach will follow the comparative case study methodology used by Clifford Bob (2005) in Marketing Rebellion. Bob compared the strategic use, and different degrees of success, of media on a local, domestic and international scale by African and Latin American groups. Based on the similarity of our research and my own experience of conducting cross-cultural and multilingual fieldwork, I will follow this methodology, combining interviews, observation and text and curriculum analysis. Specifically I will conduct interviews with the students, curriculum developers and educators along with professional journalists, members of civil society and funders of these journalism education program. Ideally my research will follow this timeline:

**May-August 2011:** Interviews and observations at Saami University College, Galdk Resource Centre for Indigenous peoples and Riddu Riddu a Saami-run international Indigenous cultural and political festival with significant Saami journalistic coverage

**September 2011:** Interviews and observations at the Underrepresented Peoples and Nations Organizations and meeting with journalism focused donor organizations in mainland Europe.

**October-November 2011:** Interviews and observations at the Roma Mainstream Media Internship Program. Observation of journalism training programs in Kosovo.

**December 2011-February 2012:** Transcription and coding of data; preparation to return to research sites for community consultation and follow up March-April 2012.

**Contribution to the Field:** There is a considerable amount of work in international relations that recognizes the importance of the public framing of a people’s identity as a form of agency, and the neglect, if not violence, that occurs in misframing (e.g., 2009). By contrast, little work has been done on the education that journalists, who are influential in said framing, receive and the biases inherent in such education. As (2005) point out, there is a particular gap in analyzing “the nature of media and the mediation of activism” (p. 3). My research will help address this gap by examining journalism programs that destabilize the notion of media as mere observers and instead affirm and support the media’s role as participants in a political project. Recognizing that there are multiple perspectives in defining objectivity, I seek to understand ways that media makers strive to be credible without requiring the unattainable—and perhaps undesirable—ideal of objectivity. Although I am looking specifically at transnational peoples’ approach to media and journalism training, the concepts of credibility, objectivity, bias and the role of framing information can speak to multiple fields and disciplines in the academy and beyond.

**Relevance to Canada:** Although my research sites are not located in Canada the Saami and First Nations and Inuit people have nurtured a long history of collaboration in political, cultural and educational activism. Additionally, there have been recent changes in Canadian immigration policies in regards to Roma from the Czech Republic and Hungary. Moreover, Canada has often been at the forefront of programs that intersect media, political and social agency and social change (e.g., Aboriginal Peoples Television, the CBC programs focusing on refugees and immigration, and the award-winning Inuit Cache Collective) and thus insight into these dynamics of self-representation and agency will prove useful in terms of academic work, policy and activism (2008).
Proposal 3

Faculty Development and Student Learning: Is There a Connection?

Statement of the problem and aims of the research: Many North American universities offer structured faculty development programs to improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in relation to students’ critical thinking and “deep” approaches to learning (defined in the next section). Reviews of research into the pedagogical training of university faculty have concluded that there is a paucity of evidence regarding the impact of such programs on student learning. Although two recent quantitative studies reported a range of positive effects of intensive faculty development programs on teaching and student learning, they did not offer qualitative insight into how students make connections between their own learning and their instructors’ teaching. To begin to address this considerable gap in knowledge, I plan to undertake a qualitative study which will examine students’ experiences of learning over a time period that coincides with their instructors’ participation in the Faculty Certificate Program on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (FCP) at the University of British Columbia (UBC).

The FCP, which began in 1998, is an eight month (two-term) cohort-based program for teaching faculty from various disciplines and academic ranks. The purpose of the program is to develop pedagogical knowledge, attitudes, and skills in order to enhance teaching and augment student learning. Participants in the FCP have said that the program expands their understanding about teaching, increases their use of active learning and critical thinking strategies, and makes them consider their students’ points of view on teaching and learning more often. However, it is not known whether changes in teaching beliefs and practices enhance student learning. The aims of my research are: (1) to investigate whether students’ learning and thinking become more critical and whether their approaches to learning become deeper over a two-term course, during which their instructors participate in the FCP; (2) to discover how students relate their learning developments to changes, if any, in their instructors’ teaching practices; and (3) to study how instructors describe their teaching beliefs and practices – as they relate to promoting critical thinking and deep approaches to learning – at the beginning, during the middle, and towards the end of the FCP. The aim of this study is not to claim a causal relationship, but rather to explore possible connections among the FCP, teaching practices, and student learning.

Theoretical framework: The concepts of critical thinking and “surface” versus “deep” approaches to learning are central to my proposed research. For my research, critical thinking is defined as an ability to challenge the logical soundness of arguments while maintaining an open-mindedness to alternative perspectives. Critical thinking includes the facility for “creatively suspending strict rules of inference and evidence in order to envision new possibilities, innovative procedures, and fresh, potentially fecund, problems” (Freire, 1999, p.11). The critical thinker is sensitive to the limits of information collected and considers this information in the broader context of history and experience (Ramsden, 1994). The above definition contests traditional models that limit critical thinking to a process whereby an “objective” individual applies logical analysis to a problem in order to draw a conclusion. An “approach to learning” describes a relationship between a student and the learning. It is not something a student “has”, but rather represents the engagement an individual has with the learning (Rose & Menges, 2003). Deep approaches to learning are characterized by students’ intentions to understand learning tasks and seek their meaning. They extend students’ abilities to analyze new ideas and link them to already known concepts and principles. As such, deep approaches to learning are said to augment complex problem solving skills and promote life-long learning (Trigwell, Prosser, & Waterhouse, 1994). The difference between surface and deep learning is the extent to which students make sense of, and create personal meaning about, what they are learning. Surface learning is similar to what Freire (1970) described as “banking education”, in which knowledge is “deposited” into students who “receive, memorize, and repeat” (Freire, 1970, p.72), thereby remaining detached and disconnected from the content.

Methodology: The proposed study will employ semi-structured interviews with students and instructors, as well as student focus groups. This design addresses the main criticisms made of research studies
which have explored the impact of educational development programs: that they generally ignore the students' viewpoints, rely on the self-reported opinions of trainees, and depend on a single source of data (Prebble et al., 2004; Kreber & Brook, 2001). Initially, between four and six volunteer participants will be recruited from among the current FCP cohort. If possible, given who volunteers to participate in the study, I will select faculty members from one broad disciplinary area (e.g. Social Sciences) as this consistency could contribute to the depth of my analyses. To discover how these faculty members describe changes in their teaching beliefs and practices over time, I will conduct three semi-structured interviews over an eight-month period that will coincide with the duration of the FCP. Next, I will recruit three to five student volunteers from within two-semester credit courses taught by each instructor taking part in the study. I will then conduct two semi-structured interviews with each student: the first time near the start of the course and the start of the FCP, the second time shortly before the end of both. The purpose of the interviews will be to ascertain how the students describe their experiences of critical thinking and deep approaches to learning and to discover how, if at all, they make connections between their learning and their instructors' teaching practices. In order to probe this further, I will also conduct a student focus group towards the end of each course. The focus group will consist of eight to twelve students and will include students who are participating in the one-on-one interviews as this will allow me to note differences that result across the different modes of data collection. I will analyze data gathered in all phases with the use of an electronic software package designed for qualitative analysis.

Outline of Work Plan: I am currently in the first year of doctoral studies in the [department at UBC, where I will do my research under the mentorship of Dr. [Mona Gleason] and Dr. [Gary Poole]. Dr. [Mona Gleason], a historian of education, has expertise in the evolution of the purposes of education and measures of “successful learning” for students over the twentieth century. Dr. [Gary Poole], director of the [Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth] which offers the FCP, is an internationally recognized specialist in teaching and learning in higher education. Over the next two years I will complete coursework in educational research methods, critical social theory, and the organization and administration of post-secondary education. Before the end of year two, I will write my comprehensive examinations in relevant areas, and complete the ethical review process prior to undertaking the proposed study. The study will be done during the third year of my program, and year four will be spent writing the results and preparing to defend the dissertation.

Significance: Educational developers, policy makers, and funding agencies are increasingly interested in learning whether and how faculty development programs make a difference to student learning. Given that higher education institutions aim to produce graduates who are able to think critically (Gardiner, 2005; Walters, 1994), there is clearly a need to better understand connections between faculty development programs and students’ critical thinking and deep approach to learning. Though I recognize that a causal relationship cannot be claimed, it is my hope that the students’ understandings and interpretations of their learning experiences during a two-semester course, combined with the instructors’ perspectives on their own teaching practices during their participation in the FCP, will give more insight into the impact of faculty development programs.