



## York University Faculty of Education Overview



***Faculty of Education:** Through its programs in teacher education, graduate work, professional development, research and international education, the Faculty of Education at York University seeks to engage students, stimulate their interests, and raise their awareness of their environment and communities. In a world of difference, it encourages graduates to make a difference in the world.*

York University Faculty of Education values its relationships with schools. To strengthen the university to school relationship and to ensure teacher-candidates and their mentors benefit from their work together, York University's Faculty of Education has developed a blended professional development mentorship program. Using broadband networks and a blended learning model, this program connects mentoring expertise to schools and models the effective use of information communications technology (ICT) to support professional learning and communities of practice. The mentoring program is the first in a series of blended learning programs developed and implemented with the ABEL program. It strives to develop effective mentoring and coaching strategies for host teachers working with pre-service candidates thereby improving the learning climate in classrooms for students.

The mentoring project will be fully implemented in York University partner schools by next September starting with the official launch of its pilot on May 21, 2006. The Faculty of Education has utilized ABEL resources to engage York mentor teachers in discussions about professional partnership and mentoring. Through the online modules, participant teachers are able to dialogue with each other and the Faculty from disparate physical locations independent of time. As well to enhance mentoring skills of host-teachers, the mentoring project leverages classroom videos of exemplary mentoring and coaching to move theory to practice.

Michael Charles, the practicum coordinator and the chair of the Mentor committee hopes to change the culture of supervision and professional growth of our different learning communities with this mentoring project. He says:

“We strive to increase the skill levels and teaching capacities of host teachers through effective pedagogy and appropriate use of technology. The project provides online modules as well as AQ courses using a blended learning model. As well the program is using video capture in a number of classroom activities along with blogging sites for participant teachers and streamed webcasts.”

Michael Charles believes the collaboration between ABEL and the Faculty of Education to be invaluable to the mentoring project and to future professional development endeavors. “Due to ABEL’s in-depth experience with so many other projects, we have the good fortune of being able to leverage their knowledge and applications. We welcome this partnership with open arms.”

Other Mentor committee members include: Wayne Sproule, Alice Pitt, Celia Haig-Brown, Maurice Di Giuseppe, Jackie Robinson, Wai Yin Mok, Liza Zawadzka, Janette Holmes, Karen Devonish-Mazzotta, Judith Anderson, Judy Blaney, Nancy Foster, Marguerite Campbell, Joyce Mounstevan and Evelyn Wilson.

**Other news:**

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, the Faculty of Education’s ECE Language Arts Class and Marni Binder hosted Dr. David Booth’s presentation on *Literacy and Boys*. Dr. Booth spoke of boys and literacy and featured a film he produced with students at Queen Victoria where he interviewed boys and their literacy practices. The ABEL program was on hand at the event to capture and stream Dr. Booth’s presentation live for remote audiences.

**Institute for Research on Learning Technologies (IRLT):**

Over the past year, educational games are receiving growing attention as a tool to motivate and engage students while at the same bridge the gap between their school and outside school lives. Dr. Ron Owston and colleagues from the Institute for Research on Learning Technology (IRLT) are beginning a study to find out if literacy skill acquisition can be enhanced by providing grade 4 students with an opportunity to develop and play their own games on curriculum-related topics that require students to research, read, analyze, and write questions. The study is being funded by the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL). Visit the IRLT website (<http://www.yorku.ca/irlt/>) for program updates.

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**Advanced Broadband Enabled Learning (ABEL)**

A broadband program funded by public and private sector partners, led by York University.  
See [www.abelearn.ca](http://www.abelearn.ca) for more information about partners etc.

- Course director/teacher gives an ultimate evaluation,
- we are training the mentor teachers to do a better job,
- effective pedagogy,
- picking up mentoring skills,
- responsibilities moves from the shoulders of the course directors to the mentor teachers themselves.

- increase their skill level and their capacity
- Course directors: work with the staff (using the materials to work with the staff)
- AQ course on associate teachers offered
- Running conferences at the York university providing professional development.