

# POLYTECHNIC ACADEMY

The BCIT logo consists of a dark blue square with the letters "BCIT" in white, bold, sans-serif font. It is positioned on the left side of the banner, below the main title.

BCIT

## Academic Proposal

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### **Education Support and Innovation**

James Rout, Associate Vice President, Education Support and Innovation  
March 2021

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# DESIGNED FOR LEARNING

**The Polytechnic Academy will provide a strong foundation for applied, hands-on, polytechnic teaching and learning methodologies, supporting all BCIT faculty to enhance their skills, and expand their practice as exceptional educators.**



## Leading Our Future

“ BCIT has a significant opportunity to invest in a comprehensive approach to faculty development and empowerment, and to strive for a position as one of Canada’s post-secondary leaders in applied polytechnic instruction and e-learning pedagogy.

### Polytechnic Academy

This proposal directly advances two key deliverables in BCIT’s Strategic Plan:

- **Extended faculty training to support e-learning and new teaching practices;**
- **Rapid expansion and innovation in e-learning / blended learning.**

As a powerful differentiator in student choice, in an increasingly competitive market, faculty development and training are crucial initiatives in the post-pandemic world. As pressures on post-secondary institutions grow, along with intense competition for students, it is the quality learning experience that is increasingly the predictor of which institution students will choose.

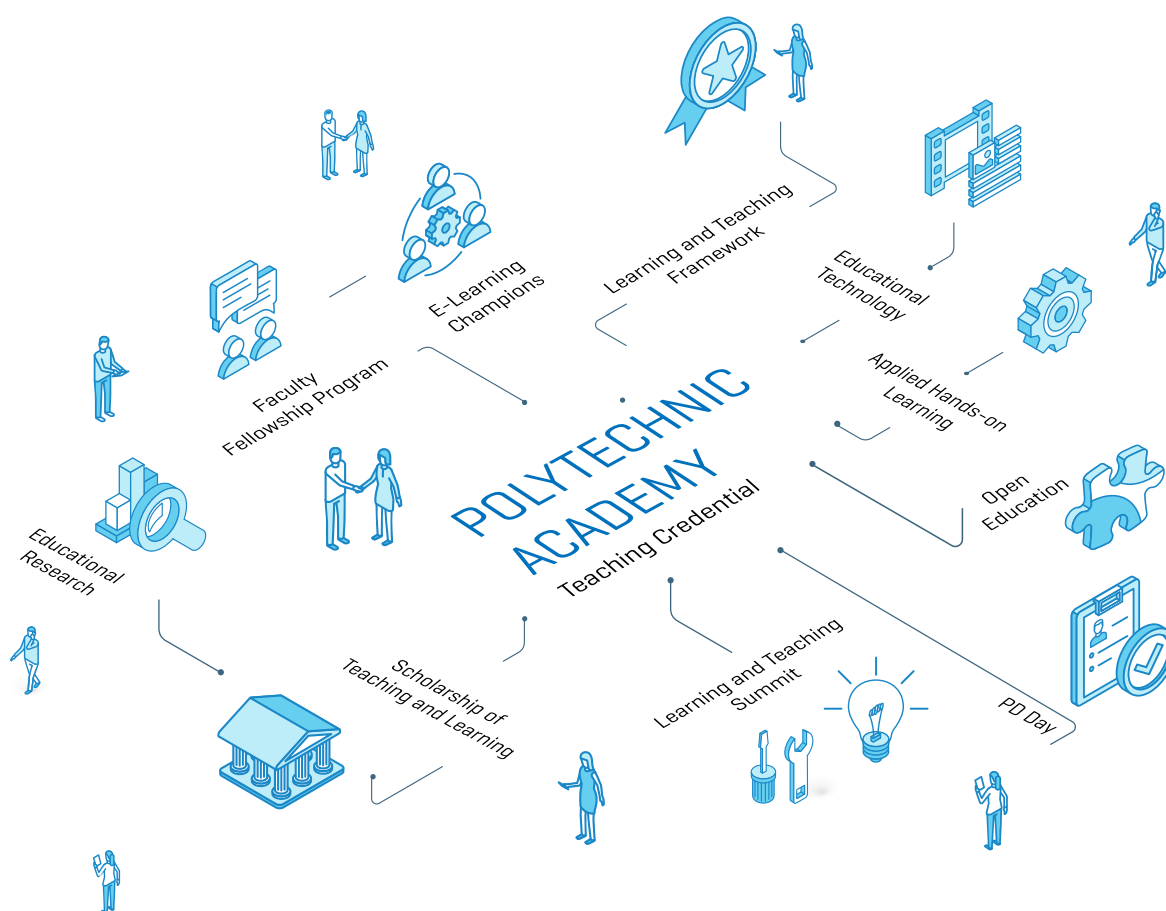
Pressures on post-secondary institutions are widely anticipated to increase, along with rapidly growing competition from corporate training, big tech, and disruptive new educational providers. The quality of the learning experience will almost certainly be the most significant differentiator across the board.

Our Polytechnic Academy presents an energizing opportunity to build an innovative faculty development culture, with an emphasis on applied instruction, state-of-the-art teaching methodologies, instructional strategies, and educational technologies. The design incorporates multiple, flexible pathways for BCIT faculty to innovate as practitioners, and to inspire the next generation of polytechnic educators.

The Polytechnic Academy will emphasize development opportunities for BCIT faculty, but there is clearly potential over time for it to evolve into a unique, world-class program that scales well beyond BCIT to other polytechnic institutions. Building on the Learning and Teaching Framework consultations, moving towards the goals and objectives of the E-Learning Strategy, and very deliberately synthesizing faculty input on specific training needs during the pandemic, we are ready to take concrete steps towards future-proofing education at BCIT.

# POLYTECHNIC ACADEMY

BCIT's Polytechnic Academy represents a constellation of resources, programs, and services, focused on excellence in faculty development and support.



## Polytechnic Academy

Teaching Specialization Credential

Scholarship of Learning and Teaching

E-Learning Fellowship Program & E-Learning Champions

Open Education

Learning and Teaching Framework

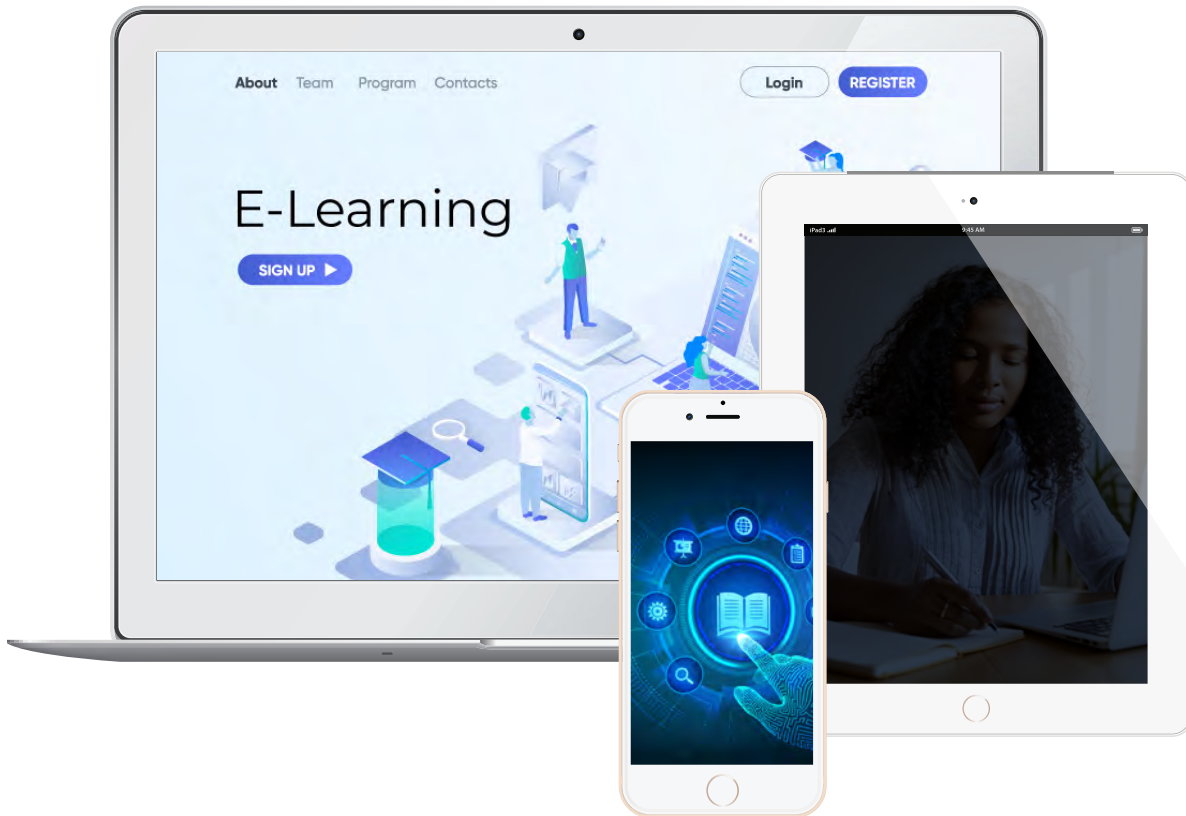
Learning and Teaching Innovation Grants

Learning and Teaching Summit

PD Day



# EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY



*There can be infinite uses of the computer and of new age technology, but if teachers themselves are not able to bring it into the classroom and make it work, then it fails.*

**Nancy Kassebaum**

Educational technology represents a cornerstone of modern pedagogy, and faculty should be supported with the training and resources to use it effectively in a learning environment.

The Polytechnic Academy will provide enhanced support and development opportunities for all faculty, to confidently use state-of-the-art educational technologies in their teaching practice.

# Polytechnic Academy Teaching Credential



## POLYTECHNIC TEACHING SPECIALIZATION

BCIT has the opportunity to differentiate itself through this innovative new credential, focused on instructional skills and teaching strategies in the context of applied hands-on polytechnic education.

With a commitment to teaching excellence, and enhancing and scaling up our training programs for faculty, BCIT is focused on supporting faculty as outstanding teachers. This proposed program will allow BCIT faculty to achieve a unique polytechnic-focused teaching credential, which will also ladder into the Provincial Instructor Diploma Program.

# INSTRUCTIONAL SKILLS POLYTECHNIC TEACHING

## INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Develop learner-centered learning experiences that engage diverse learner needs.

## EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Empower faculty to use and innovate with educational technologies to enhance learning and teaching.

## ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Design authentic assessment strategies and tools that are aligned with learning outcomes.

## POLYTECHNIC ACADEMY TEACHING CREDENTIAL

BCIT's Learning and Teaching Framework identifies what teaching excellence at BCIT means. This credential will provide a pathway for faculty to get there.

This program will include three primary learning themes: core teaching skills, delivery modes, and reflective practice.

### Program Map for the Polytechnic Academy Credential

#### Entry-Level (based on current offerings at BCIT)

##### Core Teaching Skills:

Instructional Skills Workshop (1.5 credits)

##### Delivery Modes:

Fostering Learning Online 1.0 (0.5 credits)



#### Effective Practitioner Level (new curriculum)

##### Core Teaching Skills:

Evaluation of Learning (1.5 credits)

Instructional Strategies (1.5 credits)

##### Delivery Modes:

Fostering Learning Online 2.0 (1.5 credits)

Blended Learning Seminar (1.5 credits)

Teaching with Technology (1.0 credits)

##### Reflective Practice:

Small Group Instructional Feedback (0.5 credits)

Peer Teaching Observation (0.5 credits)



#### Expert Practitioner Level (new curriculum)

##### Reflective Practice:

(PDS) Performance Development System (0.5 credits)

##### Optional:

ISW Advanced Lab (1.5 credits)

Lesson Study (1.5 credits)



# Open Education



## OPEN PEDAGOGY AND OER

Open educational resources (OER) represent some of the most impactful and significant areas of focus in modern post-secondary learning and teaching. OER are high-quality teaching, learning, and research materials that are free for faculty and students to use and repurpose.

Open educational resources empower faculty to use, adapt, improve, and enhance work - and share it back. Together, faculty work collectively to build and improve educational resources.

Open education practices facilitate engagement, and open pedagogy empowers students to create meaningful and impactful work that can be shared beyond their classroom.



# OPEN EDUCATION RESOURCES AND PEDAGOGY

## OPEN GRANTS

Grant funding is instrumental to supporting faculty to develop and implement open education resources.

## COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Sharing best-practices, developing resources, and providing support to peers with open education and pedagogy.

## OPEN TEACHING

Using open resources and teaching methods to emphasize the creation of knowledge vs the consumption of information.

## OPEN EDUCATION

For several years, British Columbia's Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training has included open education as a key priority in their mandate letter to all BC post-secondary institutions.

OER resources developed by BCIT faculty have been downloaded over 1 million times across Canada, supporting BCIT's brand and reputation in post-secondary education.

Open education resources (OER) are high-quality teaching, learning, and research materials that are free for people to use and repurpose. Users can legally retain, reuse, revise, remix, and redistribute open resources (5 R's of Open Ed).

The creators of these materials facilitate collaboration by sharing their work and supporting their colleagues to use, adapt, and enhance learning resources. In the classroom, open practices facilitate engagement and empower students to create meaningful and impactful work that can be shared beyond their instructors.

Open resources offer significant benefits to faculty, by enabling them to easily adapt and improve learning materials to suit their own specific instructional strategies.

This program will provide faculty with support and resources, including: PD opportunities for the development of OER; their integration in teaching practice; and the adoption of open educational practices to sustain learner engagement.

# Scholarship of Learning and Teaching [SoLT]



## EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

With a unique, polytechnic-focused Scholarship of Learning and Teaching [SoLT] program, BCIT can support faculty to engage in the scholarly inquiry of their teaching methods and student experience.

The impact of scholarly inquiry in learning and teaching can be profound. Many of the most significant improvements in teaching effectiveness come from faculty who are actively engaged in formally studying their practice, in order to improve the learning experience for students.

BCIT has an opportunity to invest in developing a culture of scholarly inquiry in learning and teaching, to ensure faculty have the resources they need to evaluate and improve their practice on an ongoing basis.



# DATA-DRIVEN LEARNING AND TEACHING

## SCHOLARLY INQUIRY

Educational research focused on the student learning experience and improvements to teaching methods.

## PEER ENGAGEMENT

Faculty share their research results with their peers for review and knowledge exchange.

## LEARNING ANALYTICS

Data driven, evidence-based approach to scholarly inquiry and teaching methods, using analytics to inform learning design.

## SCHOLARSHIP OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

A critical area of support for the Scholarship of Learning and Teaching includes resources and academic services for scholarly inquiry.

Faculty are provided the resources and release time to support the study of their teaching practices, and to design and innovate improvements to the learning experience for students.

This program would also provide an opportunity for a Canada Research Chair.

Scholarly inquiry programs are prevalent in post-secondary institutions that emphasize innovative learning and teaching methodologies. They are focused on building a culture of evidence-based learning design, along with ongoing improvements to learning and teaching practices.

BCIT's Scholarship of Learning and Teaching program (SoLT) will be designed with an emphasis on the polytechnic experience, and with a focus on engaging faculty with the study of their learning and teaching practices. This includes support for evaluating teaching methods, assessing the student experience, assisting faculty with publishing or presenting their work, and building a community of practice focused on scholarly inquiry.

There is significant evidence that these programs effectively improve outcomes and assessment scores, increase reflective practice in learning and teaching, and promote a data-driven and learner-centered educational culture.



# E-Learning Fellowship Program



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

A formal peer-based professional development opportunity, BCIT's E-Learning Fellowship Program will be designed to enhance teaching excellence, and to integrate the principles of the Learning and Teaching Framework and E-Learning Strategy into teaching practice.

This enhanced faculty training program will support the development of best practices in polytechnic learning and teaching, including applied, hands-on instruction, educational technology, remote teaching, and blended learning. It will focus on enhancing faculty capacity within the schools while fostering a learning-design mindset.





## PEER-BASED MENTORSHIP AND LEARNING

### COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Share experiences, best-practices, and provide support to peers with e-learning methodologies.

### MENTORSHIP

Faculty work with an IDC mentor to develop e-learning curriculum, and instructional strategies that demonstrate best-practices.

### E-LEARNING CHAMPIONS

Build strong alliances with other faculty and influence early adopters to promote e-learning benefits.

### E-LEARNING FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Program Duration: 4 months

Course Release Time: Required

Some of the most effective faculty development opportunities include peer-based learning experiences. The E-Learning Fellowship Program will be designed to build capacity across BCIT schools, and champion best practices in teaching and learning.

Faculty members who complete this program will be able to follow best practices in teaching and learning, structured around development of student core competencies and skills in an e-learning environment. They will also be able to transform the digital learning space from a content delivery tool to a collaborative learning environment, and demonstrate appropriate use of educational technology tools to support teaching and learning.

At the end of the Fellowship Program, Fellows will be able to work across their schools to establish their own communities of practice with faculty and administrators. Fellows will have a deep understanding of the teaching possibilities afforded by various educational technologies, along with the ability to leverage them effectively in their teaching practices.

# Professional Development Events



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENTS

PD Day and the Learning and Teaching Summit represent some of the most popular and effective ways of nurturing employee engagement for our staff and faculty.

BCIT held its first annual PD Day 20 years ago, in 2001, with the goal to support the on-going professional development of all employees and to foster community. In 2017, the first annual Learning and Teaching Summit was held, to focus on faculty development and best-practices in learning and teaching.

Each of these initiatives are profoundly important for community engagement and staff development, and BCIT has an opportunity to ensure continued investment and support for these initiatives on an ongoing basis.



## ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT FACULTY AND STAFF

### WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS

Peer-based learning opportunities, engaging discussions, and workshops to support personal and professional development.

### COMMUNITY BUILDING

Nurturing community and building employee engagement across all departments and programs.

### WORKPLACE WELLNESS

Supporting a healthy and motivated team; providing support and resources to ensure employee success.

## LEARNING AND TEACHING SUMMIT AND PD DAY

BCIT PD events support employee engagement; enhance the learning community for all faculty and staff; and are an investment in workplace career development and well-being.

This enhanced program will offer regular faculty development engagements throughout the year, including workshops, seminars, conferences, and webinars. Ranging from drop-in “Lunch & Learn” sessions, to formal online classes that can be attended by faculty anywhere, regardless of their location.

The Learning & Teaching Summit is BCIT’s annual all-day event focused on faculty development, including a series of workshops and seminars covering all areas of teaching and learning. It also provides an opportunity to showcase our faculty who are practicing innovation and demonstrating exemplary teaching.

PD Day is attended by all of BCIT’s faculty and staff, as an all-day event focused on Learning & Teaching, Work/Career Life, and Well Being. The event kicks off with a world-class keynote presentation, followed by sessions throughout the day. PD Day has been offered for over a decade, and it generates very positive engagement with faculty and staff.