

## Scholarship in Radiology Education

### New Research and Scholarly Initiatives Award, Major Grants Competition

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS (1)** Dr. Kathryn M Hibbert, Director, Centre for Education

**OTHERS** Dr. Rethy K. Chhem, Chair, Radiology NM  
Dr. Teresa Van Deven, Curriculum & Pedagogy Support

#### Summary of Proposal:

Imaging research is increasingly integral to health care, drug discovery, cell biology and other life sciences. The demand for imaging services has increased exponentially - a trend that promises to continue. These pressures require innovative responses within the education and training of imaging professionals of the future.

Recognizing the growing need to do things differently, a partnership was formed at Western between the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry's Department of Diagnostic Radiology & Nuclear Medicine (DDRNM), and the Faculty of Education. The 'Centre for Education in Radiology & Nuclear Medicine' was charged with the mandate to strengthen curriculum design and implementation, support and guide the art of teaching, and advance educational scholarship in medical imaging education. Over the past year, a pilot research project yielded an in-depth needs assessment of DDRNM (including the department in Windsor involved in the expansion of Schulich to a Windsor campus) and investigated the ways in which scholarship is currently institutionalized in the department. The study involved a mixed methods approach,

- a) Quantitative: collecting exploratory statistics to establish baseline figures for future comparative research,
- b) Qualitative: collecting narratives and recording experiences that allow the researchers to capture the complexities of practice

As Tapscott and Williams note, "if we want to succeed, we must make the choices that advance us all" (2006, p124). The results of the pilot study generated new findings that went beyond importing theories from one field into another, or having medical professionals acquire some form of educational training. The research was designed to bring experienced educators and educational researchers together with medical professionals in conversation, collaboration and activity that would lead to authentic interdisciplinary inquiry around the scholarship of teaching, learning, and educational research in response to articulated and unarticulated needs.

The study findings were disseminated at the 1<sup>st</sup> *International Conference, Expanding Scholarship in Radiology Education* which we hosted in August, 2007. Seventy-five people from around the world attended. Many expressed that they were coping with challenges similar to those addressed in the conference and commented on the enormous potential Western's unique collaboration across organizational boundaries offered the field. The sense of tapping into an unfulfilled niche was confirmed when a book prospectus, developed as a process of disseminating our early work, was quickly accepted by Springer (Appendix A). Similarly, we have received invitations from those in attendance at the conference, interested in having us share our approach to what appears to be a global problem, and conduct the Educational Series developed at Western with faculty and residents at other teaching hospitals (see for example, Tay, Appendix B). The growing interest in the form and function of this particular collaborative venture has led us to establish a *Society for Scholarship in Radiology & NM Education*. As the founding members, we serve in a leadership

advisory capacity; building a critical mass of interested scholars across geographic boundaries, and initiating an entirely new research field through the unique approach to collaboration. Plans are already underway for a 2008 conference to be hosted by Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS.

ADF funding would allow us to broaden the pilot study conducted at our single institution into a national study that would explore promising practices across the country. Promising practices gathered in the expanded inquiry will inform not only the research in this field, but are likely to lead to educational insights and applications derived from the nature of interdisciplinary work itself. The student experience in the professional schools at Western are poised to benefit from the findings as they translate into improved course design, the development and harnessing of newer technologies and assessment tools and new opportunities for creativity and social connectivity. Graduate student experiences will be enriched and expanded as we build in opportunities for them to develop and apply emerging research skills in some innovative settings, collaborating with researchers within and beyond their own discipline. Given the growing international interest in research of this nature, ADF seed funding in 2008-2009 would put us in a strong position to apply for external multi-year funding.