

November 18, 2014

To Whom It May Concern

I had the pleasure of working with Kathleen Bortolin through her facilitation of a year-long Teaching Faculty Scholar's Program at Vancouver Island University. This unique program was designed to assist faculty members to re-vision and revitalize their teaching skills through an exploration of different pedagogies, methods and techniques. It used a blend of online and face-to-face delivery of the content; group work and peer support; and peer mentoring from other faculty. This occurred during my first year teaching at Vancouver Island University and this program was an incredibly timely and useful support. Specifically I was learning how to switch up my teaching from purely face-to-face to a fully online program and so I had some unique needs and interests.

As one of the facilitators, Kathleen was able to create a safe environment of learning and exploration that was creative and empowering. She presented herself as an intelligent, well prepared and a responsive leader. But I think the trait that was most important to me was her passion for the learning process and her ability to impart this to our group. She effortlessly modeled how the teaching-learning interaction can work creatively and successfully.

The content of the learning was directed at both group learning but also to the unique needs of the individual group members. For example, Kathleen created specific modules for me that spoke directly to exploring online pedagogies and provided me with useful resources and exercises in which to make application to my own learning needs. Kathleen is now a resource on whom I know I can draw on throughout my career, both in a teaching and research based capacity.

I look forward to the possibility of working with and learning from Kathleen in my career at Vancouver Island University.

Yours truly,

Louise Stern MSW, PhD.
Professor
Social Work
Faculty of Health and Human Services
Vancouver Island University
Nanaimo, British Columbia
250-740-6582
Louise.Stern@viu.ca