Introduction
The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) promotes teaching as a scholarly endeavor where “the work of the classroom [becomes] a site for inquiry, asking and answering questions about students’ learning in ways that can improve one’s own classroom and also advance the larger profession of teaching” (Huber and Hutchings, 2005). SoTL engages individuals in designing, conducting, and publishing research on teaching and learning. It also creates a community of practitioners who contribute to the body of knowledge about teaching and learning as well as benefit from the SoTL of others.

The Network of Teaching and Learning will host the 1st bi-annual SoTL conference in a blended learning format on August 20-21, 2015 aimed at enabling Aga Khan University (AKU) faculty and Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN)/AKU partners to join in conversations and collaborations on SoTL with one another from the regions AKU serves across Asia, Africa and the UK.

Conference Theme
This being the first conference by the Teaching and Learning Network and more specifically by the university on SoTL, it will be dedicated to exploring broader questions about the scholarship and practice of teaching and learning in higher education as well as building a scholarly community dedicated to developing teaching and learning research. Therefore, the theme for the conference is Engaged Teaching for Engaged Learning.

Conference Goal and Objectives
The main goal of the conference is to raise the profile of teaching at AKU by bringing together AKU faculty and faculty developers as well as those interested in the scholarship of teaching and learning within AKDN and AKU partners.

The objectives of the conference are:
- To celebrate teaching and learning at AKU
- To identify and acknowledge SoTL at AKU
- To contribute to the development of communities of practice and enquiry around teaching and learning
- To communicate the role of TL_net in service and support for teaching excellence in AKU
- To create a shared understanding of engaged learning and teaching at AKU through the AKU TL framework
- To build capacity of faculty on engaged learning and teaching at AKU
- To recognise and reward teaching excellence
- To launch the SoTL ‘seed’ grants

Conference Structure
It is envisaged that the conference will run over two days in a Blended format. It will be also a part of a larger celebration of teaching and learning at AKU which will include
‘Instructional Skills Workshops’ for AKU faculty in East Africa and Pakistan. There will be two plenary keynote sessions beamed via VCC, concurrent sessions of face-to-face paper presentations on site in Karachi and Nairobi and poster presentations on a virtual learning space.

Conference Presentations
All presenters will be encouraged and expected to prepare papers or posters on the conference strands below and according to the highest professional standards for an international, academic conference audience. Thus, the submission and review process will be designed to accept only those proposals which are about important aspects of SoTL, and that will be presented in innovative, engaging, effective ways modelling good pedagogy.

All proposals will be submitted online and will go through a blind, peer-review process by a review team consisting of faculty/faculty developers knowledgeable about the scholarship of teaching and learning both within and outside AKU.

Conference Strands
Those wishing to present papers or posters should present their abstracts on any of the conference strands below for review. Those, whose abstracts will be accepted for presentation, will be expected to prepare papers or posters according to guidelines issued to authors. Support by TL_net for publication of selected outstanding papers will be provided by professional educator mentors through the Academics without Borders partnership.

Strands:
• Innovative Engaging Pedagogies to improve teaching practice
Today, classrooms that employ engaging pedagogies are considered to be classrooms in which the teacher aims to learn as much from his/her students as he/she intends to teach. It is also widely acknowledged that teaching and learning affect students’ knowledge, skills, attitudes and capacity to contribute to the communities they live in and beyond. Hence, there has been an increasing demand for teaching and learning processes which are based on evidence-informed principles. The foregoing notwithstanding, within the hard work of teaching, lies the need to celebrate all that we do in our classrooms in this endeavour.

This strand calls for presentations that exemplify pedagogical models/practices that open up classrooms leading to learning that is enduring and transformative; ways of involving students as learners and participants with valid views on the teaching process; and, narrations of individual or group journeys that highlight the lessons learnt about the teaching and learning enterprise. Presenters can also share what they have learnt about improving their own or others’ teaching practice.

• Teaching with Technology
The use of technology in teaching and learning is quickly gaining currency in today’s classrooms in most developing contexts thereby creating an array of opportunities and challenges. This strand calls for presentations on pedagogies that have employed the use of technology, research reports on the use of technology in teaching and learning as well as stories of opportunities and challenges in using technology to teach or learn. Graduates of the blended learning faculty development programme are encouraged to share their reflections and action research.

• Assessment for Learning
There is a growing recognition that assessment should focus on learning outcomes as well as learning processes. Besides determining whether learning has occurred, it should also advance learning. This strand calls for presentations on innovative assessment practices as well as research reports or stories of opportunities and challenges in assessing for learning.
• Student Voices on Learning

This strand is exclusively for postgraduate students in AKU to present posters on their learning experiences. The distinguishing characteristic of these presentations will be learning experiences that the students considered innovative and transformative.

Keynote Speakers

1. **Arshad Ahmad** is the Associate Vice President, Teaching & Learning and Director of McMaster University’s Institute for Innovation and Excellence in Teaching and Learning (MIIETL). His current research interests are in Accelerated Hybrid Learning Designs, Conceptual Change, Teaching Philosophies and Strategies. Prior to this appointment, Professor Ahmad was an Associate Professor of Finance at the John Molson School of Business at Concordia University. He is the President of The Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE), which is a national association of teachers. He is also the Vice-President of The International Consortium for Educational Development (ICED)

2. **Janet Welch** is the Assistant Dean of Academic Technologies in the Faculty of Education and Director of Digital Teaching, Assessment and Learning at the University of Alberta. Professor Welch’s focus has been dedicated to improving the quality of teaching assessment and learning in the faculty of education. Her current endeavour is to broaden that scope to the whole university. Her focus over time is to progressively advance teaching and learning modes including face-to-face, online, and blended environments. With Professor Welch’s leadership, the University has seen advancement and a shift in the outlook on traditional learning.

3. **Brenda Leibowitz** is currently Chair, Teaching and Learning, University of Johannesburg, South Africa. Previously, she was Director of the Centre for Teaching and Learning at Stellenbosch University. Her most recent piece of work is: Leibowitz, B. (2014). Reflections on Academic Development: What is in a name? *International Journal for Academic Development, 19*:4. DOI: 10.1080/1360144X.2014.969978