

Cheryl Messick from the University of Pittsburgh, USA – Semester 2 2016.



Where you have come from and what do you teach?

I work at the University of Pittsburgh in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania in the Communication Science and Disorders Department. At my home institution I teach a graduate course in Articulation & Phonological Disorders in children, which is similar to the course I am teaching here at UC. I also teach a course in Clinical Teaching to our clinical doctoral students, which is a topic I have strong professional interests in. Finally I teach a course to undergraduate students on Language Acquisition in children.

What interested you in the Erskine Programme/Why did you want to come to UC?

I have heard of the Erskine Programme for many years from colleagues who had the opportunity to come to UC. The opportunity to work and live in another country for a few months, and especially in New Zealand, is incredible. It is great to learn different approaches and ideas regarding how/what to teach; the Erskine program is a wonderful cultural exchange for two-way learning.

I also have personal interests in New Zealand as my grandparents were from New Zealand; they emigrated to the United States in the 1930's. While here I have had a chance to connect with cousins (on the north island) and learn more about my kiwi heritage.

What have you been doing at UC?

I am teaching a course called Articulation & Phonological Disorders in the Communication Disorders Department. I have also had a chance to participate in simulation activities in the Communication Disorders department that aim at helping students acquire skills in clinical interviewing techniques; I played the role of a mock parent and marked students on their performance in the tasks.

One particularly exciting activity that has emerged from my time here at UC is that I worked with some of the speech/language pathology clinical instructors to create a partnership for a clinical education project. We submitted a proposal to serve as a team of "content matter experts" for a set of clinical teaching resources that are being developed by the Council of Academic Programs in Communication Science and Disorders (CAPCSD), which is a professional organization whose mission it is to serve as a resource in leadership, education and advocacy to academic programs in who educate speech/language pathology and audiology students. We will be working with a web team who specializes in developing training materials to develop resources for training clinical instructors to provide feedback to their students based on evidence based practice. It was exciting to put together an international team to work together on the project, and we were just informed that our proposal was accepted. I'm looking forward to working with my colleagues here from UC on this project.

What have you most enjoyed about your time here at UC/Christchurch?

That's a difficult question, as the entire experience has been so positive; I have enjoyed becoming acquainted with speech-language pathology students and faculty here at UC. Everyone has been very welcoming. I have also really enjoyed seeing the beauty of this country. In Christchurch in particular watching spring unfold through weekly walks at the Botanic Garden have been wonderful.

Finally, it has been wonderful to learn more about my NZ family genealogy. The photo attached was taken on the walking trails at Diamond Bay with the entrance to the Lyttleton harbour in the background - my great great grandparents landed at Lyttleton in September 1877 (from Ireland) - so it has been fun to look at those hills and imagine what it was like for them when they arrived to New Zealand.