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Scholarship in Support of Institutional Change … Institutional Change in Support of

Scholarship

Richard A. Gale

Mount Royal College

Although I have no idea when he said it, where he said it, or if he said it at all, there is a quote attributed to hockey legend Wayne Gretzky that seems pertinent to advancing scholarship of teaching and learning at the institutional level: "I skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it has been." This strikes me as the hockey equivalent of Lee Shulman's "visions of the possible," a phrase that first appeared with the subtitle, "Models for Campus Support of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning." In that essay, Lee articulated four academy models for coordinating and advancing teaching and learning scholarship at the campus level. Each model presented a structure for institutions to "skate where the puck is going to be," and all can be found somewhere in North America.

But sometimes advancement comes not from one model or another but from other (often opportune) circumstances. During the last year I have been working as a visiting scholar for Mount Royal College (Calgary AB Canada), where institutional support for scholarship of teaching and learning is being driven by an institutional sea change—the transition from college to university status (Canadian colleges are generally two-year institutions). This new status is generating changes in the academic plan and encouraging a re-imagination of its commitments to teaching, learning, and scholarship. It is also raising important questions about how institutional change advances scholarship of teaching and learning, how scholarship of teaching and learning advances and supports institutional change, and how scholarship of teaching and learning institutions "skate to where the puck is going to be."

Keeping high-quality teaching and learning front and centre

There are certainly some colleges and universities that can approach institutional change from a perspective divorced or at least removed from learning and teaching. But for those (like Mount Royal) that have always been learning-and-teaching-centric institutions, any significant change must occur within a pedagogical context. This is where scholarship of teaching and learning can provide an important "identity marker" for maintaining core institutional values, keeping student learning and pedagogical innovation at the forefront of faculty work, and demonstrating a commitment to integrating old and new profiles in a way that will benefit the institution and its constituencies. By devoting resources (which need not be measured in dollars), ratcheting up the public rhetoric of visible and vocal and vigorous support from administration and faculty, and acknowledging the viability and stature of all forms of research (á la Boyer), institutions can use scholarship of teaching and learning to help redefine institutional identity. And in return, that new identity will naturally support the advancement of scholarship of teaching and learning, especially along vectors of institutional change.

Re-aligning the research profile

Faculty research is often what defines a university, but scholarship of teaching and learning is rarely at the centre of any institution's research agenda. Even those campuses that have embraced the idea of Boyer's four scholarships (application, discovery, integration, teaching) often privilege discovery above all else. But with institutional change comes an opportunity for re-evaluation of faculty work, and re- alignment of research expectations. In recent years we have seen scholarship of application rise in prominence as community-based research and other outreach-oriented inquiry has gained traction. Something similar can be said for the scholarships of integration and teaching. But in all cases there has been a commitment on the part of campus leaders (VPs research, chairs, and faculty) to not only acknowledge alternatives to bench work, field study, archival investigation, etc., but also to understand them

deeply, promote them honestly, and support them consistently. Including all forms of

scholarship as appropriate and serious avenues for faculty research has the potential to

invigorate young faculty, who often enter the field of higher education with a passion for

teaching but still have their advisor's research expectations ringing in their ears. Likewise,

supporting scholarship of teaching and learning for experienced faculty members who have

been devoting time and energy to excellence in teaching and learning and encouraging those

teachers interested in building on their own experience in the classroom and turning their

pedagogical expertise into scholarly inquiry can only yield positive outcomes and dividends

ranging from a re-invigorated professoriate to a new process for passing the teaching

excellence torch to a new generation. Such research will also respond to the growing need for

evidence of student learning, helping institutions address issues of assessment and

accountability.

Building and growing a core of experienced scholars, mentors, and exemplars

In order to advance scholarship of teaching and learning institutionally, there must be

both a core group and a critical mass of faculty committed to and engaged in systematic

scholarly inquiry into student learning. One of the most successful ways of developing that

population is through a teaching academy, similar to the model developed for the Carnegie

Scholars of the CASTL Program.[1] This has been the approach taken by Mount Royal,[2] and it is

particularly well suited to institutions trying to be intentional about fostering engagement with

scholarship of teaching and learning. The most important features of such a program include

instruction, production, community, mentorship, and sustainability. Selected faculty need to

learn what it means to do scholarship of teaching and to actually conduct a research project with

supportive yet critical guidance. They must produce scholarship that is of a high quality and

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1 http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/programs/sub.asp?key=21&subkey=63&topkey=21
2 http://mtroyal.ab.ca/ProgramsCourses/FacultiesSchoolsCentres/InstituteforScholarshipofTeachingLearning/ScholarsProgram/

likely to create disciplinary and interdisciplinary impact. This must occur within a community of scholars with an explicit mandate to serve as mentors within the larger academic context of which they are a part. Finally, the program must be sustainable as an organizational entity (constantly bringing in new scholars and expanding the impact of the experienced scholars) and as a practice undertaken by those who are serving as exemplars (faculty cannot be burned out because of ever-increasing expectations). All scholars should understand the responsibilities of selection and embrace their roles as standard-bearers, mentors, informed colleagues, and future leaders. In turn, they will help establish scholarship of teaching and learning as a robust activity while coordinating parallel efforts within their own departments and establishing collaborative relationships with other faculty. Despite the fact that such a program needs administrative support, it is really a grassroots initiative: operating across the campus community, influencing individual programs as well as institutional processes, institutionalizing a faculty-centric process of exposure to, engagement with, and expansion of scholarship of teaching and learning.

Championing the intellectual link between teaching and scholarship

For too long we have accepted the "two cultures" of teaching and research as necessary binaries—applauding those who care about both so long as they are scholars first and teachers second—when in reality they are complementary parts of a "braided practice" that includes disciplinary knowledge, pedagogical expertise, and scholarly inquiry (for more see Gale 2007). Although it may seem like a given, the idea of helping faculty build on their own teaching and learning expertise to establish a research agenda is somewhat novel as a growth strategy. It is, however, an important way for excellence in teaching and commitment to learning to be valued, rewarded, and celebrated. Similarly, it brings a renewed sense of stature to the academic enterprise and a new path for those looking to expand what was once simply good practice into research agendas for the greater good. By acknowledging and raising to prominence the

intellectual work of teaching and learning, by linking such work to the future and fortunes of the college or university, an institution is declaring itself to be a champion of more integrated approaches to the business of postsecondary education (which in my mind is where the puck is going to be).

As I said at the outset, all of these reflections have been sparked by my work with Mount Royal as they embark upon a new and exciting chapter in their 100-year (and counting) odyssey. But for many institutions, the changes they are facing have less to do with growth and expansion and more to do with re-grouping and re-evaluating in the face of dwindling resources. Can scholarship of teaching and learning support institutional change (and vice versa) during bad times as well as good? I have to say yes, it can. For it is during times of re-evaluation and retrenchment that we need to keep teaching and learning front and centre, rethink what kind of research can and should define our identity, build a culture of inquiry, and celebrate the intellectual work that goes into improvements in teaching and learning. What matters are not specifics of time and place and opportunity, but rather the willingness to think about scholarship of teaching and learning as central to institutional culture and to act on that thinking in productive, collaborative, and intentional ways.

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Recognition and Reward: SOTL and the Tenure Process at a Regional Comprehensive University

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Abstract

This paper presents the results of one regional comprehensive institution's efforts to implement

an infrastructure that provides both recognition and reward for research into the scholarship of

teaching and learning (SOTL). The authors offer an intensive analysis of Western Carolina

University's experiences with adopting the Boyer model of scholarship through the

transformation of its tenure and promotion documents. The changes wrought at WCU suggest

a path that may be particularly instructive to similar institutions that may be contemplating the

use of a more expansive definition of scholarship into their institutional culture.

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[1] Authors' names appear in alphabetical order and do not suggest a hierarchy of contribution. All authors contributed equally.

I.   Introduction

The term "SoTL paradox" is used to describe the imbalance between growing

recognition of the value of SoTL work and the relative weight SoTL research carries in formal

reward systems (e.g. tenure and promotion) (Walker et al, 2008). In conventional academic

culture, SoTL researchers note, the scholarship of discovery is valued over other types and

article after article laments this lesser valuation of SoTL as a major obstacle towards the

ultimate goal of equal status (Boshier, 2009; Diamond, 2005; Huber, 2004; McKinney, 2006;

Shapiro, 2006). While researchers have been adept in describing the obstacle, solutions to the

paradox have been harder to find. Part of the reason for this frustration is that the search has

focused on universal solutions that would be applied to institutions at all levels, from Research I

to Community College. Increasingly, scholars are recognizing that solutions to the paradox may

need to be tailored to the diverse goals of different institutions or institutional levels. In his 2006

book, *Teaching at the People's University*, Bruce Henderson suggests that state or regional

comprehensive universities[2] (often abbreviated as SCUs) because of their emphasis on

teaching, are naturally suited to become leaders in SoTL research and, in fact, already play a

disproportionate role in the publication of that research (Henderson and Buchanan, 2006). This

article focuses on the efforts of one such regional comprehensive institution to implement an

infrastructure that provides both recognition and reward for SOTL work.

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2 Henderson explains the term state (or regional) comprehensive university by breaking down the terms. State, as in
    an institutions where "the bulk of the funding…come from state government"; comprehensive as in "contrast
    to single purpose or limited purpose" institutions; and university as in "most SCUs have for some time
    offered master's degrees and some also offer doctorates in a limited number of fields." In the Carnegie
    classification systems, SCU's have been variously classified as Masters I or II level, public comprehensive
    universities or public master's institutions. Henderson, *Teaching*, 3.

II. The Case Study: Western Carolina University

On the surface, the case of WCU is not remarkable, as it was neither the first nor the last to adopt Boyer standards[3], including SoTL, into its reward structure, though it is the first within its own UNC system to do so. Other universities have reported on their experiences with adopting the Boyer model at the institutional level, though because Boyer's classification is relatively new, many of these articles rely heavily on reported or anecdotal information rather than systematic evaluation.[4] This paper offers an intensive analysis of WCU's experiences with adopting Boyer through the transformation of its tenure and promotion documents. The changes wrought at WCU suggest a path that may be particularly instructive to other SCUs that may be contemplating the use of a more expansive definition of scholarship into their institutional culture.

Like many other regional institutions, Western Carolina University jumped at the opportunity to work with SoTL at an early stage. As an active participant in the Carnegie Academy's leadership groups and clusters, the University sought to encourage a broad range of faculty to engage in SoTL research (Bender, 2005). The Coulter Faculty Center provided support for these efforts through methods likely familiar to most SoTL practitioners (Shulman, 2002), including the instigation of SoTL faculty learning communities, organization of SoTL workshops and events, nomination of SoTL Faculty Fellows (essentially peer mentors), and the founding of a SoTL journal, *MountainRise*. The Faculty Center was particularly fortunate to receive a large endowment specifically targeted towards SoTL research, the proceeds of which

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3 For those not familiar with the Boyer model, see the seminal text, E.L. Boyer, *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997. Boyer identifies four types of scholarship: discovery, integration, engagement and teaching. Learning was later added to the fourth category leading to the acronym SOTL (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning), used frequently in this piece.
4 For reports from individual campuses, see especially Barbara Cambridge, *Campus Progress: Supporting the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* (Washington, DC: AAHE, 2004) and KerryAnn O'Meara and R. Eugene Rice, *Faculty Priorities Reconsidered: Rewarding Multiple Forms of Scholarship* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005).

were used to fund an active SoTL grants program and to honor an annual SoTL scholar. In addition, the center pioneered other SoTL-related activities, including an annual two-day intensive SoTL Retreat and SoTL Socials (informal gatherings held at the University Club). Despite this variety of opportunities and expenditure of resources, actual participation in SoTL tapered off to a relatively low level and many faculty remained unfamiliar even with the SoTL acronym.

As institutions, universities and colleges are historically among the most resistant to change (Evans and Henrichsen, 2008) and this may especially be the case when dealing with an issue as sensitive as faculty reward systems. For this reason and others, many of the most familiar models of institutional change used in the business world are not always a good fit to higher education. Researchers have also evoked sociological models, especially Wexler's community of practice, in making sense of SoTL's road to recognition, but these seem to provide more insight into the situation than solutions for it (Cambridge, 2004). The integration of multiple forms of scholarship, including SoTL, at WCU followed a distinctive path towards fruition that included two major stages: recognition and then valuation. Similar to the five stages of institutional change in higher education outlined by Conrad (2007), the recognition stage at WCU took the form of facilitating the interests of different, even divergent, stakeholder groups on campus.

Margaret Mead once famously quipped, "Never doubt that a small dedicated group of people can change the world, indeed it is the only thing that ever has." This certainly seemed to apply to this case study. In the case of the Boyer model, there were several parties on campus with diverse reasons for advocating the adoption of a model that recognized multiple forms of scholarship. The librarians, for example, had already embraced the Boyer classifications because it facilitated the recognition of the diversity of their scholarly activities. Further, as an SCU, the institution also carries considerable responsibilities for regional engagement and that charge had been strengthened by recent mandates of the UNC system, of which WCU is one of

seventeen member campuses. This charge led to a considerable number of faculty and staff

initiatives designed to work with community partners and to produce scholarship of

engagement. Finally, the activities of the Coulter Faculty Center (noted above) led to the

creation of a small but very dedicated band of SoTL practitioners. Together, these groups

formed the core of initial advocacy for change on the campus.

This advocacy alone, though, was insufficient to overcome the considerable inertia that

often characterizes academic cultures. At WCU, the initial spark that eventually led to the

incorporation of SoTL into the reward system was an administrative initiative to update the aged

Faculty Handbook, particularly those sections that covered tenure, promotion, and

reappointment. Although many sections of the handbook had been added or amended, over

fifteen years had passed since the last comprehensive revision. The document suffered from

problems of organization, accessibility, and transparency. In addition, the process was not

uniform, as departments across the university were using many different methods and

standards to evaluate faculty. The Academic Affairs division, led by the Provost's office, decided

to instigate a thorough revision of the tenure and promotion sections of the handbook under the

auspices of the Faculty Senate.

The need to adapt rewards systems to changing university culture was one impetus

towards this revision, but another was legal. Encarta (2007) defines tenure as "the position of

having a formal secure appointment until retirement, especially at an institution of higher

learning after working there on a temporary or provisional basis." As a relatively new concept in

American higher education (Ceci, Williams & Mueller-Johnson; 2007), tenure protects faculty

members in the classroom regardless of their political and social beliefs which may leak into

their instruction. Tenure is generally awarded to professors after a probationary period of six to

eight years after submission of a detailed, lengthy dossier outlining their teaching, scholarship

and community service accomplishments and other contributions to their university. Legal

remedies may be an alternative for professors who are not conferred tenure.

Mullaney et al. (1994, pp. 176) define due process as "a system of procedures designed to produce the best possible judgments in those personnel problems of higher education which may yield a serious adverse decision about a teacher. By its fairness, it seeks to protect not only the career of the individual, but also the reputation of the institution." The proceedings leading to tenure decisions may involve peer or departmental review, external or university review, and administrative review. Each of these procedures is a due process system in itself. A specific university's appeal process to a negative tenure decision is another example of due process. Given an established, fair due process program for awarding tenure, legal action is the next step for a professor to consider if tenure is not granted. Literature on litigation is varied but generally addresses legal options for tenured faculty who have been fired unfairly due to perceived unfair classroom academic interventions by administrators (Ceci et al., 2007) or legitimate reasons for dismissal of faculty (Mullaney et al., 1994). These detailed discussions exceed the scope of this paper, but the threat of legal litigation is a balancing force in most university tenure processes. To mitigate potential legal problems, clarity and consistency in the processes for tenure and promotion are essential. The proposed faculty handbook revision addressed this issue and university legal council was an active participant in the revision process.

The initial committee included representatives from legal council, Academic Affairs, and the Faculty Senate. As is the case with many long-term academic committees, its membership would fluctuate over time but the core representation remained stable. Before getting down to the nuts and bolts tasks of composing new language and individual sections, the committee discussed the creation of a guiding philosophy that would give the new document greater coherence and wider applicability. The members of the committee agreed that any major changes would increase the time it took to reach a consensus among the faculty, departments and colleges and so committee members wanted to pick their battles wisely. In the end, the committee chose to follow a standard of "minimum university standard for collegial review". This principle was designed to provide departments with the flexibility to build upon the Faculty

Handbook's basic description of teaching, scholarship and service. The principle proved

effective, as the handbook was completed, revised, and approved by all levels of the university

within two years.

With the minimum standard in place, each discipline/program/department was free to

incorporate particular expectations and values. In many ways thanks to the advocacy of groups

outlined in the above overview, part of the minimum standards outlined in the new handbook

included the Boyer model of scholarship. The new handbook very briefly described each of the

four types of scholarship (see Appendix A for descriptions) and left it to each department to

evaluate the relative importance of each type of scholarship within its own disciplinary

parameters. With the university-level minimum standard officially in place, the onus moved to

the departmental level to create new tenure and promotion documents that would incorporate

these standards. With the adoption of the new handbook, WCU's recognition of multiple forms

of scholarship, including SoTL, was official, but the task remained to resolve the paradox or gap

between recognition and valuation.

Throughout most of the revision process thus far, faculty and administrators had worked

together to achieve desired results. With the department-level revisions, however, negotiations

became more contentious and multiple compromises had to be made in order to maintain a

balance between flexibility and coherence in the tenure review process. First, communication

was essential. Because the handbook was deliberately brief in its descriptions of the Boyer

model, a campus wide effort to educate faculty on the concepts became necessary. Both the

Provost's Office and the Faculty Center provided workshops, forums, and individual department

consultations to increase familiarity. Secondly, because the balance being negotiated took place

at the institutional level, academic affairs coordinated the process of updating thirty-three sets of

departmental documents, using the drafts to encourage minimal levels of standardization and

addressing new issues as they arose. In the end, Academic Affairs revised the standards to

include the following provisions: departments had to provide recognition in some way, shape, or form to all four forms of scholarship.

They also had to be as clear as possible about their standards for peer-review, the latter an issue that came increasingly to the fore as the process unfolded. From the initial departmental documents, Academic Affairs constructed a template (see appendix A) that would apply to all faculty at the institution and provided the parameters from which departments would construct their own tenure and promotion standards. Then and now, the Provost's office approves all department-level documents by comparing them to the standards set out in the template. For the first time last year, the revised departmental documents on standards for tenure and promotion became effective across campus. What follows is a study of the diversity by which the departments of this SCU placed value on multiple forms of scholarship, particularly SoTL. The researchers in this study analyzed departmental tenure review documents (on this campus, commonly abbreviated CRDs for Collegial Review Documents) in order to determine how different entities, such as departments and schools, within the institution valued research in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

III. The Study: Sample of Tenure and Promotion Documents

To be included in the set of documents analyzed, two conditions had to be met. First, a CRD had to follow the template provided by the provost (see Appendix A) and be in effect for Fall, 2008 or Fall, 2009. The template was provided to thirty-three departments and schools organized within six colleges. By Fall, 2008, eighteen (54.55%) had CRDs following the new template. By Spring, 2009, another five departments and schools within colleges had CRDs following the template. Second, in order to be included in the analysis, documents needed to contain statements regarding departmental policy regarding scholarship of teaching and learning and other forms of research. Thus, documents were excluded if they contained statements in the scholarship sections allowing individual faculty members to determine

emphasis on various forms of scholarship in consultation with their department heads. One

department allowed for individual faculty members to determine the value of different forms of

scholarship and was excluded from analysis. Thus, twenty-two documents were included in the

final analysis, each between eight and thirty pages in length (average 20.3 pages). A group of

five researchers independently coded each of these to maintain objectivity and consistency.

IV. Characteristics of Tenure and Promotion Documents

A. Load Balance

Considerable discussion took place on whether or not departmental documents should mandate

the relative balance between teaching, service, and scholarship as part of the faculty load. As

proponents have pointed out, in order for SoTL to succeed faculty members will have to balance

their SoTL research with their other commitments (Huber, 2004). The Academic Affairs division

chose to leave the decision up to individual departments. In the end, only four departments

chose to include the suggested percentages in their documents. For example, in one case a

department specified that faculty should balance their work loads to spend approximately 50%

of their time on teaching, 30% on scholarship (regardless of type) and 20% on service. In a

department with many members who engage in applied research, the department suggested

two separate tracks for faculty to follow, one for educator/scholars and another for

educator/practitioners. Others chose not to provide such uniform standards. As one document

notes:

> "[T]he department needs to balance teaching, scholarship, and service, but individual
>
> faculty members don't all need to achieve exactly the same balance. Certainly we will
>
> differ with regard to specialty area within our discipline, but we will also vary in terms of
>
> the types of scholarship we emphasize."[5]

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5 All quotes are from the documents themselves unless otherwise noted. The documents are available for public
        viewing at http://www.wcu.edu/10870.asp

In between these two poles, departments varied in their specifications, but teaching remained the highest percentage or most emphasized activity in all cases, as is perhaps befitting a SCU with a high teaching load (4/4) and explicit institutional identity as a teaching and learning institution.

B. Scholarly Outlets

The majority of documents (twenty of twenty-two documents) contained explicit statements regarding the differential value of various scholarship research outlets, regardless of type of scholarship (discovery, integration, engagement, or SoTL). For example, these departments placed higher value on publications in well-regarded refereed journals in the discipline than on publications in lesser known journals and/or non-refereed journals or magazines. Similarly, in some cases departments valued international conference presentations over national presentations which were, in turn, more highly valued than regional or campus presentations. Often, departments employed a point, module or category system, or more rarely a system of benchmarks, to differentiate scholarship outlets and formats. Under these systems, candidates would need to earn a set number of points per year or per review period in order to successfully advance to higher statuses (see Appendix B for a sample point system). In contrast (or at times in conjunction with), other departments specified standards of quality that did not specify outlets. A handful of departments used the criteria developed by Glassick, et al in *Scholarship Assessed* (1997), including "clear goals, adequate preparation, appropriate methods, significant results, effective presentation, and reflective critique." Several departments went their own way, setting criteria such as "degree of difficulty, potential impact, and value to the mission of the department and/or the university" or, in a different department, "clear goals which lead to improved instruction, adequate review of the literature and research on teaching and learning with a clear understanding of current research in the field, effective dissemination

of results and findings"-- each set of criteria serving as arbiters of the value of SoTL for tenure

and promotion purposes.

C. Peer Review

One of the biggest challenges to implementing the Boyer model was determining proper

forms of peer review. Not all types of scholarship recognized under this model are traditional

publications in the form of books and articles, so departments became more explicit about what

types of peer valuation would be appropriate. Several departments allowed for various forms of

alternative peer review, usually when the traditional double-blind standard did not apply. In

several cases, departments specified that candidates for tenure or promotion could call together

review committees to determine whether a particular scholarly activity was properly reviewed for

quality. For example, one department included the following disclaimer:

> "We recognize that infrequently a candidate may present other activities that do not fit
>
> well with these categories yet are still legitimately scholarship. It will be up to the
>
> candidate to defend the activities as scholarship based on their extraordinary nature, or
>
> justifying why an activity should be moved to a higher classification."

In other cases, departments allowed candidates to designate outside reviewers to adjudicate

quality standards. Most of these cases concerned the scholarship of engagement specifically,

but the principles could also apply to SoTL.

D. SoTL vs. Scholarly Teaching

One issue often cited as an obstacle towards the institutional-level acceptance of SoTL

is problems with its definition (McKinney, 2006). SoTL practitioners have often tried to hammer

home the difference between scholarly teaching and the scholarship of teaching and learning

(Kreber, 2001). At this campus, the template provided only a brief definition, "systematic study

of teaching and learning process." The distinction between SoTL and scholarly teaching was

not always clear to faculty developing the new tenure/promotion standards and several

departments had to revise their documents to exclude scholarly teaching in the category of

scholarship. Others addressed the definitional issue in interesting ways. One department chose

to provide a definition of each in order to explicate the differences to its faculty, even providing

case studies and examples for review. Taking a different tack, another department chose to

differentiate between published articles and creative activities, both of which counted as

scholarship for tenure purposes (not surprisingly, this was a creative discipline). For this

department, the scholarship of teaching and learning included "creation and publication of

original aids to teaching whether in traditional print media or on the web" as well as "master

classes that reach an off-campus audience." Other departments allowed for unpublished

outcomes, ranging from grant development to classroom experimentation. With the two-tier

adoption system, departments could define SoTL in a way that they were most familiar and

comfortable with, and the university allowed for differences in interpretation.

E. SoTL Valuation

As for SoTL specifically, the departmental documents manifested significant differences

along two major axes: academic career stage and SoTL valuation.

Academic Career Stage (Pre-Tenure vs. Post-Tenure): 9 out of 22 (41%) documents

posted the same scholarship requirements for tenure as for promotion to associate professor,

but departments occasionally differentiated their expectations for post-tenure review and/or

promotion and tenure requirements. In one department, for example, senior faculty are

expected to engage in a greater degree of scholarship of discovery as their careers progress. In

a few cases, there was recognition of the differing roles SoTL can play over the course of an

academic career (Weston and McAlpine, 2001).

SoTL Valuation (Equal vs. Unequal): Academic Affairs required that all departments

recognize all four forms of scholarship, but allowed for them to be weighted, or valued, as the

department saw fit. In this analysis, documents with explicit statements that all four forms of scholarship would be equally valued, we labeled 'equal'. In addition, in the absence of explicit document statements indicating inequality, documents were also considered equal. The two axes were then measured against each other to fall into one of four quadrants (see Figure 1 next page).

For the purposes of obtaining tenure, SoTL was considered equal to the other three forms of scholarship during the pre-tenure period by more than a two-to-one margin. Of the twenty-two departments, fifteen departments (68.2%) considered SoTL equal to other forms of scholarship while the remaining seven departments (31.8%) explicitly considered SoTL unequal to other forms of scholarship. Each of these seven departments required the predominance of the scholarship of discovery in order to receive tenure.

On the other hand, considering post-tenure expectations, more departments considered SoTL equal to the other three forms of scholarship. Of the twenty-two departments, twenty departments (91.9%) considered SoTL equal to other forms of scholarship while the remaining two departments (9.1%) considered SoTL explicitly unequal to other forms of scholarship.

Given the two variables, SoTL valuation and pre/post tenure status, the departments fell into the following four quadrants/categories:

Figure 1: Pre-Tenure and Post-Tenure Valuation of SoTL

Boyer Valuation Pre-Tenure (Short Term)	Equal	Health and Human Sciences
		   Nursing
			Arts and Sciences
			   Communication
			   English
			Business
			   Accounting, Finance, Information
			     Systems, & Economics
			   Business Administration, Law & Sport
			     Management
			   Global Strategy & Management
			   Professional Sales, Marketing &
			     Hospitality and Tourism
			Education and Allied Professions
			   Educational Leadership & Foundations
			   Health, Performance ER
			   Human Services
			Fine and Performing Arts
			   School of Music
			Health and Human Sciences
			   Criminology and Crim Justice
			Engineering & Construction
			Management
			   Construction Management
			   Engineering & Techology
			Library
			   Library

	Unequal	**Arts and Sciences**
		   History
			Arts and Sciences
			   Geosciences and Natural Resources
			   Philosophy and Religion
			   Political Science
			Education and Allied Professions
			   Elementary and Middle Grades
			     Education
			   Psychology
			Health and Human Sciences
			   Communication Sciences and
			     Disorders

		Unequal	Equal
		Boyer Valuation--Post Tenure (Long-Term)	

1. Conventional Consistent: Unequal Pre-Tenure – Unequal Post-Tenure

Departments here value scholarship of teaching and learning differently than other forms both during pre-tenure and during post-tenure and one department fell in this quadrant. These departments explicitly valued the scholarship of discovery, a convention generally regarded as the norm across US colleges and universities as necessary for tenure and for successful post-tenure review. The document of this department says flatly, "the department encourages faculty to engage in the scholarship of teaching and learning but regards this work as supplemental to the scholarship of discovery and insufficient by itself for tenure and promotion consideration."

2. Conventional Inconsistent: Unequal Pre-Tenure – Equal Post-Tenure

Seven departments fall into this quadrant, in which SoTL is only on equal par with other forms of scholarship during the post-tenure period. As is typical of many colleges and universities, the scholarship of discovery is valued more highly, and even required, for a successful tenure bid. As one department states, "the scholarship of application, integration, and of teaching and learning are valued, but the scholarship of discovery must be represented in the granting of tenure." Another states that three out of four units must be in the scholarship of discovery for tenure, but leaves scholarship for post-tenure review unspecified.

3. Non-conventional Inconsistent: Equal Pre-Tenure – Unequal Post-Tenure

One department fell into this quadrant which describes situations in which the scholarship of teaching and learning is valued equally, but only before tenure. In the case with this department, SoTL is valued unequally during the post-tenure process because the department requires SoTL publications.

4. Non-conventional Consistent: Equal Pre-Tenure – Equal Post-Tenure

Thirteen departments are located in the quadrant describing those that value the scholarship of teaching and learning equally during both the pre-tenure stage as well as the post-tenure stage. As one document states clearly, "candidates will be allowed to pursue their scholarly interests in any Boyer function they choose and are not required to complete projects

in multiple functions." Others want to see a bit more breadth, specifying that faculty pursue "at least two of the four Boyer Scholarship Model categories."

VI. Discussion and Future Research

The lessons learned from this evaluation of the process by which SoTL became formally recognized and valued at a regional comprehensive university are manifold. SoTL activists have long recognized the need to improve recognition of SoTL as a part of a larger shift to a learning-centered paradigm in higher education (Shapiro, 2006; Diamond, 1995). As a regional comprehensive university, WCU's primary mission emphasizes regional engagement as well as effectiveness and innovation in teaching and learning, both of which are scholarly activities recognized by the Boyer model. The alignment of the faculty reward system with this mission took the collective efforts of administrators, faculty, and faculty organizations in order to induce fundamental change (Brascamp, 1994). As SCU's struggle to find their own identities relative to other types of institutions (Henderson, 2007), this kind of alignment may prove particularly fruitful.

That being said, a major objection to adopting SoTL remains. There are, as the economists say, 'penalties to the pioneer'. In this case, by being an early adopter of the Boyer model, WCU has guided its faculty to tracks that may or may not be recognized at other institutions or by other organizations. This is particularly true of the Research I institutions that tend to dominate academia and the production of future faculty. For faculty who may desire to change institutions later in their careers or to rise to leadership positions within their respective disciplines, the early adoption of Boyer standards may prove to be detrimental, at least in the short run. In other words, while it may be valued here on this campus, the world of academia naturally extends beyond its own hallowed halls. Future research into the mobility (or immobility) of SoTL practitioners might prove instructive.

Recognition of SoTL at the institutional level has been significantly hampered by the varying

standards held by the increasing number of disciplines housed under the university umbrella. It

should be heartening to SoTL advocates how many departments on this campus embraced the

equal status of SoTL when offered the opportunity. WCU's success stemmed from the adoption

of a two-stage process in which minimal university standards provided broad parameters and

individual departments/programs filled in specifics according to perceived disciplinary standards.

This balance between standardization and flexibility characterized not only the process, but the

documents themselves. While the documents were certainly not identical, there were sections

that very nearly were, even beyond the requirements in the template. For example, several

documents shared verbiage regarding scholarship requirements for various stages of a faculty

member's academic career (Annual Faculty Evaluation, Tenure, Reappointment and Post

Tenure Review) and/or standards for outlet differentiation. The wording for a standard point

system (see Appendix B), for example, was essentially identical in five of the documents under

review. These similar sections, though, belie the diversity of responses achieved through the

revision process. Discussions took place primarily at the department level and the documents

reflect the differing personalities, disciplines, and generations of the people that created them.

Faculty have cherished and jealously guarded their academic freedom, as the tenure process

attests, and this two-step process allowed for greater faculty input and the casting off of one-

size-fits-all models that would not do justice to the abundance of opinions and perceptions that

make up a thriving academic environment.

Though many consider WCU's efforts thus far a mark of success, dangers remain. To

say that practice always follows policy would be grossly naïve. Undoubtedly, some of the

department documents reflect only a lip service commitment to multiple forms of scholarship. If

SoTL is to be fully and genuinely recognized and valued, it will require fundamental changes in

academic culture and faculty perceptions (McKinney, 2006). This is a larger and less concrete

task than what has been described in this paper. With the adoption of these standards,

however, WCU has moved considerably along the continuum of SoTL development (Bender, 2005). It remains to be seen how much effect these policy changes will have in the future and it will be interesting to investigate what, if any, changes in scholarly production and attitudes will ensue.

This study is in some ways similar to a case study, a document-based analysis, and an institutional level survey, yet it lacks certain elements of each one. [6] The researchers intend this work to be preparatory to a further research agenda that includes deeper work in each of these categories. Future research will include a compendium of case studies from different institutions, a comparative analysis of a wider set of documents across institutions, and/or qualitative studies of the people and processes behind the documents.[7] As this study has suggested, collaboration that is not limited to any one individual, discipline, or institution can lead to further resolution of the SOTL paradox.

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6 Thank you to an anonymous reviewer for his comments that led to the inclusion of this final paragraph.
7 Readers at institutions that have adopted or are considering adopting the Boyer model are encouraged to contact the authors for possible collaboration on future research.

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Appendix A

Department of [*Template*]
Collegial Review Document
2008-2009

Policies, Procedures, and Criteria for Faculty Evaluation:
Annual Faculty Evaluation; Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment; Post-Tenure
Review

I.   **Overview** – The purpose of this document is to describe the policies, procedures, and criteria for faculty performance evaluation specific to the department in which the faculty member is appointed. The document is guided at the highest level by *The Code* of the UNC system and by the Faculty Handbook of Western Carolina University. Included also are policies issued by General Administration, by the Office of the Provost, and in some cases by the college. While this document is intended to be comprehensive and precise with regard to department-level criteria and procedures, the faculty member should have familiarity with *The Code* and with the WCU Faculty Handbook (section 4.0). Further, in preparing a dossier for one of the review processes described here, the faculty member should also have available the appropriate Guidelines for the Preparation of the Dossier.

II. **Domains of Evaluation**
     A. Teaching
             1. **Teaching effectiveness is evaluated according to the following 7 dimensions:**
                   a) **Content expertise** – Effective teachers display knowledge of their subject matters. Content expertise includes the skills, competencies, and knowledge in a specific subject area in which the faculty member has received advanced experience, training, or education.
                   b) **Instructional delivery skills** – Effective teachers communicate information clearly, create environments conducive to learning, and use an appropriate variety of teaching methods.
                   c) **Instructional design skills** – Effective teachers design course objectives, syllabi, materials, activities, and experiences that are conducive to learning.
                   d) **Course management skills** – Effective teachers give timely feedback to students, make efficient use of class time, and handle classroom dynamics, interactions, and problematic situations (e.g., academic dishonesty, tardiness, etc.) appropriately.
                   e) **Evaluation of students** – Effective teachers design assessment procedures appropriate to course objectives, ensure fairness in student evaluation and grading, and provide constructive feedback on student work.
                   f) **Faculty/student relationships** – Effective teachers display a positive attitude toward students, show concern for students by being approachable and available, present an appropriate level of intellectual challenge, sufficient support for student learning, and respect diversity.

g) **Facilitation of student learning** – Effective teachers maintain high academic standards, prepare students for professional work and development, facilitate student achievement, and provide audiences for student work.

2. **Methods of evaluation** (and approximate weighting)

a) **Evaluation of teaching materials** (40%). In all evaluation processes reviewers should be presented with a substantive and representative set of teaching materials, including syllabi, tests and examinations, assignments and projects, class activities, etc. [Describe specific departmental expectations with regard to presentation of teaching materials. More detail may be provided in the appropriate appendix]

b) **Direct peer observation** (20%). [Describe departmental policies and procedures for peer observation of teaching, including methods related to part-time and fixed-term faculty. More detail may be provided in the appropriate appendix]

c) **Self-evaluation** (20%). Self-evaluation of teaching, using the 7 dimensions of effective teaching, is a component of all evaluation processes. [Describe departmental practices for self-evaluation. More detail may be provided in the appropriate appendix.]

d) **Student perceptions** (20%). **All sections of all courses taught by untenured faculty will include SAIs. These will include a form of the university-wide SAI instrument.** [Include additional departmental policies and procedures related to SAI, particularly as they related to tenured faculty. More detail may be provided in the appropriate appendix.]

3. **General comments** –

   [*Include any departmental expectations regarding Professional Development in teaching.*]

B. **Scholarship**

1. **WCU recognizes as legitimate forms of scholarly activity the 4 types described by Boyer. Specific departmental perspectives on these categories, relative valuations of various forms of scholarly activity, and department-specific examples of each, are described below.**

   [*Department should provide 2-3 representative examples of each type of scholarship that would be deemed acceptable.*]

a) **Scholarship of discovery** – Original research that advances knowledge.
   1) Published outcomes
       i. [*example*]
       ii. [*example*]
       iii. [*example*]
   2) Unpublished outcomes
       i. [*example*]
       ii. [*example*]
       iii. [*example*]

b) **Scholarship of integration** – Synthesis of information across disciplines, across topics, or across time.
   1) Published outcomes

      i. [*example*]
      ii. [*example*]
      iii. [*example*]
    2) Unpublished outcomes
      i. [*example*]
      ii. [*example*]
      iii. [*example*]

  c) **Scholarship of application** – Application of disciplinary expertise with results that can be shared with and/or evaluated by peers.
    1) Published outcomes
      i. [*example*]
      ii. [*example*]
      iii. [*example*]
    2) Unpublished outcomes
      i. [*example*]
      ii. [*example*]
      iii. [*example*]

  d) **Scholarship of teaching and learning** – Systematic study of teaching and learning processes.
    1) Published outcomes
      i. [*example*]
      ii. [*example*]
      iii. [*example*]
    2) Unpublished outcomes
      i. [*example*]
      ii. [*example*]
      iii. [*example*]

2. **Methods of evaluation** – Representative samples of scholarly works will be examined, with consideration to issues such as peer review, acceptance rate of outlet, visibility, citation index data, impact on field.

3. **General comments** – [*Describe departmental philosophy on the Boyer types, with relative weighting. Consider how grant proposals and awards are counted in this section. Include any departmental expectations regarding Professional Development in scholarship.*]

C. **Service/Engagement**

 1. **Types of service/engagement:**

  a) **Advising –** being informed about curriculum and related processes, availability to advisees, assistance with academic and career planning (includes thesis/dissertation advising as well as advising student professional organizations)

  b) **Community engagement**

  c) **Institutional service** (e.g., committees, recruiting students, mentoring new faculty, serving as advisor to student organizations, etc.)

  d) **Special expertise, unusual time commitments, or exceptional leadership** (includes service in professional organizations, work on accreditation documents, etc.)

 2. **Methods of evaluation -**

 3. **General comments** –

  [*Include any departmental expectations regarding Professional Development in service/engagement.*]

III.   **Criteria** – The criteria specific to each form of review and each type of promotion are described in detail below.
  A. Annual Faculty Evaluation:
    1. **Teaching** -
    2. **Scholarship** -
    3. **Service/Engagement** -
  B. Reappointment:
    1. **Teaching** -
    2. **Scholarship** -
    3. **Service/Engagement** -
  C. Tenure
    1. **Teaching** -
    2. **Scholarship** -
    3. **Service/Engagement** -
  D. Promotion to Associate Professor
    1. **Teaching** -
    2. **Scholarship** -
    3. **Service/Engagement** -
  E. Promotion to Full Professor
    1. **Teaching** -
    2. **Scholarship** -
    3. **Service/Engagement** -
  F. Post-Tenure Review
    1. **Teaching** -
    2. **Scholarship** -
    3. **Service/Engagement** –

Appendices
A.   Composition of Collegial Review Committees
B.   Specific procedures and dossier guidelines for AFE for part-time teaching faculty:
C.   Specific procedures and dossier guidelines for AFE for full-time faculty
D.   Specific procedures for Reappointment
E.   Specific procedures for Tenure
F.   Specific procedures for Promotion
G.   Specific procedures and dossier guidelines for Post-tenure review

Appendix A. Composition of Collegial Review Committees

    I.   **Departmental**
        a. AFE – [*Describe composition and function of departmental AFE committee or equivalent.*]
        b. TPR - The departmental TPR Advisory Committee shall be chaired by the department head (non-voting) and shall be composed of up to six tenured faculty members elected annually by the department's full-time faculty. In the event that we have six or fewer tenured faculty, the committee shall be composed of the department head and tenured faculty, providing that the resultant committee shall consist of at least three members, exclusive of the department head. In the event that there are less than three tenured faculty, the Provost, in consultation with the department and dean, selects tenured faculty from similar departments to constitute a committee of at least three.
        c. PTR - The departmental PTR Advisory Committee shall be chaired by the department head (non-voting) and shall be composed of up to six tenured faculty members, excluding any faculty members scheduled for Post-Tenure Review during the current academic year, elected annually by the department's full-time faculty. In the event that we have six or fewer tenured faculty, the committee shall be composed of the department head and tenured faculty, providing that the resultant committee shall consist of at least three members, exclusive of the department head. In the event that there are less than three tenured faculty, the Provost, in consultation with the department and dean, selects tenured faculty from similar departments to constitute a committee of at least three.

    II.   **College** – The College of Education and Allied Professions TPR Advisory Committee shall be chaired by the dean (non-voting) and shall be composed of 10 tenured, full-time faculty members of the college, half elected (one per department) and half appointed by the dean. Each shall serve a 3-year staggered term, with no limit on succession.

    III.   **University** - The university TPR Advisory Committee shall consist of the Provost as chair (non-voting); the Dean of the Graduate School, one tenured faculty member elected from each college by the faculty of that college, one tenured member elected by the faculty of the university library, and tenured faculty members appointed by the Provost equal to the number of elected faculty members on the committee. Each shall serve a 3-year staggered term with no limit on succession.

Appendix B: Sample Point/Unit System

Category A - two units:
o First authorship of an article in journal that is widely recognized as having high status within the discipline (e.g. *IEEE Transactions*)
o Authorship of the first edition of a textbook or a scholarly treatise
o Editorship of an edited book
o Granted patent with strategic or application value
o A successful external grant proposal that transformationally supports departmental goals

Category B - one unit:
o First authorship of an article in a scholarly journal within the discipline or second authorship in a journal that is widely recognized as having high status within the discipline (e.g. IEEE Transactions)
o First or second authorship in conference proceedings (e.g. ASEE, IJME, IEEE)
o An invited address at a conference
o An invited journal paper
o An engagement activity having met all criteria required by the Kimmel School Engagement Committee to be approved as "scholarship"
o A chapter in an edited book
o A patent application
o A successful external grant proposal incrementally supporting departmental goals

Category C - one-half unit:
o A scholarly book review
o Presentation at a professional conference (no proceedings)
o Other than first or second authorship in conference proceedings (e.g. ASEE, IJME, IEEE)
o A successful internal research grant proposal supporting departmental goals
o Poster at a professional conference
o NCUR sponsorship
o Submission of an unsuccessful but significant external grant proposal as a Principal Investigator (PI) supporting departmental goals

One Size Does Not Fit All: A Look into Three Distinctly Different Faculty Centers

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Abstract

This article will examine three distinctively different sizes and types of Faculty Centers: a large Research-intensive institution, a medium sized Comprehensive Public University and a small Private Institution. Brief backgrounds and missions of each center will be shared, followed by commonalities and differences in Centers' programs due to their specific audiences. A comparison of the Centers' activities and development opportunities will be discussed. Recommendations which could be generalized to other settings will be presented for ten different attributes common to all Centers as well as associated strategies which might lend themselves more to a particular type of institution.

Introduction

Sorcinelli et. al. (2004) outlined the evolution and future of faculty development as the Age of the Scholar, Teacher, Developer, Learner; and now of the Network. The key elements in the current Age of Network are transforming, scholarship, diversity, leadership, and the environment. Other factors for success include ownership, administrative support, sustained activities, and faculty involvement. There are many common themes, challenges, and successes amongst faculty developers regardless of location, type of institution, resources, mission, etc. However, just as there are Carnegie classifications for universities, there would also seem to be differences in how faculty development is pursued in different environments. Historically, faculty development organizations in higher education began in 1974 with the Professional and Organizational Development (POD) followed by the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE) in 1981, and programs offered by the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) beginning in1990. Regional programs such as the Southern Regional Faculty and Instructional Development Consortium (SRFIDC) were developed in 1991, and later, local/state organizations were founded, including the Florida Faculty Development Consortium (FFDC) which began in 2005. These organizations provided developers, many of whom were often the only developer on a campus, the chance to step out of their institutions to collaborate, share, and meet with others with similar goals.

Ubiquitous among Centers is the literature frequently cited, including: Scholarship Reconsidered (Boyer, 1990); Understanding by Design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2004); Tools for Teaching (Davis, 1993); Handbook for Classroom Instruction (Marzano, et. al., 2001); Teaching with Your Mouth Shut (Finkel, 2000); Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, and Theory for College and University Teachers (Mckeachie, 2005); and What the Best College Teachers Do (Bain, 2004). These literature sets are commonly provided to newly hired faculty and kept on hand to assist faculty in redesigning their courses.

The scholarship on faculty development has significantly increased over the past decade. Historic perspectives of faculty development have been interpreted in many ways as described throughout the literature, which address instructional, professional and organizational development, as well as career and personal development (Nelson, 1983; Riegle, 1987). Sabbatical leaves have long been considered a part of faculty development as well as a multitude of funding opportunities for workshops, seminars, week-long events and summer teaching and research grants.

Along with professional societies and literature on development, faculty development workshops, which range in duration, content, approach and philosophy, attempt to provide an efficient (although possibly ineffective) method for transferring information to faculty who wish to enhance their teaching and student learning. Each center develops its own unique philosophy and mission to address faculty needs, typically by using a combination of what has worked in the past for other centers while continuing to try and understand the specifics of their faculty needs and institutional goals. This may differ considerably from a large research institution to a small, private university.

Three Types of Institutions and Center Missions

Public Research University

The research university examined is a large institution (50,000) in the southeast United States which focuses on teaching and research with a diverse body of both full-time and part-time students, many who participate through distributed learning. The institution has undergone rapid growth from 1000 students when it was established in 1963 to now over 50,000. Approximately 20% of the 50,000 students reside in on-campus or affiliated campus housing. The university currently offers 140 Baccalaureate programs; 97 Master's programs and 28 Doctoral programs with about 1,200 full time faculty members and 400 part time faculty members.

The institution has colleges of Arts & Humanities, Biomedical Science, Business Administration, Education, Engineering & Computer Science, Health & Public Affairs, Nursing, Optics and Photonics, Hospitality Management, and Sciences and a newly approved College of Medicine, which will open its doors to a first cohort of students in 2009.

The Faculty Teaching and Learning Center (FTLC) was established in 1999. The FTLC's mission is to support and promote faculty in their roles as teachers, researchers, scholars, and as members of the university and the community. Essential to such support is the enhancement of faculty success at any career stage and the promotion of collegiality. The services, resources, and events offered through the faculty center are available to all university instructors, including full- and part-time faculty, and graduate teaching assistants. The faculty and staff of the faculty center seek to promote and support 1) excellence in teaching and learning, 2) successful research and creative endeavors, 3) professional fulfillment, and 4) partnerships with other academic institutions and the regional, national, and international community.

Public Comprehensive University

The medium sized (16,000 students) comprehensive university which is classified as a Master's level institution with a few doctoral programs is also located in the southeastern part of the United States. The institution houses about 2000 of its students in on-campus housing; the remainder are commuter students. The university was started in 1972 and at that time offered only upper level undergraduate courses. There are 550 full time faculty members in five different colleges of Health, Arts and Science, Business, Education and Human Services, and Computing, Engineering and Construction. Currently, 50 undergraduate degrees and 26 graduate degrees are offered. The primary focus is on instruction, with scholarship and community involvement playing vital roles.

The Faculty Teaching Enhancement Center opened in 2000. Its mission is to support all faculty members in teaching, research, and service, and to facilitate growth of a university

culture that champions innovation, the use of technology, cooperation, and ongoing professional development and research.

Private Teaching University

The small private teaching university is located in the northwestern United States, with approximately 6,000 students, practically all of whom reside in on- or near-campus housing. The institution was chartered in 1851and offers 65 undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree programs in nine colleges including Arts and Science, International Studies, Engineering and Computer Science, Education, Music, Business, Pharmacy and Health Science, Law and Dentistry. The Law and Dentistry programs are housed in cities about one hour from the main campus. There are 375 full time faculty members.

The Faculty Teaching Excellence Center began in 2005. The center's mission is to support the pursuit of excellence in teaching and learning. The center faculty and staff provide services and resources to assist faculty in becoming more effective, active teachers and scholars, subsequently enabling students to become more engaged stakeholders in the construction of their conceptual process.

Faculty Development in a Nutshell

Assisting faculty members in their pursuit of excellence has most likely been around since the first university was established, but formally, faculty development centers are relatively new to the academe. The intent of this article is not to be all-inclusive, either in types of centers or the full possibilities of development opportunities, however, some of the more common approaches to faculty development will be shared to build a context for subsequent differentiations cited for each of the three types of universities explored. Therefore the data is presented to assist faculty developers in a variety of institution type and not meant to be used as broad generalizations.

Faculty centers primarily focus on assisting faculty members with improving their teaching, although many also assist in scholarship endeavors (for example, assessment, statistical analysis, and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning) and service obligations such as organizing online course management sites and grant support. Traditional faculty development centers offer a variety of workshops, seminars, and demonstrations to showcase effective models of teaching and active learning strategies. In addition, centers may organize internal and external speakers, support Faculty Fellows programs, offer internal conferences, and finance faculty travel to teaching conferences. Additionally, centers may provide teaching, promotion and tenure resources, offer confidential classroom observations and graduate teaching workshops. A major role of most centers is to organize and mentor newly hired faculty members.

Some centers offer assistance in instructional technology, in the form of discussion, hands-on training, and equipment loans where resources are available.

Analysis of Common Programs Offered

There are commonalities between faculty development centers, as well as differences in centers' goals. Originally, the authors considered tabulating the differences between institutions gathered through observations, working at various institutions, informal surveys and reviewing websites. While this is a clean method of putting the information together, it ultimately leaned too much toward categorization that was efficient, but not effective. Therefore, an approach to avoid an overly reductionist format resulted in the following narrative, which shares the strengths and challenges of each center type.

Workshops, presentations, seminars, and demonstrations

All three center types provide broad, universal, and generic information on pedagogical methods. The Research Intensive institution focused on pedagogical best practices and

discipline specific scholarship, experimental design and statistical analysis; whereas the comprehensive institution tended to provide an on-going connection between new best practices and collaboration; and private schools assisted in leading and developing best practices in teaching. Challenges in this area for all institutions include low attendance and participation. Large institutions found it difficult to convince faculty that the center can offer topics which would both interest and assist them. Comprehensive challenges included making the connections between what the workshop offered and how it related to teaching, as well as providing low threshold applications, that the faculty could take and use immediately. Private schools struggled to provide high quality, pertinent topics, which faculty were not already using.

Classroom Observations

All centers used faculty initiated, confidential classroom observations to increase insightful, reflective metacognition, which can transfer directly into instructional modifications. Large institutions used this practice to change instructors' ways of thinking and organizing concepts for teaching, which enhanced how research is aligned with classroom events. Mid-sized and smaller schools used these to address on-going continuous improvement for innovative teaching strategies, reflection and modification of practices. The major challenge for all faculty members was the potential risk of opening up their classrooms to others. Convincing faculty of the intent, which was to observe and collect data for non-evaluative purposes, was also challenging.

Faculty Fellows

For all institutions, Faculty Fellows are faculty who are selected by a competitive process and asked to provide a dedicated service of expertise to the center. They can provide universal buy-in, broad scope applications, and a varied and ever-growing breadth of expertise. In research institutes, Fellows can guide and lead discipline-specific initiatives, which can

empower traditional researchers to spend their time efficiently on improving their teaching. In comprehensive schools Fellows can enhance an ever-present group of faculty who can operate in both pedagogical mode and scholarship to learn and share their findings. The challenges for all include a lack of funds and identifying viable, interested faculty as well as developing a useful, global product for sharing with others. In addition, for schools that focus on teaching, it can be a challenge to identify faculty who can share their methods in a broad, generic way to the greater university community.

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning uses discovery, reflection, and evidence-based methods to research effective teaching and student learning. For all schools, SoTL preparation facilitates the organized application of innovative teaching methods and subsequent data gathering for analysis and dissemination to determine effectiveness. For comprehensive schools, SoTL aligns well with missions typical for this type of institution, thereby will most likely be valued and rewarded as a form of scholarship. For small schools, SoTL is an essential component of a successful instructor and will be highly valued in the process of promotion and tenure. The challenges for all schools include the amount of time this type of research requires and the perceived lack of institutional value as compared to discipline specific research. For mid-size institutions, SoTL is commonly misunderstood and therefore, may not be valued, rewarded or recognized in tenure and promotion. This was found to be discipline specific. SoTL is useful to faculty as research opportunities as it is quantifiable and rigorous; to increases awareness on teaching and learning; and for evidence of effective teaching for tenure and promotion. Types of SoTL include pre/post-assessment, essays developing innovative methods, summaries of self-reflection, integration of larger frameworks within curriculum, qualitative studies, and meta-analyses. Topics can include active learning, assessment (rubrics), cooperative learning, general education, undergraduate research, and technology.

Promotion and Tenure Events

These events are very popular for everyone and are critical for development, growth and institutional stability. The events are essential for connecting decision-makers with stakeholders. The challenges include an innate aspect of human concern of the unknown, and a potential traditional fear of "publish or perish". Also, there is a universal uncertainty of potentially moving guidelines to secure promotion and tenure.

Active Learning Methodology

In every institution, active learning connects theoretical to applied learning and capitalizes on the efficiency of an information processing model. For large schools, undergraduate research and project based learning implemented as active learning components were examples of faculty engaging students early in a potential career in scholarship. Mid-sized schools integrate active techniques with project-based research to enable students to participate in a holistic discovery of knowledge and understanding in the application process. Smaller schools provide engaging, contextual learning environments and activities which attend to student-centric philosophy. The challenges for all include the time required and the ability to change teaching style. For large schools, often, faculty members have learned one type of pedagogy as a doctoral candidate and do not currently have the time or motivation to update their approach. At all schools, frequently faculty members are aware of effective teaching practices, but there may be a perception that changing strategies could reduce student course evaluation scores.

Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)

For all institutions, events assisting GTAs were designed to prepare them for future careers in higher education. In research institutes, these events are essential for students whose goals are to work in a research environment and to assist in developing and

understanding their teaching philosophy. In a comprehensive institution, this is a critical time in

a students' career to assist in understanding how research and teaching are closely aligned and

can work in concert. The challenges for all include training, acculturation, mentoring and

breaking the cycle. Comprehensives frequently only have a few GTAs and may wish to focus

their roles on administrative efforts. Small schools may not have a significant role since many

smaller private institutions doe not employ GTAs.

Teaching and Learning Library

Every institution can provide specific teaching-centered resources that offer unique,

specific literature for teaching, learning, and scholarship. Large schools can offer dedicated,

resources to assist faculty who may not have precious exposure to teaching methods and

provide a space for discussion of teaching strategies and support. For comprehensives, this

provides an ideal place for faculty to frequently visit to keep current, share ideas and collaborate

with colleagues. The challenges for everyone include finding the funds and identifying the

market and usability of these resources. For comprehensive schools, it may be a challenge to

provide the specific type of resources which they can efficiently read and implement. For small

schools, many of the faculty may be on the leading edge pushing the envelope on teaching and

learning, hence the best practices may not be sufficient or current.

Instructional Technology (IT)

This issue has become more and more significant for each type of institution. IT may

provide unique possibilities to enhance various learning styles and access some students in

their own learning environments. For large schools, IT can increase efficiency, and provide a

dynamic and interactive method for distribution of research models online for teaching,

research, review and input. Comprehensive schools can create an ideal environment to explore

for aligning teaching and learning styles, offering multiple modes of learning and investigating

research in the area of educational technologies. For small schools, IT enables student-centered teaching to go beyond the classroom into asynchronous communication and interaction as well as offering mobile and social learning. The challenge for all includes the need to embrace change, identifying the funds, ensuring appropriate maintenance and training, as well as encouraging a positive attitude and aptitude for technology use. In addition, all schools struggle with finding the time to learn successful methods for integrating technology into their teaching as well as identifying a systematic, sustainable way to institutionalize the Instructional Technology.

Non-academic events

These types of events can build collegiality, collaboration, and provide a venue for faculty to more fully enjoy their academic life. In addition they provide a broad arena for discussions between disciplines, which enables integration of content for general education, seminars, etc. The challenge for everyone is determining if the time invested is worthy and valued. Some schools may see the benefits and participate, but also, may not be able to fully connect and capitalize on these experiences to successfully integrate into their teaching and research.

Connecting Thoughts and Conclusions

The concept of tailoring faculty development needs to one's institution, typically through an ongoing faculty needs assessment, is commonplace in most centers. The struggle is to assess the effectiveness of the interventions and opportunities to influence changing faculty activity in the classroom setting. However, the intention of this paper was to gather baseline development practices and share the strengths and challenges of each in hopes of assisting in cross-over possibilities from one institutional type to another, as well as highlight awareness of the different approaches. In addition, this compilation can act as a guide to assist or confirm the

types of programs which centers provide, and may help them be proactive as they develop similar programs to maximize the potential for success. The authors encourage those in the Faculty Development profession to become part of state, regional and national level organizations to meet those at similar and different institutions and share ideas on effective strategies. Bring speakers in that have expertise in the areas in which the institution would like to develop and adapt materials for faculty and institutional use. Overall, using the information in this paper to develop a way to configure and assess faculty development in a systematic, measurable - formative and summative - process that addresses the university mission is encouraged.

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Integrating SOTL into Instructional and Institutional Processes

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Abstract

The benefits of SOTL for individual faculty members are significant. Unfortunately, the issue of how it can benefit an institution is often not so clear. For SOTL to be valued and supported by postsecondary institutions, it needs to be purposely linked into the research and teaching mission of the institution. This paper shares successful approaches for integrating SOTL in instructional and institutional processes. SOTL's focus on supporting and refining scholarly inquiry can broaden the scope for improving student learning outcomes from individual classes to improving outcomes across the institution. This expanded role matches faculty, department, and institutional needs.

Introduction

While many faculty have made SOTL work central to their professional lives, many postsecondary institutions are still asking what it is, what can be done with it, and how they can measure and evaluate it as part of faculty workloads. As Eileen Bender (2005) suggests, while faculty report being engaged and energized by SOTL, they are less positive about their institution's acceptance of SOTL as legitimate scholarship. Mike Theall (2006) comes to a similar conclusion in his review of O'Meara and Rice's *Faculty Priorities Reconsidered*. In assessing the state of institutional efforts to integrate SOTL work, Theall calls for reconceptualizing the professoriate in tandem with SOTL programs that "address relevant local issues, focus on learning, …[and] target improved campus policies and processes for assessment and for faculty development and evaluation" (p. 928).

As Bender and Theall suggest, campus SOTL initiatives need to promote educational reform on three different levels: 1) assisting faculty in evaluating, improving, and deepening their students' learning, 2) building campus communities that support and refine inquiry into student learning, and 3) challenging institutional attitudes and policies about teaching. Viewing SOTL work in this way broadens the scope for improving student learning outcomes from individual classes to improving outcomes across programs, curricular areas, departments, and different colleges. In this article we highlight how SOTL has become successfully integrated into these three levels of our campus culture.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Peer Review of Teaching Project

SOTL work cannot be done in isolation on a campus, but rather needs to be purposely linked into the research and teaching mission of a particular institution. Such is the case for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln is a land grant, Ph.D. granting Carnegie classified High-Intensive Research Institution. UNL defines its tripartite

mission of teaching, research, and outreach as foundationally organized around a shared

commitment to inquiry:

> Each of the functions of a great public land grant research university–teaching, research
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> and scholarship, and outreach–is organized around a shared commitment to inquiry and
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> the communication of the knowledge resulting from that inquiry. (UNL Blue Sky Report,
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> 2003)

This commitment to inquiry is an organizing principle for UNL's Peer Review of Teaching Project

(PRTP), a project that sponsors faculty SOTL inquiry.

Started in 1994, the PRTP is a campus faculty development program that introduces

faculty to SOTL by supporting them in making visible the serious intellectual work of their

teaching (Bernstein, Burnett, Goodburn, & Savory, 2006). From 1994 to 2004, the project was

supported from external research grants (FIPSE, Pew Charitable Trust) along with matching

assistance from the university. Huber (2004) provides a detailed description of the project's

history. Since 2004, the project has been completely funded by our institution through the office

of the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (i.e., Provost).

The PRTP supports faculty in a year-long program in which they document student

learning in a target course and then create an electronic course portfolio showcasing their

inquiry. A course portfolio is a reflective investigation of how the course structures, teaching

techniques, and assessment strategies enhance or detract from student learning. It provides a

window into what occurred during the course, highlights what worked and what did not, and

showcases the student learning that resulted. Over the year, faculty meet as a group and in

small teams to discuss literature about teaching and the assessment of learning, to write about

one of their courses, and to develop and share their course portfolios. Creating a portfolio for

documenting their teaching is often a faculty member's first exposure to SOTL. Underlying our

project is Michael Reder's (2007) conception of teaching "as a collaborative practice (something

done within a larger community that is open to discussion) and a critical practice (something

shared with an eye toward discovery, integration, refinement, and improvement)" (p. 11).

In the past seven years, 170 UNL faculty members from 44 different academic units and

8 different colleges have participated in our year-long program. Their course portfolios, along

with those from other schools, are archived on our project website:

http://www.courseportfolio.org. Participation in the year-long project is voluntary and there is

often a waiting list each year. Typically half of the participants are pre-tenure faculty.

Drawing upon Randy Bass's (1999) notion of viewing one's teaching as "a set of

problems worth pursuing as an ongoing intellectual focus," many UNL faculty want to continue

their classroom inquiry after their first year. Through an advanced program, the PRTP supports

interested faculty in developing more formal inquiries into their teaching and exploring

opportunities for sharing their work in public ways (Savory, Burnett, Goodburn, 2007). During

the past seven years, project participants have developed two book chapters, eleven journal

articles, and fifty-four conference presentations, workshops, or poster sessions based on their

work in the PRTP. Faculty welcome these opportunities to be more scholarly in their teaching

and support campus efforts around it.

The story of how the PRTP has become integrated into the fabric of UNL illustrates the

need for SOTL initiatives to be responsive and flexible to the institution's needs. In 2002, UNL's

teaching and learning center was discontinued after a round of budget cuts. This closure was

viewed by many faculty as the death knell for teaching on campus. Surprisingly, that has not

been the case. While the demise of the Teaching and Learning Center certainly left a void,

particularly for faculty who desire one-on-one consultations regarding particular teaching

concerns, the PRTP has helped to fill an important niche. The PRTP does not offer all of the

functions that a teaching center typically performs, but the project's SOTL focus provides a

valuable means for faculty to explore, reflect upon, and document how their course objectives,

their teaching practices, and learning approaches impact student learning. In the remainder of

this paper, we discuss how SoTL inquiry supported by the PRTP has become integrated into campus instructional and institutional processes.

Using SOTL for Faculty Development

One of the primary goals of the PRTP is to help faculty develop a vocabulary and methods of inquiry around teaching for improved student learning. In this respect, the PRTP focuses on formative teaching development, providing opportunities for faculty to carefully reflect upon their teaching and, in some cases, to sponsor a new understanding for how the intellectual work entailed in teaching can be made visible. The PRTP is not viewed as a remedial program to "fix" problem teachers, but rather as a scholarly activity to learn better approaches for documenting the intellectual effort one puts into designing and teaching a course. This approach to SOTL often invites faculty to develop a sense of ownership and engagement around their teaching. For instance, in responding to a question about how the PRTP challenged or extended ideas about teaching and students' learning, a faculty member from Communications comments:

> Learning about the scholarship of teaching and learning has opened my eyes to a new approach to instruction. I am now much more systematic in the design of course objectives and activities. More importantly, I feel more confident in my assessment techniques and therefore I am able to more accurately assess student outcomes and make appropriate changes. One of the best results of being involved in this program is that it gets me excited and engaged in my courses, which obviously spills over into the classroom. J. Soliz (PRTP impact survey, 2009).

In the process of writing about their students' learning, faculty often make discoveries about their teaching that cycle back into course design and curricular revision. In talking about the project, a faculty member in Special Education and Communication Disorders describes her experience in this way:

Through my participation, I was amazed and embarrassed to discover that I had course

objectives I never taught, I had course objectives I taught but never assessed, I had

course objectives I assessed and never taught, and I had material I taught and assessed

but never listed as a course objective. By reorganizing the goals of my course,

developing rubrics for evaluating student work, and assessing my classroom activities, I

now have a focused approach for linking my teaching to my students' learning. C.

Marvin (PRTP impact survey, 2004).

These faculty members' formative reflections about their teaching often lead to more summative

purposes for their work. For example, faculty have used their course portfolios in support of

teaching award applications, teaching portfolios, annual reviews, and promotion and tenure

files. Initially course portfolios were viewed with indifference by committees and administrators,

but over time, as a large cohort of faculty have continued to develop them, they are now

welcome and have become more integrated into institutional structures. For example, UNL's

College of Arts and Sciences revised its bylaws to include course portfolios as an optional

element in documenting teaching performance. Faculty seeking promotion from associate to full

professor on the basis of teaching have had their course portfolios externally reviewed by peers

at other institutions as a measure of their teaching effectiveness. In this respect, SOTL inquiry

that emphasizes individual faculty development has begun to make inroads in how faculty

document and make visible their work for institutional moments of review and evaluation.

Using SOTL for Program Development

The benefits of SOTL on individual faculty members are often apparent. But SOTL work

can also benefit a department or program. By asking faculty to reflect upon and analyze their

teaching practices in a systematic and structured manner, the PRTP provides a mechanism for

starting interdisciplinary and interdepartmental campus conversations about program goals,

course prerequisites, and linkages between courses. As Dan Bernstein and Randy Bass (2005) describe,

> [T]he process encourages development of a community of teachers inquiring into the success of their students. These communities function like informal groups of scholars who discuss the early stages of their research and creative efforts; participants receive intellectual commentary and social support (p. 39).

This type of discussion is both deliberate and spontaneous. When the PRTP was originally structured, participants were comprised of faculty from department teams. This approach sponsored intense discussions for the department teams, often focusing their inquiry around department majors or sequences of courses. For example, a faculty team from Political Science documented student learning in some of the core courses in the major, including lower-division courses that met the university's general educational goals. The resulting conversations allowed them to learn about each other's student performance, learn how their students' work compared, and to explore raising their expectations for these courses. Similarly, a team of four English Department faculty used their course portfolios to assess curricular connections across a new English major concentration. And a team of four faculty from Visual Literacy (a multi-disciplinary program) used their course portfolios to analyze connections in their sequenced 8-week course rotation and to revise course projects.

While successful, the department team approach for SOTL also posed challenges for faculty who wanted to join the PRTP but who couldn't persuade department colleagues to participate, particularly if they were the only ones in their department to teach in a specific area. To be responsive to these faculty, the PRTP evolved, first soliciting faculty partners to participate and then eventually opening the project to any individual faculty member who wanted to apply. Similar to how Cotton (2006) at the University of Plymouth found a need for staff from diverse disciplines to forge a link for teaching and learning, a positive by-product of this change was increased faculty collaboration across departments and programs. Faculty often found

connections across their teaching that could never have been anticipated. For instance, a group of faculty who teach large lecture courses in psychology, accounting, and management, studied how to develop multiple-choice exams that required application of theory and knowledge rather than rote memorization. A team of four distance education instructors (each teaching an internet-based course) focused their participation on exploring the technology, their approaches for teaching, and their means for measuring student learning in a distance education environment. In a conversation about how the PRTP promotes discussions about teaching, a faculty member from Industrial Engineering described the value of cross-collaborative inquiry into teaching in this way:

> …I was surprised to realize that the focused discussions with other project participants have had the biggest impact on me. Whether one is teaching a large lecture in engineering, economics, or psychology, there are similar teaching and student learning issues in terms of classroom management, presentation of materials, and student assessment. Due to the nature of the project, we were able to share our issues, offer suggestions, and explore best practices among academic disciplines that would rarely interact. S. Hallbeck (PRTP impact survey, 2007)

Beyond focusing on improved student learning within their own particular courses, these cross-college collaborations have helped faculty to gain broader understandings of what students face in UNL's overall university curriculum. One former project participant from English summarizes the project's impact on her teaching in this way:

> Thanks to the PRTP, I've been thinking a LOT about what would be compelling to others on campus as solid evidence of my students' learning. Not so much because I'm preoccupied with "proving to others who don't get it" that my students learn—but because the PRTP reminded me in really productive way that I am part of a cross-campus community of teachers who are dedicated to student learning. My peers in PRTP reminded me of how high the bar can productively be for our students as they

move across campus. It sent me back to my classroom re-engaged in a way I hadn't

expected. D. Minter (PRTP impact survey, 2009).

In addition to supporting conversations, SOTL work has also helped to address

programmatic and assessment needs that departments face on our campus. Many institutions

conduct periodic examinations, or "academic program reviews" of their academic units,

departments, or programs. Similarly, many programs seek external accreditation and renewal.

Each review involves an enormous amount of time as unit members gather evidence and

organize it for local and outside reviewers. Faculty members and unit leaders spend

considerable time reflecting on the evidence and learning from it, and while that time is often

seen as well spent, the time and energy devoted to gathering and organizing data is rarely

perceived to be inherently valuable.

At UNL, several departments have used PRTP course portfolios to aid these

assessment moments. A systematic presentation of the materials found in course portfolios

(and other SOTL documents) provides a ready source of information about student learning for

a unit. The Construction Management Department used course portfolios developed by five of

their faculty to document program outcomes for an accreditation visit. Similarly, the accreditation

coordinator for the College of Journalism and Mass communication describes how the college

will use faculty members' SOTL work in their upcoming assessment:

Assessment is a new accrediting standard set forth by the Accrediting Council on

Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. Over the past five years, eight

journalism faculty members have produced 14 course portfolios as fellows of the Peer

Review of Teaching Project and three more are completing portfolios this year. The

course portfolios are an important component of our college's assessment at the course

level and have provided evidence of student learning that was used to improve the

curriculum. F. Hachtmann (personal communication, 2009).

When a unit routinely keeps course portfolios from strategically identified courses, analyzing and assessing the overall state of learning in the unit is much simpler. The reporting for the teaching part of the review is also simplified, since faculty and leaders of the unit have already identified where student learning is strongest and where student learning might be increased through enhanced efforts. In this way, SOTL inquiry has become integrated within departmental and programmatic units on our campus.

Using SOTL for institutional development

Similar to how Huber and Hutchings (2005) define the role of the "teaching commons", beyond assessment at a department level, SOTL work can have a powerful impact on the institution. Key outcomes of the PRTP have been to develop a group of faculty who have a common language and vocabulary about how to discuss the intellectual work of the scholarship of teaching, who are better able to assess teaching, and who can create and advocate campus teaching policies. A faculty member from Art and Art History summarizes the impact of her participation in this way:

> By participating in Peer Review I am part of a community of teachers and scholars who are committed to teaching excellence and who generously share their experiences and their expertise. Peer Review makes teaching a rigorously intellectual and yet intensely practical and immensely satisfying activity. It helps me counter isolation and prevent burn-out and it gives me the tools and courage I need to take a critical look at my teaching and my students' learning. Ingraham (PRTP impact survey, 2009)

The impact of this community is evident on campus committees and in campus leadership through their demands for higher quality documentation for campus award applications and promotion and tenure files.

Similar to how SOTL work can aid a department in a program review, it also can aid in the accreditation of the institution. As Bender (2005) suggests:

> The regional accreditation agencies are increasingly insisting that every institution
>
> seeking accreditation demonstrate its effectiveness by gathering, analyzing, and
>
> disseminating evidence of student learning outcomes. In coming years, the very
>
> institutions now inclined to marginalize SOTL may well support it as a powerful tool for
>
> such assessment (p. 49)**.**

As part of UNL's recent accreditation review by the Higher Learning Commission, the

university created a virtual resource room where many of the PRTP's course portfolios

were highlighted.

SOTL work has shaped other university initiatives as well. Recently UNL passed a

comprehensive reform of its general education program titled Achievement Centered Education

(ACE). This program requires students to take ten learning outcomes-based courses and for

departments to collect and analyze student work on these outcomes for institutional

assessment. The PRTP's influence on this reform effort is quite visible—various ACE structures

for documenting teaching and learning are based upon PRTP guidelines and many of the

faculty members responsible for developing ACE course proposals are former PRTP

participants. In future years, the PRTP will recruit faculty members teaching ACE courses to

further support the institution's goals in assessing the student learning outcomes.

Beyond supporting curricular efforts, SOTL can play an important role in helping

institutions obtain external research funding. Initially some may say that this statement is

counterintuitive. After all, many faculty are initially hesitant to engage in SOTL work because

they feel that time spent on classroom inquiry is time not spent on their disciplinary research. It

has been found, however, that helping faculty to better define, reflect upon, and document

students learning makes them more effective in terms of developing grants and the subsequent

education plans that are often a part of them. For example, the National Science Foundation

sponsors the CAREER grant. A key component of this grant is an educational plan for sharing

the resulting disciplinary research work with students. Due to the competitiveness of this grant,

the quality of the educational component of the proposal is often what distinguishes which grants are funded and which are not. Former PRTP participants have received over $1.8 million in external grants for funding disciplinary research. These faculty attribute their project participation for helping them develop the pedagogical skills and assessment strategies central to securing these grants. In this way, SOTL inquiry has furthered, rather than thwarted, external funding opportunities for our campus.

Finally, we have seen the PRTP's impact on how our campus structures and rewards teaching. UNL recently announced a named professorship in teaching to recognize sustained and extraordinary levels of teaching excellence. This professorship for teaching excellence is commensurate in stipend and recognition with professorships traditionally given for outstanding research records. As part of the submission process for this professorship, faculty are required to submit course portfolios and have external review letters about their teaching. Also in 2008, the university formalized a new type of academic position–professors of practice–which are renewable non-tenure track lines that parallel tenure-track titles of assistant, associate, and full professor but which primarily emphasize instructional activities. For promotion, faculty will need to demonstrate national leadership, recognition, and impact of their teaching. The PRTP is especially equipped to help these faculty document their teaching and students' learning and to engage in SOTL activities which will support their promotion files.

Conclusion

Successful integration of SOTL into institutional processes is facilitated when SOTL supports the institution's needs for faculty development, programmatic curricular development, review and accreditation, and other institutionally valued criteria such as research funding. Of course, one has to determine the extent to which faculty leaders should pursue their own goals versus support or comply with institutional initiatives. One of the strengths of the PRTP is that it is led by faculty and participants are encouraged to select target courses based on their own

goals and to investigate areas in teaching and learning which they most care about. These

principles of voluntary participation and faculty ownership over course portfolios will not be

compromised regardless of institutional pressures to do otherwise. While our project will, in the

future, support faculty teaching ACE courses, for instance, we will not let this focus override

other faculty purposes for participation. While SOTL integration requires flexible and ongoing

responses to university initiatives and goals, maintaining a level of independence is also

important. Teaching initiatives and administrators come and go. But being flexible and

constantly assessing and rethinking approaches, SOTL can have a valued and enduring role in

a postsecondary institution.

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Reflective, Reflexive, and Recursive: the Praxis of SoTL

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Abstract

SoTL is a theoretical orientation with practical application, which, in its time, yields fruit.

However, inquiry into teaching and learning and getting to the point where such inquiry is peer

reviewed and made public through traditional routes is often a complex undertaking. As such, a

look at the process-oriented nature of SoTL is warranted. SoTL is reflective, reflexive, and

recursive, and sometimes the only thing gained is coquina for the next time around. SoTL is

laden with theoretical, practical, moral, and social imperatives, and must be continued despite

challenges.

Background

With the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) as catalyst, the last decade has witnessed a tremendous growth in scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). Currently, SoTL is gaining new momentum on college campuses in the United States (Henderson & Buchanan, 2007), as well as internationally. Huber and Hutchings have argued that SoTL is an imperative rather than a choice for institutions of higher learning (2005, p. 13). SoTL is manifested differently across and within various disciplines. However, it is the contexts of SoTL that set it apart from general research on teaching and learning, with regards both to the clarity and depth of understanding that it brings to individual situations and the challenge it poses in connecting SoTL across paradigms (Huber and Hutchings, 2005). Regardless of the immediate contexts and shades of definition of SoTL (McKinney, 2007), there seems to be some consensus among leaders in the field that work within SoTL can be identified by four main characteristics. First, teaching is viewed as inquiry into student learning (Huber and Morreale, 2002). Second, it views teaching as public and community oriented, rather than private and idiosyncratic (Huber and Hutchings, 2005). Third, the work should be subject to review and evaluation. Last, it should be accessible to others in one's field (Bass, 1999). These characteristics notwithstanding, SoTL can be difficult to ascertain in the product driven academy. In my opinion, SoTL is a mindset, an attitude, a world view, that in its time bears fruit that can be judged against numerous criteria. As such, a look at the process-oriented nature of SoTL is warranted.

The Nature of SoTL

SoTL is rooted in reflection and action and it ultimately generates products. Nonetheless, the pure work of SoTL is in the process. In fact, the work of SoTL is never done. By nature it is reflective, reflexive, and recursive. Thus, SoTL has its very own three Rs, which can aid in understanding its nature. SoTL is a never ending process in which sometimes the only thing

gained is insight or coquina for the next time around. Perhaps Aristotle would have approved of

SoTL for bringing together *theoria, poiesis*, and *praxis* with emphasis on enactment supported

by theory and production. That is, SoTL emphasizes praxis. "Praxis involves critical reflection

and contemplation on one's actions and using the reflection to inform practice" (hooks, 1994

and Freire, 1970/1998). It is not surprising, given such an ambitious agenda, that work done in

the spirit of SoTL (a) requires much consideration and contemplation (Shulman, 2001), (b) is

directed back on itself with ethical and moral imperatives (Atkinson, 2001)., and (c) often comes

full circle, ready to *re-currere*. At once its greatest strength and challenge, contexts, sometimes

shifting contexts, produce some inherent threats for SoTL.

SoTL, then, is no fast ticket to scholarly success, but rather a time-honored engagement

by those who seek to improve teaching and learning in their own and other contexts. The

momentum of SoTL must not be misinterpreted to mean that activities of low quality or lacking in

integrity will be allowed to masquerade as SoTL. Nor is SoTL just a quick action research

project. It is good that discussions are being held about how to identify and evaluate SoTL.

CASTL SoTL Cluster Members in the summer of 2005 came up with four standards and

corresponding descriptors that could be used in evaluating SoTL.

The four standards are: 1. SoTL exhibits methodological rigor, 2. SoTL has substantive

implications/outcomes, 3. SoTL is peer reviewed, and 4. SoTL is made public (McKinney, 2007,

p. 98). When I look at the standards put forth by CASTL SoTL Cluster Members for use in

evaluating SoTL, I see standards that are used to evaluate the products of other scholarly

works. Rather than taking this discussion to mean lower standards, the opposite should be

assumed. Work done in the name of SoTL, although manifested differently from works done in

other areas, will need to meet comparable standards if SoTL is to be taken seriously. Many of

the people who are engaged in SoTL have been doing it for many years. For some, the

momentum has provided new labels and niches for what they are doing. Meanwhile a new

generation of scholars also has a framework through which to connect their teaching and

scholarship in a manner that, thanks in part to SoTL, will be valued and rewarded within the academy.

Concluding Thoughts

New insights are gleaned when one engages in SoTL and in time such engagement yields very useful and context specific information, which taken together, advances understanding of teaching and learning within and across disciplines. I believe that it is a particular view of teaching and learning that enables those who investigate teaching and learning to engage in praxis, as opposed to prematurely abandoning such work as fruitless and instead pursuing work with more readily "publishable material." It takes a particular understanding of the reflective, recursive, and reflexive nature of SoTL to maintain momentum even when products are not immediately tangible and getting them perhaps means starting over. Given the process- oriented nature of SoTL, it is incumbent upon the SoTL community to devise ways to recognize not only the products, but also the processes of SoTL. This will be most beneficial for those new to SoTL, as their products might not be readily available in traditional venues as they begin to inquire into teaching and learning. In the meantime, ideas abound for documenting SoTL (McKinney, 2007, Huber and Hutchings, 2005), and documentation is always a good starting point. Those who engage in such work know that the work is laden with theoretical and practical, as well as moral and social imperatives, and must be continued despite challenges.

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