

CASTL at Illinois State University: Supporting SoTL on Civic Engagement Experiences
Kathleen McKinney, Illinois State University

Illinois State University (ISU) has been involved with the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) over the last 12 years. CASTL is now in the final formal phase (2 years- January 2010-December 2011). In this phase institutions are encouraged to engage in SoTL and provide support for SoTL that promotes key institutional initiatives. At ISU, we have been involved in a number of 'high-leverage institutional agendas' that are directly part of or related to our strategic plan, *Educating Illinois*. Two of these are the American Democracy Project --and civic engagement more generally-- and promoting learner autonomy. The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning is helping us with these initiatives. Our goals for this final phase of CASTL are that through engaging in the scholarship of teaching and learning we will do the following:

- Better understand and document the developmental and learning processes and outcomes for students of involvement in civic engagement experiences in and out of the classroom including service learning opportunities.
- Better understand and document the extent to which, and how, enhanced learner autonomy is related to civic engagement and service learning experiences.
- Share what we learn via the web site, presentations, and publications.
- Encourage 'student voices in SoTL'.

Thus far, our CASTL Team members (Steve Hunt, Tom Gerschick, Phyllis McCluskey-Titus, Jennifer McDade, Kathleen McKinney, and Erin Pearce) are working on or facilitating several actions to meet these goals. We have conducted, for internal use, an on line Survey of all ISU faculty about whether they do civic engagement and/or service learning assignments in class or related to student organizations or other out-of-class opportunities, the nature of these projects, whether they have reflected on or studied learning outcomes, whether/how/where reflections/studies have been made public, and the type of support they would like to see for doing and making public such reflections/studies. We are involving students in this work in several ways including having student collaborators in SoTL projects on civic engagement, connecting with student organizations, and planning a SoTL project consisting of a video of student reflections on their civic engagement experiences that will be planned and created by other students. We also provided internal funding for SoTL projects on civic engagement by ISU instructors. See the list of projects funded for 2010-2011 below. This past summer we held a workshop, co-sponsored with our Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology, on 'Doing SoTL on Civic Engagement' and will offer another workshop focusing on making this work public this spring. We are also working on a list of possible external funding sources. Finally, we are discussing the idea of an edited book on both best practices in offering civic engagement experiences and in doing SoTL work on such experiences as well as with examples of such scholarship.

We congratulate the recipients of the 2010-2011 SoTL Small Grants on Civic Engagement/Service Learning. The grants are to study the developmental and learning outcomes of ISU students involved in civic engagement and/or service learning in classes or in co/extra-

curricular experiences. Grants ranged from \$1,200 to \$5,000. We hope some of the recipients will be ready to present at ISSOTL in Milwaukee.

- Judith Briggs, Art Ed; Kim McHenry, Art Ed; Michael Vetere, Theater Ed: *Community Arts and Pre-Service Educators: A Study of Civic Engagement*
- Laura Erskine, MQM: *Community Organization Research Project (CORP): Learning Decision-Making through Civic Engagement*
- Phyllis McCluskey-Titus, EAF; Jodi Hallsten, COM; Wendy Troxel, EAF; Erin Pearce, Office of the Dean of Students: *Six Years of Collaborative Service: EAF 463 and LinC*
- James Thompson, SED: *Creating Family Assessment Portfolios (FAPs) in SED 101*
- Jeffrey Walsh, CJS; Jessie Krienert, CJS; David Marquis, Student Body President—*Taking Stock of Student Outcomes: Examining Participation and Perception of Civic Engagement at a Large Midwestern University*