

Cluster Update Report August 2004- March 2005

In August, the SoTL Collaboration on line data base was up and running. Please go to <http://www.sotl.ilstu.edu/sotlcollaboration/> and register. Individuals can use this data base to search for others in their discipline or at a particular school or with interests in a particular area of teaching and learning with whom to discuss SoTL work or to collaborate. The URL for this and other cluster related activities (our small grant guidelines, *MountainRise* journal...) will be in a handout at our cluster poster.

In September, the guidelines for Cluster Small Grants were widely distributed to faculty in our 10 Cluster schools. You can view these guidelines at <http://www.sotl.ilstu.edu/funding/sotlCluster.shtml>.

The funds to support these small grants came from a \$5,000 grant to the Cluster from AAHE. In January, we announced our first recipients of the Cluster Small Grants: Dr. Patricia Jarvis, Illinois State University and Dr. Cynthia Nordstrom, Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville will each receive \$1,000 toward SoTL travel to present their collaborative research. They plan to submit a proposal to IS-SoTL in Vancouver and use the funds toward those expenses.

In September, Kathleen McKinney traveled to the University of Akron (a member of another cluster) and gave two SoTL presentations. And, in January, Kathleen and Pat Jarvis traveled to the University of Cincinnati and gave a SoTL workshop and met with administrators in the college of nursing about SoTL.

Several Core Member representatives met at the IS-SoTL meetings in Indiana in October where we presented a Cluster poster and discussed future plans for the cluster, including a panel presentation here.

In the fall, we also finished writing and began sharing a one page document with SoTL language related to tenure and promotion, and attempted to collect (hearing from some but not all members) a list of successes re: SoTL on each core campus. We also asked what they hope the Cluster can do in the future. Some common themes were working at the department level, working to improve rewards, and obtaining external funding for SoTL. These, along with our action plan from the 2004 summer academy, will form the start of our conversation here about 2005 Summer Academy objectives.

A full contingent of Core Members attended the SoTL Colloquium in March in Atlanta. We had an updated version of our Cluster poster at the colloquium (presented by Ken Callis (Southeast Missouri), John Habel (Western Carolina), Pat Jarvis (Illinois State), and Denise Peterson (South Dakota State) as well as a panel on "Expanding our Strategies for Institutional Integration of SoTL Work through Work with Administrators and Departments" with cluster members David Schodt (St. Olaf), Scott Johnson (Buffalo State), and Pat Jarvis and myself (Illinois State).

In addition, core members met to discuss proposals for IS-SoTL in Vancouver including one on IRB and ethical issues in SoTL work, one on funding and resources for SoTL work, and another on tenure, promotion, and rewards related to SoTL. We also worked on our objectives for the Summer Academy.

Finally, in April we released a second Call for SoTL grants as discussed above. These are due June 1, 2005.