

SOTL AT ISU

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at Illinois State University
“*systematic reflection/study on teaching and learning made public*”

Volume 7; January 2013



ISU Premier of SoTL on Civic Engagement Video a Success!

On November 13, about 100 faculty, staff, students, and community members attended a premier of “Civic Engagement at ISU: Case Studies and Student Reflection.” The research video served as the method for, and the way of sharing of, a SoTL descriptive study of Illinois State University students’ perceptions of learning outcomes from participation in four civic engagement experiences. The video was made by a production team of School of Communication students. The premier event, planned and carried out by a team of public relations and events interns,

involved a reception, screening, and discussion. The 30 minute video is available online at <http://sotl.illinoisstate.edu/civicEngagement.shtml>. The video was also presented at the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning meetings in Canada in October and the National Communication Association meetings in Florida in November. Special thanks go to Dr. Maria Moore, School of Communication, for work on the video and advising the student teams, and to Drs. Steve Hunt and Lance Lippert, COM, for their assistance on the project.

Congratulations to Professor of the Year Gary Creasey!

Illinois State University’s Professor of Psychology, Dr. Gary Creasey, has been named the top professor in Illinois by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. These organizations choose one professor from each state to be honored as a U.S. Professor of the Year. Part of Creasey’s successful application portfolio and letters focused on his scholarship of teaching and learning work. Creasey has presented and published SoTL work in a variety of conferences and journals and has been the recipient or co-recipient of the following ISU Cross Chair in SoTL small grants over the last 11 years:

Understanding Epistemological Development in Foundation of Inquiry Students: A Longitudinal Investigation (Patricia A. Jarvis, Gary L. Creasey, and Leatrice Brooks)

Learner Autonomy and Achievement Motivation as a Function of Teacher Immediacy and Student Attachment Representations (Gary Creasey, Patricia Jarvis, and Daniel Gadke)

Forecasting Changes in Learner Autonomy- A Longitudinal Investigation (Gary Creasey, Patricia Jarvis, and Daniel Gadke)

The Development of Learner Autonomy: The Importance of Classroom Goal Structure, Teacher Immediacy, and Student-Instructor Relationships (Patricia Jarvis, Gary Creasey, and Denise Faigao)

Becoming and Urban Educator: Intellectual Growth and Development of Social Justice in Re-Designed Courses Serving the Urban Teacher Preparation Program (Interdisciplinary Urban Teacher/Pipeline Program)

The ISU CONNECT Program: Identifying Developmental, Motivational, and Civic Outcomes (Gary Creasey, Verence D’Santiago, Kaitlin Jones, and Robert Lee)

The ISU CONNECT Mentorship Program: Identifying Critical “Soft Skill” Outcomes (Gary Creasey, Martin Gallegos, and Kim Budnick)

Call for Applications for University-Wide SoTL Award

The Dr. John Chizmar & Dr. Anthony Ostrosky Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award: The purpose of this award is to recognize and encourage high quality and quantity of scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) work at Illinois State and in the discipline beyond Illinois State that contributes to the SoTL field, the SoTL body of knowledge, improved teaching, and enhanced student learning. Calls for award applications will go out each spring beginning

in 2013. Nominations may come from applicants, Chairs, Deans, or colleagues. Complete applications are due to the Cross Chair in SoTL by September 30. Review and selection takes place in October and November. The award recipient will be announced in time for the following annual Teaching-Learning Symposium and Founders Day. For complete information, go to <http://sotl.illinoisstate.edu/downloads/pdf/SoTLAward.pdf>.

Highlight on SoTL Research

“A Comparative Analysis of Students Who Have/Have Not Been Exposed to Civic Engagement Curriculum in Higher Education at a Large Midwestern University”

Jeffrey Walsh, Jessie L. Krienert, CJS; David Marquis, Past ISU Student Body President/POL

Introduction. Civic engagement can be viewed as social action oriented towards community involvement facilitating community cohesion. Research suggests that college student civic engagement and involvement has a positive impact on students' commitment to future community involvement, efficacy, and empowerment (Knapp, Fisher, & Bristol, 2010). Young people who participate in school groups, volunteer, and take part in civic life are more likely to give both time and money, and continue their engagement as adults (Uslander, 2003).

Overview of the project. This study extends the knowledge and discussion of civic engagement in higher education providing an answer to the question, “how do university students with civic engagement exposure in higher education differ from university students without civic engagement exposure”. Civic Engagement is: “working to make a difference in the public life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation needed to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community through both political and non-political processes” (Illinois State University FOCUS Initiative; http://focus.illinoisstate.edu/modules/what/isu_definition.shtml).

The Present Study. The present study examined student differences across a variety of student characteristics, self-perceptions, and outcomes distinguishing between students who have and who have not had civic engagement curriculum exposure. The work was cross-sectional and descriptive/exploratory employing a sample of ISU students (n=3,724). With IRB approval, data were collected using a 100-item closed-ended multiple choice and Likert style e-

survey instrument. Questions were categorized into several student-based domains including academics/campus life, engagement/involvement, and comparative self-perception of skills/qualities.

Select Findings. Females (61%) on campus were more likely to report having been exposed to Civic Engagement in the classroom than men (31%). Students in the mid-age category, 20-21 (43%), were most likely to report civic engagement exposure compared to the younger (22%) and older age categories (35%). Students with civic engagement exposure in their curriculum were also more likely to be involved in fraternities or sororities (13% compared to 8%) and campus based Registered Student Organizations (59% compared to 39%). In terms of academics, civic engagement students were more likely to report forming study groups for classes, asking questions in class, and talking to professors outside of class than those without civic engagement experiences. Civic engagement students were more likely than other students to report increased satisfaction with campus culture, activities, and overall college experience. Civic engagement students were also more likely to raise money for a cause (58% compared to 45%), and take part in campus elections (45% compared to 38%) compared to students without civic engagement experience.

Knapp, T., Fisher, B., & Bristol, C. (2010). Service learning's impact on college students' commitment to future civic engagement, self-efficacy, and social empowerment. *Journal of Community Practice*, 18(3), 233-251.

Uslander, E. M. (2003). Civic engagement in America: Why people participate in political and social life. Knight civic engagement project. University of Maryland: College Park & Georgetown University.

Events and Opportunities to Support Your SoTL Projects

Be on the lookout this spring via announcements in campus mail, at www.sotl.ilstu.edu, and on the ISUteach discussion list for information on:

SoTL Small Grants for FY14 This program will likely be similar to the FY13 program. Past SoTL Small Grant guidelines are at <http://sotl.illinoisstate.edu/downloads/pdf/crossGrantFY13.pdf>.

FY13 Travel Grants In addition to the grants awarded to attend ISSOTL, we will have 6-7 travel grants of up to \$500 each for SoTL travel that occurred or will occur between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013. See the call for applications (due February 25) at <http://sotl.illinoisstate.edu/downloads/pdf/travelGrantFY13.pdf>.

SoTL Writing Group If sufficient interest and a common time can be found, we will organize a SoTL writing group for the Spring. Members would meet about every 3 weeks to share their writing on teaching and learning, as well as to offer feedback on the writing of others in the group. Writing projects must be SoTL or scholarly teaching and could be abstracts, posters, webpages, newsletter articles, research notes, journal articles, etc. If interested, send an email to kmckinne@ilstu.edu.

Consulting Are you considering or working on a SoTL project or product? If you would like any advice or assistance, individual or team consulting meetings are always available. Just contact kmckinne@ilstu.edu.

Reflections on October 2012 ISSOTL Annual Meetings

Phyllis McCluskey-Titus, EAF

This was my second ISSOTL conference, which was held in Hamilton, Canada. I presented some of my research, a paper entitled *How Student Learning in Four Applied Disciplines is Influenced by Faculty Practitioner Background*. This research was conducted over a one year sabbatical where I observed 15 different undergraduate classrooms on 7 different college campuses for a month each. The classes were taught by faculty who had and had not practiced as professionals in the disciplines of criminal justice, marketing, nursing, and social work. In addition to classroom observation, I conducted interviews with the faculty and students in each of those classes.

ISSOTL is an interdisciplinary and an international conference. At any program session you can interact with biologists, artists or sociologists who come from colleges in Hong Kong, Ireland, or Indiana. The common bond among all the participants is a love of teaching and a desire to improve student learning through the process of conducting research and sharing it widely. One of the most positive parts is never feeling as though you are an outsider or a stranger. My own disciplinary conferences, student affairs in higher education, are very friendly and collegial. ISSOTL feels a lot like these conferences with some participants returning year after year and rekindling professional friendships. New attendees are also warmly welcomed and received into conversation groups and discussions about research and teaching over coffee, lunch, or during the many program sessions offered during the conference. I counted 12 pre-conference workshops, 3 plenary sessions, 220 concurrent sessions, and 52 posters where opportunities for discussion, debate, and learning took place.

ISSOTL is a conference you may want to consider if you are interested in learning more about teaching or if you have conducted research about teaching and student learning and are looking for a venue to present it. In addition, ISSOTL is developing a new journal, *Teaching Learning Inquiry*, that will publish its first issue in 2013. I highly recommend ISSOTL as a stimulating, inspirational break from your disciplinary organizations, or in addition to them!

Erin Mikulec, C&I

This was my first time attending the ISSOTL conference and I was happy to be able to go with several of my colleagues from ISU who had previously been. One of the things that struck me most about this conference was the wide variety of professionals representing different content areas and coming from all over the world. What I found fascinating was that there were so many common threads in the work that everyone there was doing. I spoke with a colleague from Ireland about her work in physical therapy and shared with her my interest in brain functions during reading. She immediately gave me the names of several re-

searchers in the medical field that I could contact, and with whom I could possibly collaborate. This spoke volumes to me about the value of interacting with colleagues and professionals outside of our own disciplines.

Regardless of our individual areas of expertise, we all wanted to understand how our students were learning and what we as instructors could do to facilitate their learning. I was very pleased to see a number of projects that included reflection, from both the students and instructors, in an effort to construct meaning from shared learning experiences. Another thing I observed was that all of the presenters understood the value of what they were doing, and simply needed a forum in which to share it. I spoke to many colleagues who told me that these projects were not always valued in their home institutions. As someone in Education, I think I take for granted that such projects and reflections are indeed valuable and valued; in my field, teaching and learning cannot be separated. I was happy to participate in an event which provided this same support to others.

Overall, my first ISSOTL conference was beneficial to me as a professional and researcher. I came away with several ideas for new projects and met some truly wonderful and inspiring people.

Susan Hildebrandt, LLC

The 2012 ISSOTL conference was a wonderful chance for professional renewal, as like-minded teachers from all over the world met to discuss the important work of teaching effectively. I was able to attend a variety of paper presentations from a wide range of specialty areas, including ones that I would have thought had little to no connection to my own teaching. Boy, was I wrong!

Papers were organized thematically and that grouping helped me see connections that I wouldn't have otherwise seen. For example, in my own session, I was able to learn about environmentalism through a presentation of nature-based learning as well as qualitative methods of investigation. All three papers were under the category of experiential and community-based approaches to teaching and learning.

The presentations most relevant to my own area of study, K-12 language teacher development, were those grouped as "Diverse Approaches to Developing Future Teachers." It was heartening to know that there are other teacher educators thinking about the same things that I am. I was able to pick up new ideas to incorporate into the classes that I teach and the program that I direct. In particular, models of incorporating clinical experiences into teacher education were the most valuable. The presenters provided many possibilities to get teacher candidates into the schools early and help them formulate effective means of working with K-12 students.

SoTL Travel Grant Reports

As space permits we publish travel grant reports in SoTL at ISU, which may be edited due to space limitations.

Lucille Eckrich, EAF

I attended the 6th Annual Critical Questions in Education Conference. The critical question for this Chicago-based conference was “How Should We Prepare New Teachers?” I presented my SoTL work on “Urban Field Experiences in PK-12 Teacher Preparation: Do They Make a Long-Term Difference?” I also took part in seven concurrent sessions—hearing and discussing a total of 16 papers and one panel presentation—and in both keynote sessions. The intimate, inclusive, and dialogical atmosphere of this conference enabled me to depart having developed genuine relationships with five new colleagues in the education field with whom I continue to communicate. As someone who questions the fiscal validity of academic conferences, this experience gave me pause and new perspective.

My paper was one of 12 at the conference that explicitly addressed issues related to urban teaching and learning. I presented data from one part of a larger, mixed-methods longitudinal study that examines what difference, if any, a diverse urban field experience makes for the subsequent career choices, practices, and attitudes of participants compared to their nonparticipating peers. Preliminary findings suggest field experience participants are slightly more likely than nonparticipants to teach in Illinois but slightly less likely to teach in schools with above average numbers of low-income or minority students. Furthermore, they suggest that, of all of these ISU grads teaching in Illinois, 67% are in schools with above average numbers of white students and 67% are in schools with below average numbers of low-income students. As these results are in the opposite direction of what was anticipated and hoped for based on ISU’s Council for Teacher Education’s mission to “Realize the Democratic Ideal,” it is important to determine whether analysis of complete TDW data—that is, based on ID-matches rather than only name-matches as was done for this study—confirms or refutes them. Whether confirmed or refuted, these results may bear significant albeit different implications for teacher education at ISU and the place of diverse field experiences therein. I was encouraged by conference participants to continue this line of research.

Matthew S. Winsor, MAT

I attended the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics research pre-session held in Indianapolis, attending several informative sessions on research that ranged from teaching ELL students to pre-service teachers’ mathemat-

ical habits of mind. A session that had a direct influence on my teaching secondary mathematics pre-service teachers was “High School Teachers’ Mathematical Knowledge for Teaching Discrete Mathematics.” It discussed a research project focused on helping secondary mathematics teachers learn how to teach discrete mathematics. Because discrete mathematics is a recent offering in the high school curriculum, many teachers are unsure about their ability to teach it. The faculty at Arizona State University developed a plan to train high school teachers to teach discrete mathematics. The teachers would learn discrete mathematics from the ASU professors. The ASU professors would model how discrete mathematics could be taught. Then the teachers, in teams, created lessons. One of the teachers taught the lessons, and the remainder of the team observed the lesson. The team then reflected on how the lesson was received by students. After reflecting, the teachers would revise the lesson and a different teacher would teach it. The teachers shared their lessons on Google Docs so all had access.

The main ideas that I could see being implemented in our Math 323 course would be having students plan lessons in teams, then one team member would present the lesson, then the team could reflect on the effectiveness of the lesson. Another aspect from the presentation that could be applied in our program is to have a mathematics course taught in conjunction with our methods course, so that students could study the mathematics they would teach in the math course, and then learn how to teach the mathematics in the methods course. Our students would see good pedagogy being modeled in the mathematics course and then study the theory of the pedagogy in the teaching methods course. I also wondered whether it would be possible to adjust the structure of our courses so that we could have teams of pre-service teachers observing student teachers in the field. I benefited greatly from attending the NCTM research pre-session and am restructuring my courses because of it.

Search for New Cross Chair

The Office of the Provost is conducting a national/international, multi-discipline search for a new Cross Chair in SoTL. A search committee, consisting of faculty with SoTL expertise from each college and appropriate staff representation, formed last fall. Applications are due January 14. The position description is at <https://lilt.ilstu.edu/facultyjobs/ViewPosting.aspx?PostingID=175>. Phone and campus interviews are planned for February and March.

Kathleen McKinney, Ph.D., Editor (kmckinne@ilstu.edu)
Beth Welch, Managing Editor (eawelch@ilstu.edu)

Cross Endowed Chair in SoTL, Campus Box 6370, Normal, IL 61790; Website: sotl.illinoisstate.edu