

EFFECTIVE WAYS TO SUPPORT THE SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING AT THE CAMPUS LEVEL

Specific Examples from Four Campuses

Below a number of strategies used to support SoTL at the campus level from multiple cluster members are described.

From Illinois State University

Involvement in the CASTL Program

Since early 1998, several Illinois State University (ISU) faculty members and a larger group of faculty and staff members have participated in the CASTL program and our ongoing campus discussions of SoTL and interdisciplinary research on student engagement. Our campus definition of the scholarship of teaching is “systematic reflection on teaching and learning made public.” Three faculty members from different departments applied for and obtained an AAHE “Going Public Grant” for our CASTL work, one person attended the 2002 Colloquium, we sent a team (administrator, faculty members, staff, and student) focusing on SoTL to the 2002 AAHE Summer Academy, and we have posted reports to the CASTL Web Center. At least two faculty members have applied to be Carnegie Scholars.

Teaching and Learning Symposium

This day-long event at ISU provides an opportunity for faculty, graduate assistants, and staff to share teaching resources, teaching strategies, and pedagogical research on college teaching and student learning/development, including SoTL. Though all relevant topics are appropriate, each year’s symposium has encouraged presentations on select topics. For example, the call for the 2002 symposium emphasized active learning; assessment; collaboration between academic and student affairs; interdisciplinary efforts; and out-of-class learning experiences. Paper, poster, and panel sessions are included. A notable speaker external to campus is invited to give a keynote presentation. The symposium is held in a centrally located and highly visible venue. In 2003-2004, we are combining the symposium with a similar Teaching with Technology symposium and moving it off campus. Information about these events can be found at the websites:

<http://www.cat.ilstu.edu/events/tls.shtml>

<http://www.cat.ilstu.edu/events/partnerships.shtml>

Campus Sessions on SoTL

Upon recent investigation, there appears to be seven ISU faculty members who have recently served or are currently serving as editors of teaching/learning related journals. Two of those SoTL editors joined with two other SoTL editors from other universities to provide a panel discussion. Panel participants included Helen Moore of the University of Nebraska who is editor of *Teaching Sociology*; William Becker of Indiana University who is editor of the *Journal of Economics Education*; Dale Fitzgibbons of Illinois State University who is editor of the *Journal of Management Education*; and Deborah Gentry of Illinois State University who is editor of the *Journal of Teaching in Marriage and*

Family. The panelists spoke of the mission and expectations of their respective journals, definitions of SoTL from the perspective of their respective disciplines, and strategies and tips for undertaking high quality SoTL and then seeking to get the outcomes of such work published.

During Spring 2003 two open campus discussion on SoTL were held – the first on definitions and reward, the second on research questions and methods. In Spring 2004, Craig Nelson from Indiana University will come to campus and speak on SoTL.

SoTL Teaching-Learning Communities (TLC)

A TLC is a campus-wide opportunity for ISU faculty members of varying ranks and teaching assistants from differing disciplines to meet informally on a regular basis in small groups to reflect upon and discuss issues related to teaching and learning. Interest forms are distributed at the start of each semester. Considerable sharing and mentoring occurs during these gatherings. Most small groups meet for 1-1.5 hours every other week during an academic term. About 2-3 TLCs per semester focus on SoTL in varying ways. The Cross Chair in SoTL or a Center for the Advancement of Teaching (CAT) staff member attends TLC sessions in an effort to facilitate discussion and resources. Each SoTL TLCs have read and discussed SoTL books, co-authored internal grants, attended conferences together, learned about conducting SoTL, and functioned as research and writing circles.

Support at the Department Level

As Cross Chair at ISU, Kathleen McKinney works with Deans, Chairpersons, and faculty members on issues related to SoTL. She gave a workshop on defining, measuring, and evaluating (formative and summative) teaching, scholarly teaching, and the scholarship of teaching and learning. The differences between these concepts, how faculty might document their work in these areas, criteria, evidence for success, which work “counts” as teaching or service or scholarship, how/where SoTL fits within current policy were discussed. Dr. McKinney has created relevant handouts to share with various groups and, by invitation, attends department faculty meetings to discuss SoTL. In addition, SoTL small grants often involve department/disciplinary teams. Currently, we are considering ways to use the faculty teaching center-department liaisons to improve SoTL (quantity, quality, use, rewards) at the department level.

SoTL Small Grant Program

We have used several small grant programs to support SoTL work at Illinois State University. You can see guidelines for past grant programs at the URLs listed below. Most programs are open to regular faculty, non-tenure track faculty, staff members, and students. In 2002-2003, we began a new program supporting six teams with grants up to \$4,500 per team. Each team was required to consist, at a minimum, of two faculty members and one student. In addition, faculty are encouraged to submit SoTL projects to our University Research Grant program (an internal small grant program administered by each College), though most funds in this program go to “traditional disciplinary research.” We work with faculty to write high quality SoTL proposals in an effort to increase their competitive edge in this program.

<http://www.cat.ilstu.edu/awards/sotlgrant.shtml>
<http://www.cat.ilstu.edu/awards/tldevel.shtml>

First Year Faculty Institute on Classroom Assessment and Classroom Research

Each year the Center for the Advancement of Teaching (CAT) and the University Assessment Office (UAO) at ISU offer a summer teaching institute titled "Classroom Assessment and Classroom Research" for tenure-track faculty members who have just completed their first year of teaching at Illinois State University. Faculty members are paid a small stipend. The emphasis of the institute is on measuring and understanding student learning using strategies for getting formative feedback from and about students. We examine what faculty members can do to better assess and research student learning outcomes at the classroom, program, and/or department levels. We also discuss how such work can become a form of the scholarship of teaching and learning, and can be shared through local and national publications and presentations. The institute features presentations by on-campus experts, as well as round table discussions with the participants. This unique interaction with colleagues from across disciplines is designed to assist new faculty members in their planning and improvement of courses for the upcoming academic year and beyond. Contact Wendy Troxel at UAO (wgtrixe@ilstu.edu) for more information.

Summer Institute on SoTL

Beginning in summer 2003, at ISU, a three-half day institute for 15 faculty members, staff members or graduate assistants was offered. Potential participants submitted a 1-2 page letter of application. Each received a small (\$300) stipend, books and handouts. The goals of this institute included providing an opportunity for participants to do the following: 1. learn more about the Scholarship of Teaching, including what it is, how to conduct it, how to make it public, how to document it for evaluation, and how to use it to enhance teaching and learning; 2. begin working on ideas for doing and/or making public an SoTL project; and 3. share ideas and information about SoTL with their colleagues. The application guidelines for the institute can be viewed at <http://www.cat.ilstu.edu/sotl/invite.shtml>. The fall after the institute, we sponsor a "follow-up" session for people to get together and discuss the progress of their work.

SoTL Community of Scholars and SoTL Resources Group

We created a virtual community of people interested in SoTL at Illinois State University. Thus far just over 100 individuals are in an email nickname group. SoTL resources and opportunities are shared with this group. We are considering a brownbag series. We are just setting up the SoTL Resources Group, "a 'bank' of faculty who have expertise in specific areas related to SoTL. These individuals, their contact information, and their areas of SoTL expertise will be listed as resources/possible mentors in a data base distributed on campus and posted on the SoTL web site.

SoTL as a Criteria in University Level Awards

In the award guidelines for all university-level teaching awards (there are four categories), scholarly teaching and SoTL are explicitly listed as criteria. In addition, as we develop a Department Teaching-Learning Award, SoTL work will be in the criteria.

SoTL may be considered but is not explicitly noted in the guidelines for university-level research awards or Distinguished Professor. This latter group, however, is selected based on excellence in teaching, research, and service. Some past recipients have been involved in SoTL in addition to their traditional disciplinary research.

SoTL Book Give-aways

The Cross Chair in SoTL and the teaching center purchase multiple copies of SoTL books. These are offered to faculty and staff, free, when they receive a SoTL grant, participate in an SoTL TLC, come to the teaching center as a new faculty member, help with CASTL or Summer Academy work, and so on. These are also used as door prizes at certain events.

Campus Study of the Status of SoTL

As part of the project of the ISU 2002 Summer Academy Team and the Cross Chair, we gathered data (and will gather it again in about 5 years) on the status of SoTL on our campus. With the assistance of many campus units, team members, and other volunteers, we conducted both secondary analysis of existing data (e.g., faculty productivity reports, grant annual reports, etc.) and an on-line self-administered questionnaire to faculty and staff. The results of this study and any implications were shared with the campus community via the teaching center newsletter and our web site.

http://www.cat.ilstu.edu/sotl/castl_aahe.shtml

Endowed Chair in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Dr. K. Patricia Cross, as most of you know, is a well-know scholar in the field of higher education. She has generously endowed the Cross Chair in the SoTL at Illinois State University. Dr. Cross and her sister are Illinois State alums, and their father is a former Illinois State University professor. The Chair serves a five-year term, can come from any discipline housed at ISU, reports to the Office of the Provost, and is chosen via a national search. The Cross Chair engages in his/her own SoTL scholarship in Sociology and in higher education more generally. Second, he/she facilitates the SoTL work of other faculty, graduate students, and staff. The third role is that of a social change agent, working to promote, share, reward, and use SoTL work on campus. Finally, the Chair serves as a representative on the SoTL from Illinois State University to the higher education national scene working with his/her own disciplinary society and with organizations such as the American Association of Higher Education (AAHE) and the Carnegie Foundation.

<http://www.cat.ilstu.edu/sotl/cross.shtml>

Work with New Faculty on SoTL

We have tried to reach out to new faculty and encourage their awareness of SoTL by offering a session on SoTL at the fall teaching workshop, having a table with SoTL materials at the table fair at new faculty orientation, and sending an email message to all new faculty with information about SoTL, and local SoTL resources and opportunities. In addition, we encourage new faculty to attend the SoTL summer institute.

SoTL Web Sites

At ISU, we have put together (continue to work on and welcome suggestions, links, etc.) a web site of information and resources for the SoTL.

<http://www.cat.ilstu.edu/sotl/index.shtml>

From Buffalo State College

This description of the strategies used at Buffalo State College to support and enhance the scholarship of teaching and learning has two sections. The first is a narrative that provides an overview of and the context for our work. The second section provides a brief list of specific strategies undertaken at Buffalo State. These are grouped under the six goals that guide our efforts.

Part One: NARRATIVE

Buffalo State College joined the CASTL Campus Program in 1998. An advisory committee of representatives from a wide cross section of the campus led the first year's activities. In the spring of 2001, central administration provided a course release for a Campus Programs coordinator. The program coordinator, an advisory committee, and the Office of Academic Affairs set about planning and fostering a campus context supportive of the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL).

During our first few years of involvement with CASTL we took a diversified approach to creating awareness and understanding of SoTL throughout the campus community. Toward this goal a wide variety of activities were undertaken (see list below). As 2001 came to a close, the advisory committee and the coordinator reflected on refocusing efforts. While attempts to create awareness and understanding were favorably received by a cross section of the campus community, many people remained either unaware or unconvinced of the value of SoTL. In addition, individuals were justifiably concerned about the lack of policies and funds to place SoTL on par with more traditional forms of scholarship.

This assessment of our progress led to a three-pronged effort to achieve systemic change over the next two years. First, we continued efforts to reach faculty and staff that were unaware or unconvinced of the credibility of SoTL. This was an important step in creating a campus climate amenable to our second initiative, revision of the guidelines for promotion and tenure review to provide parity between SoTL and other forms of scholarship. A correlate of this change involved providing support to departments as they tailored this policy to their disciplinary context. Third, we established fellowships as a vehicle for visible, on-going administrative support for SoTL in the Academic Affairs Office.

Part Two: SPECIFIC STRATEGIES

Create Awareness

- Publish articles in the college newsletter discussing CASTL, SoTL, and campus activities
- Develop a brochure to publicize the project on campus
- Call for submissions of SoTL to be included in a campus publication. The call described the criteria for SoTL which creates awareness
- Plan and promote a campus wide activity to showcase the work of faculty and staff

- Create a campus list serve/discussion board on SoTL/CASTL

Increase Understanding of SoTL

- Bring in a national expert on some aspect of SoTL (Ours, attended by 60 faculty, was conducted by Barbara Walvoord, coordinator of the CASTL program at Notre Dame)
- Presentation on SoTL made to the Academic Counsel (Deans, provost, directors)
- Invite a National CASTL Fellow to make a keynote presentation on SoTL at a regional conference
- Presentations on SoTL to Chairs of all departments
- Workshop at yearly New Faculty Orientation to encourage new faculty to consider including SoTL in their research agenda.
- Work with College Senate or other governance structure to clarify the role of SoTL on campus
- Work with Departments to identify the role of SoTL in their discipline

Develop Skills in SoTL

- Use advisory committee members as consultants in areas such as portfolio assessment, assessment of technology based learning and peer assessment, for faculty/staff who want to study teaching and learning in their classroom or department.
- Conduct brown bags seminars to facilitate colleagues working in small groups to identify and plan teaching/learning studies.

Reward Efforts

- Publish a monograph to showcase faculty involved in the SoTL
- Offer SOTL fellowships to support teaching/learning scholarship
- Fund presentations of SoTL at national conferences

Institutionalize Support

- Revise policies to include SoTL in promotion and tenure review.
- Secure an institutional 'home' for SoTL by incorporating the CASTL activities into a center that has a reputable secure standing in the organization.
- Include support for SoTL in an administrator's job description

Disseminate our Experience (Collaborate)

- Present work at American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) conferences and Colloquium for Campus Programs, and other SoTL conferences (Rockhurst, London etc.)
- Publish comments on works in progress in national publications (AAHE Bulletin, generic education journals, discipline based journals)
- Post resources on the AAHE WebCenter and College homepage.
- Open a comprehensive Web Site devoted to the CASTL/SoTL (ours can be viewed at www.BuffaloState.edu/orgs/castl)
- Included a presentation on SoTL each year at Faculty and Staff Scholarship and Creativity Conference

From Dominican University

Using Faculty Orientation

A four-hour workshop on SoTL was a part of the “required” full faculty orientation at the start of the Fall 2003 semester. In addition, further discussions of SoTL and its place in the reward structure our planned.

From Western Carolina University

A Campus SoTL Journal

WCU created a local, on-line SoTL journal called *MountainRise*. This provides the following opportunities for faculty: a source of information on teaching and learning, a place to publish SoTL work, and opportunities to review SoTL work. After joining the Cluster, cluster members became involved in *MountainRise* as several core members now have faculty on the editorial board.