

CASTL Leadership Program

Theme: Students as Scholars of Teaching and Learning
Illinois State University Focus: “Fostering Learner Autonomy through SoTL”

Revised Goals, Strategies, Impact, and Methods of Documentation/Dissemination

Our original proposal for the Leadership Program proposed a new theme on promoting learner autonomy. (Our full, original proposal is in the shared web workspace.) We were placed, however, in one of the original Carnegie themes, Students as Scholars of Teaching and Learning. We believe our original theme meshes well with this one in at least two ways. First, helping students become scholars of teaching and learning will likely increase their autonomy as learners. Second, students can be involved in SoTL work on the topic of learner autonomy. With these two connections in mind, we offer revised goals, strategies, impact, and methods of documentation and dissemination.

Revised Goals

- Improve faculty and student knowledge about the current literature on learner autonomy.
- Support SoTL research projects (with student team members) on learner autonomy, design, implementation, making public, and application.
- Increase undergraduate and graduate student involvement in SoTL and research collaborations among faculty, staff, and students.
- Strengthen the SoTL component in graduate student training.
- Enhance student learning and learner autonomy through their involvement in SoTL.
- Help faculty and students use the knowledge base and their own SoTL research results on learner autonomy to deal with common and distressing issues related to teaching and learning that may be related to low levels of learner autonomy. (e.g., preparation, participation, reading, making good choices, time management).

Revised Strategies to Achieve the Goals

Students will be involved in all of these strategies. Some of these will involve collaborations of two or more units on campus (e.g., teaching center, Provost Office, Departments, Research Office...)

- Create a web site about learner autonomy (SoTL projects on campus, literature reviews, and a bibliography on learner autonomy).
- Conduct workshops on both doing SoTL and on learner autonomy and practical applications of that knowledge.
- Offer small, internal grants for SoTL projects on learner autonomy.
- Help SoTL researchers with study design for learner autonomy projects.
- Form and Facilitate research/writing teams and circles; provide peer feedback on draft papers.
- Provide internal “making public” opportunities including a panel at the annual teaching-learning symposium and a local publication.
- Connect learner autonomy to the co-curriculum and make collaborations with student affairs.

Revised Impact

We hope to have the following types of local impact:

- Increases in involvement in SoTL about learner autonomy by faculty, staff, and students.
- Increases in the research knowledge base on learner autonomy especially in terms of specific disciplines, courses, and programs.
- Increases in the application by faculty, staff, and students of this knowledge base and of the results of original SoTL work on learner autonomy to enhance both autonomy and learning.

Revised Documentation and Dissemination

Documentation of our efforts will occur primarily through products and dissemination (see below) as well as self-reports of participants (e.g., summaries of their SoTL work on learner autonomy, self-reports of application). Evaluation will be based on the quantity and quality of our products and dissemination, the results of satisfaction surveys of participants when appropriate, and the systematic self-reflections of the Leadership Team members.

We will employ a variety of means to make this work public. We plan to have a web page connected to our SoTL page as well as to create a web snap shot using the KEEP Tool Kit. We also plan to produce a local publication. In addition, there are now numerous venues for panels, posters, and papers to be presented at local and regional SoTL conferences, IS-SoTL, and the various convenings of CASTL. SoTL research teams will write up their projects for various newsletters, journals, or edited books to appear in the growing SoTL print and on-line outlets. In some cases, the work and outcomes can be shared by facilitating workshops at interested institutions and in our disciplinary society and student affairs meetings.