

Ideas for Readings on SoTL and Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

This post was first sent to the POD faculty developer discussion list in response to a request for ideas about reading on SoTL/ T & L in higher education literature for graduate students. What follows is my reply with two additional recommendations inserted (from Nancy Chick at University of Calgary). I will start by pointing out that there are different "categories" of literature here as the POD member asking the question use both the terms 'SoTL' and 'T & L higher education literature' (many would argue these overlap but are not the same sets of literature). And, depending on the graduate students [or junior faculty or others new to SoTL], their goals/needs for this literature, and your goals as a faculty developer, something from some or all of these categories of literature might be useful.

1. Theoretical or conceptual work, empirical research, syntheses of research... but in the very general and broad field of teaching and learning in the post-secondary educational level (or higher education):

This work is often by those whose degrees are in the field of education or an education sub-field of a discipline, and is often not local or practitioner or action research but more traditional, educational research or theorizing. Sometimes the work is very macro or policy oriented as well but certainly not always. Sometimes this work approaches higher educational issues from a disciplinary perspective or disciplinary literature base (e.g., M. Svinicki's classic book- *Learning and Motivation in the Post-Secondary Classroom*- summarizing and applying learning theories and educational psychology to higher education teaching or R. Arum and J. Roksa's *Academically Adrift* (and recently released follow-up book) both of which take a sociological approach to teaching and learning in higher education or J. E. Zull's *The Art of Changing the Brain: Enriching the practice of teaching by exploring the biology of learning* from a biological/physiological view. Sometimes this more traditional educational research focuses on specific teaching-learning issues. I have a handout of several books in this category I have enjoyed and found useful (though I admit the list has not been updated in about 3 years and it is in NO WAY a complete list!). [http://sotl.illinoisstate.edu/downloads/materials/A Sampling of What We Know.pdf](http://sotl.illinoisstate.edu/downloads/materials/A%20Sampling%20of%20What%20We%20Know.pdf)

2. Literature on the field of the scholarship of teaching and learning (more narrowly conceptualized than T & L higher education literature and usually action, practitioner, local, conducted by those in the disciplines including-- mostly--non education disciplines):

This work on the field of SoTL may be both within a discipline and, more often, in terms of the broader cross-discipline field of SoTL (e.g., debates about what SoTL is, how it should be done, variations by discipline or nation or institutional type, organizations, etc.). There are a number of 'how to do' SoTL books out. Most are somewhat biased toward a social science and education view of 'research.' Several cross-discipline SoTL journals also publish essays on the field of SoTL. Several books on the field have been published by Carnegie Foundation staff and Jossey-Bass over the last 15 years or so as well. You can find a bibliography of some things on the

field of SoTL (again probably not updated in the last 2 years or so and certainly there is other relevant work including that from other nations) at <http://sotl.illinoisstate.edu/resources/castl/bibliography.php>. Two other great sources for reading related to SoTL, for example, are offered by Nancy Chick:

- The readings on the syllabus for the SoTL Scholars Seminar I offered graduate students through Vanderbilt's Center for Teaching: [https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/57580440/SoTL Scholars Seminar Syllabus.pdf](https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/57580440/SoTL%20Scholars%20Seminar%20Syllabus.pdf)
- The SoTL Guide, also for the Vanderbilt Center for Teaching: <https://my.vanderbilt.edu/sotl/>

3. Actual SoTL research literature--"studies" (again more narrowly conceptualized than T & L higher education research literature) both discipline-specific (most of it) or cross/multi-discipline:

The former is generally published in discipline-specific pedagogical journals --e.g., *Teaching Sociology* in my field-- but both types are published in cross discipline SoTL journals such as *Journal of Excellence in College Teaching*, *Teaching & Learning Inquiry*, *International Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, etc. There are many lists of such journals on line including the one our librarians keep at <http://illinoisstate.libguides.com/sotl> that includes 'core' or cross-discipline and discipline-specific SoTL and teaching journals.

Finally, related to both categories #2 and #3 above, I have an edited book that has chapters about issues in the field of SoTL in HE and some SoTL projects/research, in several disciplines and in multi-discipline teams. (McKinney, K. Ed. 2013. *The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning In and Across the Disciplines*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.)

Happy reading!!!