

SOTL AS A METHOD TO IMPROVE TEACHING AND SCHOLARSHIP



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Workshop Sponsor:
Cross Chair for SoTL

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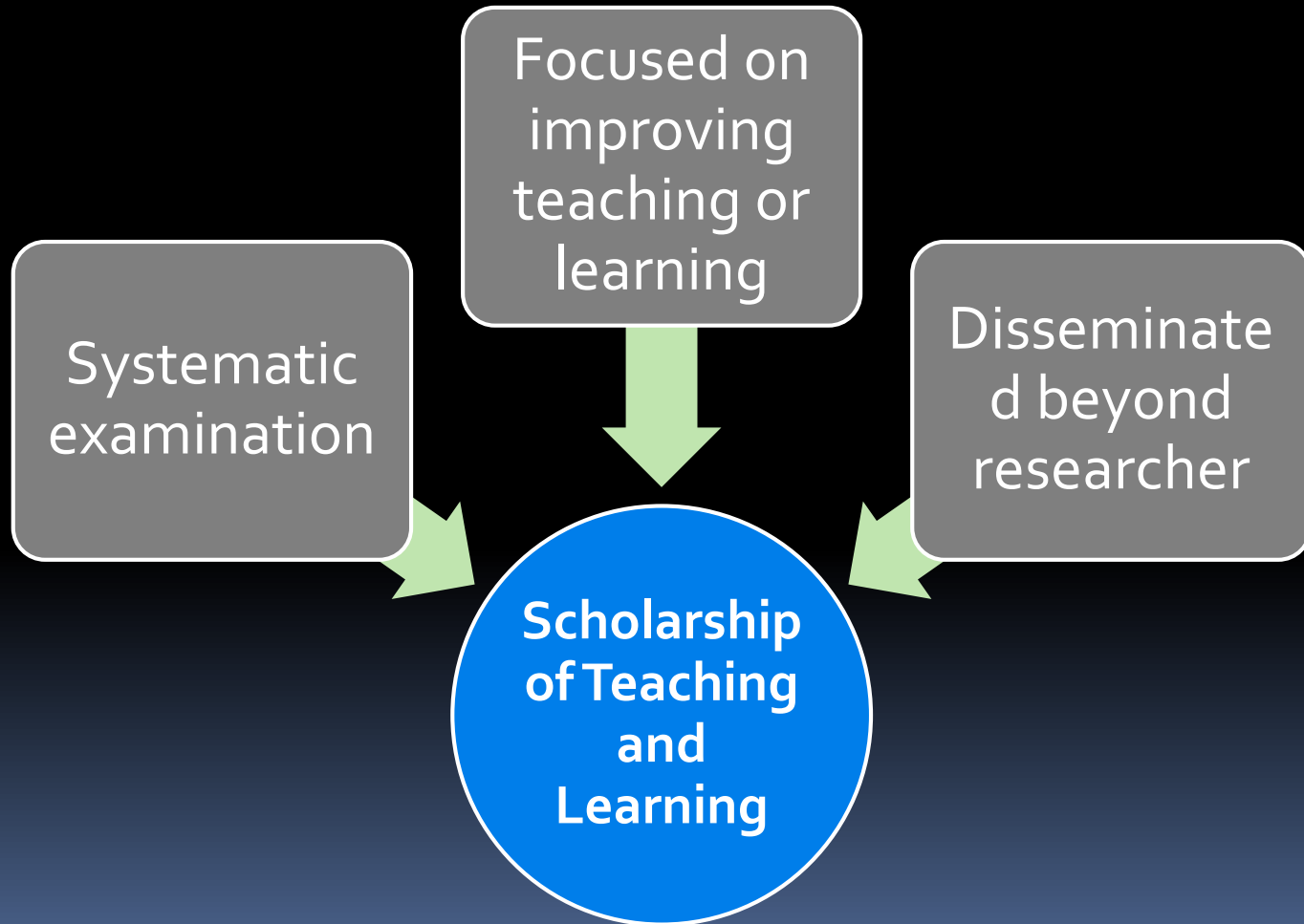
Introductions


- Tell us about yourself!
 - What department are you from?
 - How long have you been at ISU?
 - Describe past training on SoTL or general pedagogy in your graduate studies

Why are we here today?

- Define SoTL and its origins
- Understand how SoTL differs from effective teaching
- Identify ways in which SoTL can advance teaching and research productivity
- Begin to plan a possible SoTL study for future consideration

What is SoTL?





At Illinois State, we define SoTL as
*“the systematic reflection on
teaching and learning [of our ISU
students] made public”*

SoTL is a part of Educating Illinois and is
supported on campus by the
Cross Chair in SoTL

Backtracking a bit...

Good Teaching

Teaching that promotes student learning and other desired student outcomes

Scholarly Teaching

Teaching which is supported by a body of research to increase effectiveness

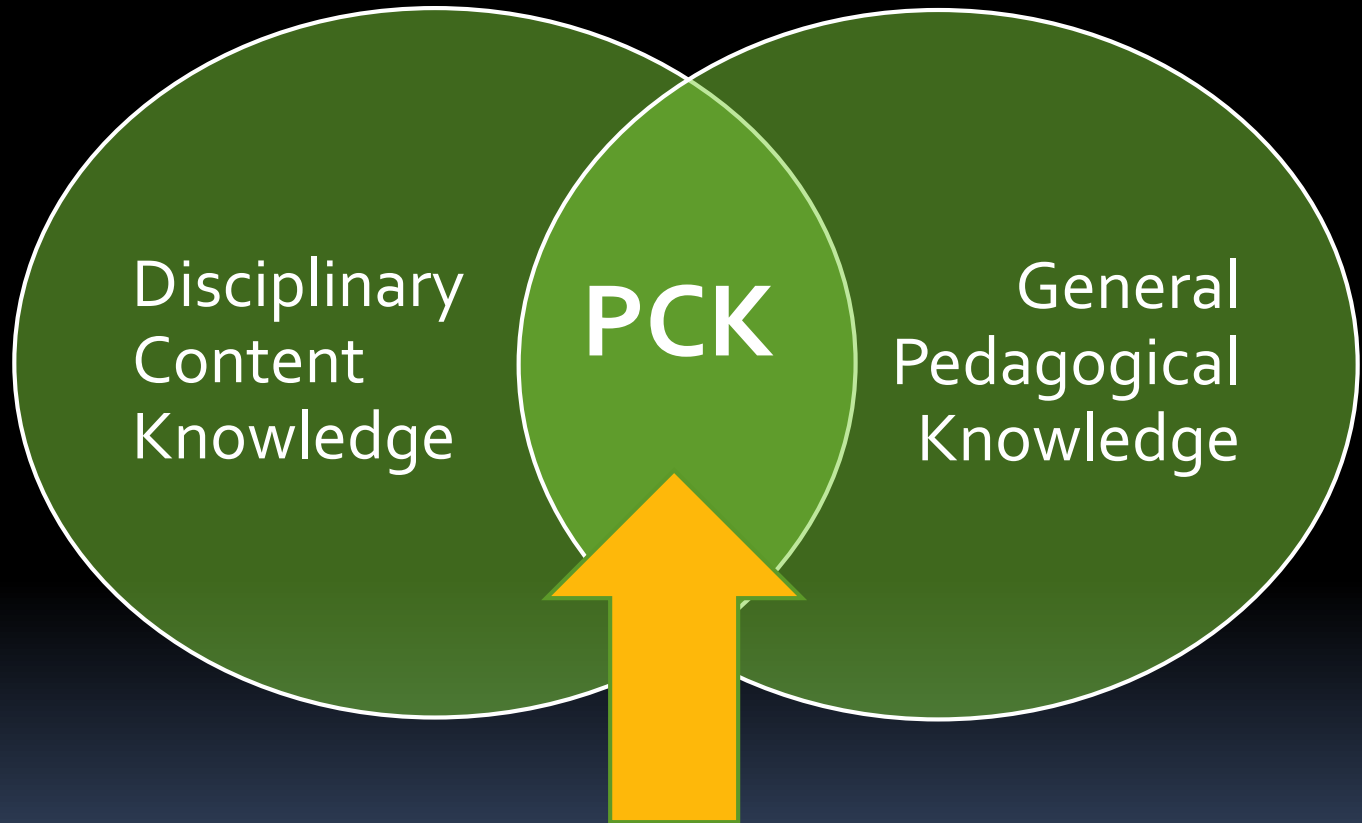
Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Combination of reflection and knowledge which yields questions about teaching for study

(McKinney, 2007)

Why SoTL? Why now?

To Improve Teaching




(Pedagogical Content Knowledge ; Schulman, 1987)



Why SoTL? Why now?

To Improve Scholarly Productivity

- SoTL can be a compliment to your discipline-specific research
 - Can be helpful for some in building a strong vita for P & T
- 

Teaching Problems: A Starting Point for SoTL


Bass (1999)
posits that
teaching
problems aren't
shameful... they
are actually
opportunities
for faculty.

“What is?” What’s going on when your students read an article in your discipline? What kinds of things do they focus on? What aspects cause them to struggle? And how could your knowledge of these answers help you to become a better teacher?


“What works?” Perhaps you’re thinking about a new and different approach to the teaching of your subject. Does it work? Your research project could help you find out.

From Vanderbilt’s CFT
Homepage







Suppose one of your teaching problems evolved into a SoTL project...

- What is the outcome you might seek from your SoTL work?
 - A report on an individual course?
 - A description of the interaction of several courses?
 - A reflection over practices from several years of teaching?
 - An investigation of interdisciplinary commonalities?
 - A comparison of specific courses and/or students?
 - A synthesis of existing SoTL work?
- 



What sort of data can be used with SOTL research?

- Course portfolios
 - Specific assignments/projects/assessments (or artifacts therein)
 - Interviews
 - Focus groups
 - Questionnaires/surveys
 - Content analysis
 - Multi-method studies
- 



For the teaching issue that you want to research, how can you design a study that will be feasible to implement?

SoTL Research Considerations

IRB

- Exempt status?

Informed Consent


- Minimize coercion

Teacher as Researcher

- Research gone amok

Lack of SoTL Support

- Discipline/Institution/
College/Department



What hurdles can you anticipate in conducting your research and how might you handle them?



Common SoTL Questions

- How is SoTL work viewed by promotion and tenure committees?
- What are my options for disseminating SoTL work within and outside of ISU?
 - Journals
 - Conferences
 - Web representations
- Is SoTL work best within a discipline or across disciplines?

Support for SoTL at ISU

- Cross Chair in SoTL
 - Grants for research and travel
 - Professional development
 - Gavisus
 - SoTL Scholars
- Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology
 - Grants for research and travel



What are your
questions about
SoTL at this
point?



References

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