

SOTL AT ISU

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

Volume 2; September 2008



Congratulations: Two Departments/Schools Receive \$10,000 SoTL Grants

For fiscal year 2009, the Cross Chair Office sponsored the Department/School SoTL Initiative Grants. This program funds work that provides the opportunity and resources for multiple people in a department/school to be involved in one or more connected SoTL projects. The initiatives will provide information on teaching and learning at the class, course, or program level which will be applied to improve student learning in the discipline. The recipients for this year include the following:

1. **Department of Criminal Justice Sciences-** “An Empirical Investigation of the Mitigating or Aggravating Effects of Teacher Immediacy on Academic Dishonesty at a Large Midwestern University.” The project will look at the role teacher immediacy plays in the rapport established in the classroom environment between teachers and students that might serve as either a mitigating or

aggravating influence on academic dishonesty, specifically cheating. Thus far there has been only limited work exploring the nexus between these two potentially interrelated behaviors.

2. **School of Communication-** “Advancing the Discipline: Expanding the Role of Communication in Civic and Political Engagement through the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.” The proposal is to combine teaching and research surrounding the concept of civic engagement. More specifically, they intend to integrate curriculum, develop training workshops, foster scholarship, assess students’ learning outcomes, and develop new courses. The communication discipline is well positioned to assume a leadership role in the civic and political engagement movement.

Drs. John Chizmar & Anthony Ostrosky Endow Scholarship and SoTL Award

A scholarship for a student in Economics and an award for a faculty member in Economics are being established to honor the exemplary careers of Dr. John (Jack) Chizmar and Dr. Anthony (Tony) Ostrosky as professors in the Department of Economics at Illinois State University. The faculty award is to recognize Scholarship of Teaching and Learning work. The goal of the Chizmar & Ostrosky SOTL award is improved undergraduate learning. Each faculty candidate for the SoTL award must be, or have, the following:

A. A demonstrated history and current standing as an outstanding teacher based on internal and external recognition of her/his teaching by colleagues and/or students as well as the actual use of best practices that contribute to student learning.

B. A scholarly teacher approaching teaching as a professional role that can be improved, has a knowledge base, should be data driven and evidence based, requires innovation and risk-taking, utilizes collaboration with or feedback from colleagues, and involves faculty development related to teaching and learning.

C. Engaged in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) defined, at Illinois State University, as the systematic reflection and study of the teaching and learning of our students made public. Evidence of SoTL work would include multiple presentations and/or publications of SoTL work in economic education or economic SoTL conferences or publication outlets, and/or interdisciplinary SoTL conference or publication outlets.

SoTL Grant Report: Learner Autonomy in Lecture Hall vs Online Learning

Cara Rabe-Hemp, Susan Woollen, and Gail Humiston, Criminal Justice Sciences

The study involved a comparison of student levels of engagement, ability to learn autonomously, and interaction with peers and faculty in two different learning settings: a large lecture hall and online. Results suggest that learning mechanism drives the styles of learning and teaching practiced in traditional and online learning settings. Students in the online course were more reflective in their learning practices, spending more time independently preparing for the course, as well as being more involved in class discussions. By comparison, students from the traditional lecture hall reported being more collaborative in their learning with classmates.

Professional outcomes thus far include the following:

- “Impact of student expectations on experiences, performances, and satisfaction with an online class.”

Presented with Susan Woollen at the Teaching and Learning Symposium. Normal, IL. (January 2008).

- “A Comparative Analysis of Student Engagement, Satisfaction, Success and Learning in Lecture Hall and Online Learning Settings.” Presented with Susan Woollen and Gail Humiston at the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Annual Conference in Cincinnati, OH. (March 2008).
- “A Comparative Analysis of Student Engagement, Learning, and Satisfaction in Lecture Hall and Online Learning Settings.” Submitted in April 2008 to *The Journal of Criminal Justice Education*.
- “Impact of student expectations on experiences, performances, and satisfaction with an online class.” Submitted to *Educational Technology & Society*, in July 2008.

SoTL Grant Report: Using Active Learning to Promote Autonomous Learning

Donna Vandiver and Jeffrey Walsh, Criminal Justice Sciences

As empirical assessments of teaching styles, strategies, activities, and exercises increase in many disciplines, a paucity of such assessment exists in courses devoted to research methods. This lack of assessment and evaluation related to methods courses impedes progress in developing successful teaching pedagogy in these courses. This situation is particularly problematic given that research methods courses are challenging for both faculty and students due to the teaching and learning of critical thinking and evaluation skills. Teaching students to think critically, contextually, and independently about the research process, including how research findings are generated and applied to social problems, serves to benefit both the individual and society. Unfortunately, students often do not recognize the value or importance of research, losing sight of their own vital role as lifelong consumers and producers of research and their potential impact on public policy.

The teaching-learning issue addressed in our SoTL work involved incorporating active learning teaching strategies through the use of a student-driven research project to promote autonomous student learning in research methods

courses with inherently complex material. The study employed a pre/post-test assessment of 67 undergraduate criminal justice students enrolled in research methods courses. Students participated in a semester-long, tiered assignment, research project and responded to a series of questions designed to assess the students' (1) motivation/attitude toward active learning and learner autonomy, (2) perceived changes in student's skill level (seek new information, use critical thinking skills, and application of learned information), and (3) perceived potential to become lifelong learners. Project outcomes were measured by comparing pre- and post-test assessments using a series of paired-sample T-tests.

The findings from the study were mixed, but generally suggest that most students had positive and rewarding experiences in the course and the tiered assignment was a beneficial and effective teaching exercise for the challenging subject matter of social science research methods. The results here also suggest that students' interest in the course increased over time.

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning-Institutional Review Board Workshop

On June 6, 2008, eleven faculty and staff members participated in a hands-on workshop to complete Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocols for upcoming SoTL projects. Resources and assistance by Gary Creasey, IRB Chair, and Joe Casto, Research and Sponsored Programs Compliance Officer, were provided to the participants who left the workshop with completed forms to submit to their department representatives as

well as \$100 per project in operating funds. The topics of the SoTL projects being planned included the following: problem-based learning and clickers; pipeline leakage of females in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics programs; teaching and learning in applied majors; cultural and linguistic diversity learning; student perceptions of asynchronous discussion; and teacher immediacy and academic dishonesty.

Upcoming SoTL Events, Opportunities, and Resources

- ***A Student-Faculty Conversation on Learning.*** "Where does learning take place on campus and who is responsible?" This conversation will be held on Tuesday, September 16, 2008, in the Student Services Building (Room 375) from 12:30 - 1:45pm. The purpose of the discussion is to consider how students can become more independent learners and how faculty can help them accomplish this goal. The event is sponsored by the Cross Endowed Chair in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at Illinois State University and is open to all faculty, staff, and students. A light lunch will be provided; no registration is necessary.
- ***SoTL Small Travel Grants.*** Information on these grants should have arrived in your mail boxes in late August. Plus, it is online at <http://www.sotl.ilstu.edu/funding/>
- ***SoTL Teaching-Learning Community- Fall 2008.*** Co-sponsored with CTLT; check their website or contact Cyndy Ruskowski (clruszk@ilstu.edu or 438-5848)
- ***SoTL Mini-Workshop for Graduate Students- Spring 2009.*** We will announce additional information later in the year.
- ***List of citations to SoTL publications*** by Illinois State faculty, staff and students dating back to 2000 are found on the Web at: <http://www.sotl.ilstu.edu/examples/isupub.shtml>
- ***Brief reports for various funded SoTL research*** are on the Web at: <http://www.sotl.ilstu.edu/examples/>
- ***Web snapshots of funded SoTL projects*** are found on the Web at: <http://www.sotl.ilstu.edu/examples/KEEPShots.shtml>
- ***SoTL book sent to departments/schools.*** This month all Illinois State chairs and directors were sent a brief handout about SoTL, as well as a copy of Dr. Kathleen McKinney's book, *Enhancing Student Learning through the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: The Challenges and Joys of Juggling*. Feel free to ask your chair or director to borrow the book.

Economics Department Receives National Recognition for SoTL Work

"A study recently published in the *Southern Economic Journal* has ranked Illinois State University's Department of Economics fifth in the nation based on proportional citations to the *Journal of Economic Education*, above such institutions as Princeton, the University of Wisconsin, and the University of Michigan. The study examines the top 50 economics departments that have published research related to economics education from 1991 to April 2005. In the ranking of the top 50 economists publishing in the area of economics education, Illinois State Professor Emeritus

Jack Chizmar and current faculty member Lon Carlson were tied for 23rd place, based on the number of economic education publications. "Recognition in such a well-established academic journal as the *Southern Economic Journal* highlights our department's commitment to the notion of the "scholar-teacher," said Department Chair James Payne. The study, entitled "Ranking Economics Journals, Economics Departments, and Economists Using Teaching-Focused Research Productivity," appeared in volume 74(3) of the journal." (from ISU's CASNews Volume 4, Issue 19, 2008)

ISU Faculty and Students Contribute Two Chapters in New SoTL Book

Several Illinois State University faculty members and students are contributing two chapters to an upcoming edited book titled *Co-Inquiry on Teaching and Learning: Listening to Student Voices*. The book will be published by Stylus in 2009. The co-authors include Department of Psychology students Denise Faigao and Derek Herrmann, and faculty members, Gary Creasey and Patricia Jarvis of Psychology, Kathleen McKinney of Sociology and the Cross Endowed Chair, Mike Sublett of Geography-Geology, and Jeff Walsh of Criminal Justice Sciences.

One chapter they contributed is "A Range of Student Voices," which discusses a continuum of co-inquiry on teaching and learning, including concrete examples of roles students might play in this research in various institutional contexts. The other chapter is "Student Voices through Research Projects on Learner Autonomy," which reports on our SoTL grant program focusing on learner autonomy and the role of student researchers in these various projects. Qualitative data on impact from the student and faculty research participants are also summarized.

Who Endowed Our Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Chair?

Emily Vigneri, Educational Administration & Foundations Graduate Student

As a first-semester graduate student in the College Student Personnel Administration program here at Illinois State University, I was assigned a “pioneer presentation.” For this project, we were asked to prepare a presentation about a pioneer in the field of student affairs. After looking at a list of potential pioneers to study, I chose Dr. K. Patricia Cross; at the time I had no idea that Dr. Cross was born right here in Normal and is a graduate of Illinois State University.

As a result of my research on Dr. Cross’s work, I am in awe of all she has accomplished and everything she has done for ISU, including the establishment of the Cross Endowed Chair in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. My first step was to “google” her; I was lucky enough to come across her Curriculum Vitae which was very helpful in deciding where to begin my research. Upon reviewing Dr. Cross’s CV, I learned that she attended Illinois State Normal University and completed her B.S. in Mathematics in 1948. For one year post-graduation, she taught Algebra at Harvard Community High School in Harvard, IL. In 1949, she returned to school in pursuit of a Master’s degree in Psychology, and obtained this degree in 1951 from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana.

After learning of Dr. Cross’s attendance at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, I made a trip to their archives department and quickly found myself surrounded by numerous boxes of reports written by Dr. Cross, as well as newspaper articles featuring her and several pictures from her time at the University of Illinois. After making my way through the archival materials, I learned that she worked as a research assistant from 1949-53, until she began work as the Assistant Dean of Women at the University of Illinois, working primarily with sorority women.

In 1958, Dr. Cross completed her Ph.D. in Social Psychology and left the University of Illinois the following year to become the Dean of Women at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. Shortly after Dr. Cross arrived at Cornell, the Dean of Men and Dean of Women’s staffs merged, and she became Cornell’s first Dean of Students! She remained at Cornell until 1964, when she left to become the Director of College and University Programs for Educational Testing Services (ETS) in Princeton, NJ. In 1966, her position changed to a joint appointment with ETS and as Research Educator for the Center for Research and Development in Higher Education at

University of California, Berkeley. In 1980, Dr. Cross left Berkeley to be a visiting professor of Education and chair of the Department of Administration, Planning, and Social Policy at Harvard University. After 8 years at Harvard, she returned to Berkeley as the Elizabeth and Edward Conner Professor of Higher Education at Berkeley, and later the David Pierpont Gardner Professor of Higher Education at Berkeley, from 1993-1995.

Dr. Cross is the recipient of numerous honorary degrees and professional awards. She has written nine books and over 200 articles during her career. She was also the president of the American Association of Higher Education (AAHE) from 1974-1975, and chair of the AAHE board of directors from 1989-1990. Dr. Cross received the 1986 E.F. Lindquist Award for “significant contributions to our knowledge of college student development.”

Perhaps one of the most amazing things I learned about Dr. Cross during my research was her humility and generosity. As a part of our research, we were encouraged to contact the pioneer for a personal interview. This certainly took some courage on my part. After several edits to my original e-mail requesting an interview, I finally decided to hit the send button. After reading about all of her accomplishments and professional commitments, I was not sure she would have the time to converse with a graduate student. Although I was not able to meet with Dr. Cross face-to-face, as she lives in California, we exchanged several e-mails in which she answered all of my questions in depth and was very kind. In 2002, Dr. Cross certainly demonstrated her generosity when she endowed the Cross Chair here at Illinois State. The Cross Chair, Dr. Kathleen McKinney, was kind enough to grant me an interview as well; during the interview, she shared her personal interactions with Dr. Cross. This was very helpful because it gave me an opportunity to learn more about her as a person, as opposed to a researcher or educator.

Overall, I feel this project provided me with the opportunity to find out more about the distinguished woman behind the Cross Endowed Chair in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning here at Illinois State. Today, Dr. Cross is a Professor of Higher Education, Emerita, at University California-Berkeley, and continues to enjoy two of her favorite activities: hiking and gardening.

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