

EFFECTIVE WAYS TO SUPPORT THE SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING (SoTL) AT THE CAMPUS AND DEPARTMENT LEVELS

Overview and General Strategies

OVERVIEW

Eleven **models** for campus support of SoTL structures

1. Loose network(s) already interested people who do what they can
2. Establish liaisons at the department or college level
3. Special Institute or conference is held
4. Work through an existing teaching center
5. Create a new unit such as a center for research on teaching and learning
6. Teaching Academy (faculty, ownership, not part of administration, self-governed)
7. System-level initiatives (if in a multi-campus situation)
8. Course offered on SoTL for students; SoTL projects and support in the course
9. Work through faculty senate type structure
10. Special positions such as Endowed Chair at university or college levels
11. Combined models

Five **best practices** when attempting to change institutional policies re SoTL (such as, P&T policies or mission or assessment or budget planning or hiring)

1. Hold wide-ranging, prolonged conversations
2. Have committed leaders
3. Have external support (money, intellectual support)
4. Be involved in national initiatives and groups (AAHE, Clusters, CASTL...)
5. Think about roles and rewards
6. Connect this initiative to other major campus initiatives
7. Involve key faculty members with high credibility on campus

A **resource**: There are many models of campus support for SoTL and specific, good ideas in the book published by AAHE, now available through Stylus. Cambridge, B. (2004). *Campus Progress: Supporting the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. Washington, DC: AAHE.

(Note: the above section of this document was adapted from a handout or email message but none of us in the Cluster can remember the original source. We acknowledge, however, that credit goes to someone else.)

CAMPUS LEVEL

Involvement in the CASTL Program

Become an affiliate member of an existing campus cluster of the Carnegie Academy for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL). Attend the AAHE/CASTL Summer Academy and SoTL Colloquium. Have colleagues apply to be Carnegie Scholars.

Self-Study

Engage in ongoing study of the status of SoTL on your campus.

Campus Conversations on SoTL

Create opportunities that encourage faculty to examine critically and question their teaching practices and student learning.

- *Teaching and Learning Symposium*: Hold a campus teaching/learning conference or symposium. Such an event provides an opportunity for faculty, graduate assistants, students and staff to share teaching resources, strategies, and research on college teaching and student learning/development, including SoTL. A notable speaker external to campus could be invited to give a keynote presentation.
- *Campus Sessions on SoTL*: Invite guest speakers and organize workshops, panels, visits by SoTL journal editors, discussion hours, etc. on using, and rewarding SoTL.
- *SoTL Faculty-Learning Communities (FLC) or Writing Circles*: Create and support FLCs or writing circles for faculty interested in or engaged in SoTL work. These groups provide opportunities for faculty members of varying ranks and graduate students from differing disciplines to meet on a regular basis to discuss issues related to teaching and learning and/or provide peer feedback on work in progress.

Integrating SoTL into Hiring and Evaluation

Consider SoTL in hiring, evaluation, promotion and tenure policies to allow faculty to pursue and be rewarded for engaging in SoTL.

Administrative Unit Support of SoTL

Provide sustained support for SoTL from an array of campus entities such as instructional technologies, library, institutional advancement, and unions as applicable.

Connecting SoTL to Institutional Mission

Incorporate SoTL into institutional mission statements and strategic plans. Promote the value of SoTL work among department chairs and promotion and tenure committees. Solicit public support of SoTL by upper level administration.

Funding

Identify funding sources for SoTL; include SoTL in prioritizing for research funding; and provide faculty development funds for SoTL conferences and workshops.

SoTL as a Criterion for Awards

Consider SoTL in selecting recipients of teaching, service and research awards.

Faculty Positions or Endowed Chair in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Create full- or part-time SoTL positions to promote faculty development; provide support for conducting and disseminating SoTL work.

Promote SoTL with New Faculty

Offer a session on SoTL at orientation for new faculty. Send an e-mail message to all new faculty with information about SoTL, and local SoTL resources and opportunities. Encourage new faculty to attend the SoTL summer institute and have SoTL mentors.

Students

Engage students in conversations about SoTL in and out of the classroom. Offer a course in SoTL for students with SoTL projects conducted in the course.

SoTL Websites

Create a website of information and resources for the SoTL. Link to other SoTL sites.

Shared Governance

Faculty who understand and support SoTL need to volunteer and be elected to committees that advise administrators, deal with budget allocation, rewrite evaluation and reward policies, and so on.

SoTL Publications

Start a campus newsletter or journal as an outlet for local SoTL work or contribute to existing publications. An example of such an outlet is www.mountainrise.wcu.edu.

DEPARTMENT LEVEL

Collaboration

Identify common student learning challenges within and across departments to encourage cross-faculty cross-discipline SoTL work.

Workshop

Give a workshop on defining, measuring, and evaluating (formative and summative) teaching, scholarly teaching, and SoTL for faculty.

SoTL Small Grant Program

Offer SoTL small grants to faculty.

SoTL Book Give-aways

Purchase multiple copies of SoTL books. These can be offered to faculty and staff, free, when they receive a SoTL grant, participate in an SoTL FLC, come to the teaching center as a new faculty member, help with CASTL or Summer Academy work, etc. Books can also be used as door prizes at certain events.

Summer Institute on SoTL

Implement a summer institute on SoTL, ranging from two days to a week. Pay faculty members stipends as funds permit. Provide opportunities for participants to do the following:

1. learn more about SoTL, 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 a SoTL project
3. share ideas and information about SoTL with colleagues.

Sponsor “follow-up” sessions for people to get together and discuss the progress of their work.

SoTL Community of Scholars and SoTL Resources Group

Create a virtual community of people interested in SoTL at your institution through an electronic discussion list and/or e-mail nickname group. SoTL resources and opportunities can be shared with this group. Set up a SoTL Resources Group, “a bank” of faculty with expertise in specific areas related to SoTL. These individuals, their contact information, and their areas of SoTL expertise can be listed as resources/possible mentors in a database distributed on campus and posted on your SoTL website.