

7 *The scholarship of teaching and learning is one development that has occurred over the last twenty-five years. This chapter argues that it is best understood as a habit of mind and set of practices that contribute to a culture in which other changes and developments can thrive.*

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: From Idea to Integration

Pat Hutchings

Metaphors about graveyards and slow-moving ships have long been commonplace in descriptions of higher education and its pace of change. But as this volume attests, the reality is more complicated. By way of example, I think of my own experience as an undergraduate in the early 1970s. I was one of those students who leapt into college life with both feet and loved (just about) every minute of it. But looking back, I am struck not only by what those years included, but also by what they didn't. There were no small-group collaborative learning experiences, no learning communities, no service-learning, no undergraduate research offerings, no electronic portfolios, no problem-based learning—indeed, very few of the practices that are now seen as hallmarks of a powerful learning environment. Granted, such opportunities are still far from universally available. And the embrace of them in even the most reform-minded, learning-focused settings may still be fragile. But clearly it is not the case that there is nothing new under the higher education sun. This essay, then, looks at the scholarship of teaching and learning as one development among many over the last twenty-five years, arguing that it is best understood not as a discrete new model or approach but as a habit of mind and set of practices that contribute to a culture in which other changes and developments can thrive. By engaging faculty from a wide range of fields in asking and answering questions about their students' learning, the scholarship of teaching and learning inspires, shapes, and informs further advances in teaching, curriculum, assessment, and campus culture.

Coming to Terms

The language of the scholarship of teaching and learning first gained prominence in higher education through the volume by Carnegie Foundation president Ernest Boyer, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* (Boyer, 1990). But the idea captured in the phrase has a longer and more varied lineage, drawing on earlier work on teacher knowledge (Shulman, 1987), more traditional educational research coming out of schools of education, the study of learning and cognition (McKeachie, 1980), the teacher research movement in K–12 settings (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1999), and the student assessment movement—especially the practices of classroom assessment and classroom research (Angelo and Cross, 1993). The work has been fed by fields (like chemistry and composition) that have a notable history of pedagogical research as well, and by the proliferation of campus teaching centers, which have provided a foundation for such work by bringing faculty together to look carefully at their teaching and their students' work. Additionally, and in a more general way, the scholarship of teaching and learning has been shaped by the rise of action research and the recognition of the value of practitioner knowledge (Schön, 1983; Shulman, 1987, 2004).

Given the diverse genetic pool contributing to the scholarship of teaching and learning, it is no surprise that Boyer's phrase was understood in different ways. (Boyer did not, in fact, include "learning," in the original formulation; it was added in Carnegie's subsequent work and has now become common usage.) The 1990s were marked by lively debates about what this new concept did and did not include, about definitions and boundaries. How was the scholarship of teaching and learning related to good teaching? If it was more than teaching excellence, what were the added elements? What forms might it take? Was it something any faculty member might do, or a type of work that demanded special skills and background and was thus only for a small group of specialists? How could its quality be measured, and how would it be valued and rewarded? These and other questions were front and center as campuses looked for ways to engage with the idea and hammered their way toward locally meaningful conceptions of the work it implied. On research universities, for instance, the scholarship of teaching and learning was typically understood in ways that parallel traditional research—as peer-reviewed, published scholarship, that is. In settings more narrowly focused on teaching, the emphasis was often on enriching local conversations about teaching and shaping innovations that improved students' learning (see Cambridge, 2004). An awareness of disciplinary differences began to emerge early on, as well (Healey, 2002; Huber and Morreale, 2002).

This line of conceptual debate and deliberation continues today and has resulted in a rich literature about the defining features of the scholarship of teaching and learning (Bass, 1999; Kreber, 2001), its difference

from related (and equally important) kinds of pedagogical work (Hutchings and Shulman, 1999; Trigwell, 2004), its methods (McKinney, 2007), and its underlying conceptual and theoretical bases (Hutchings and Huber, 2008; Roxå, Olsson, and Mårtensson, 2008). For some, perhaps, the continuing attention to “what it is” may seem to lean toward navel-gazing. But definitions matter, sending powerful signals about who is welcome in such work, who is excluded, and about purposes and values. In general the debates have been healthy, keeping the field open and emergent, and making it a welcoming place for educators from many different contexts, with opportunities for cross fertilization and solid connections to the wider “teaching commons” (Huber and Hutchings, 2005) in which communities of educators committed to pedagogical inquiry and innovation come together to exchange ideas.

From Idea to Action

Over the past dozen years, I have had a special perch for watching the scholarship of teaching and learning movement unfold. As a senior scholar and vice president at The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, I was part of a team that led and learned from the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL), an ambitious effort, running from 1998–2009, to propel this new idea and language into action: in the practice of individual faculty members; as a conception of faculty work in a wide range of disciplines and professional fields; and as an aspect of campus life and work. These three arenas offer a useful framework for tracing how this idea has taken shape, what has happened, and where things are headed. (Readers looking for a fuller account of the CASTL program should consult Cambridge, 2004; Ciccone, 2009; Gale, 2007; Huber, 2010.)

Individual Teaching Practice. One measure of the trajectory of the scholarship of teaching and learning has been its capacity to engage growing numbers of faculty from a broad range of settings. What was once an intriguing if sometimes puzzling idea—of interest to a small group of faculty—has over the past decade catalyzed a sizable and significant international community of scholars. Although exact numbers are impossible to know, one indicator of this broad engagement is the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Established in 2004, the organization’s 2009 annual meeting (the sixth) drew some 650 participants, from 500 institutions, and 15 countries (see www.issotl.org). The variety of their work is telling, as well, ranging widely across disciplines and fields, employing a full array of methods from individual case studies to larger-scale surveys, and exploring questions about particular classroom innovations on the one hand and more broad-based theories of learning and expertise on the other.

The pathways by which these scholars enter this community are varied. Some become involved through a campus initiative that raises questions about the efficacy of a new approach. Others enter through a disciplinary or departmental door, engaging with new ideas about the field and what it means to bring novice learners to advanced levels of understanding and practice. Although the initial impulse is typically local, involvement with national projects often prompts questions that invite the scholarship of teaching and learning. And in some settings, the call for program or institutional assessment has usefully intersected with the kinds of inquiry faculty can conduct in their own classrooms. As in most engaging work, a sense of common cause and collegiality adds fuel to the fire. For many faculty, the chance to share their findings with others—in writing, public presentations, and also, increasingly, in new multimedia, Web-based formats—encourages larger ambitions and deeper engagement.

What is also clear is that such work can be personally transformative, even “disruptive,” as suggested by a comment from a young faculty member in history who became involved in the scholarship of teaching and learning: “As a new professor, drunk on the high spirits distilled from positive course evaluations, I rested easily in the knowledge . . . that I was a ‘great,’ ‘superb,’ ‘wonderful’ teacher,” he noted. “But I’m younger than that now.” He goes on to talk about his effort to design his teaching more carefully and his choice to “live discerningly with the scholarship of teaching and learning” rather than “happily without it, but deceived” (quoted in Huber and Hutchings, 2005, p. 73). Although not all scholars of teaching and learning confess to such mind-changing experiences, treating one’s classroom as a site for inquiry is eye-opening and career-altering for many. Ninety-eight percent of faculty who served as CASTL Scholars (a nationally selective fellowship program) reported that the work increased their excitement about teaching; ninety-three percent changed the design of their courses; ninety-two percent found that their expectations about their own students’ learning were changed (Huber and Hutchings, 2005, p. 140).

Developments in the Scholarly and Professional Societies. Scholars of teaching and learning are powerful recruiters of new talent as they share their work in informal conversations on campus, at more formal campus events featuring local scholarship of teaching and learning, in presentations and workshops at national and international conferences, and on the Web. But in addition to this grassroots dynamic, such work has spread and evolved as a result of leadership within the disciplinary communities that shape faculty identity and send powerful signals about what does and does not constitute serious scholarly work.

Such leadership was cultivated early on when representatives of a range of scholarly and professional societies were brought together to explore emerging conceptions of scholarly work. The immediate impetus was *Scholarship Reconsidered*, but interest was catalyzed as well by the more general concern that higher education was seen as neglectful of teaching

(and other more applied, integrative aspects of faculty work). In response, many of these groups issued statements advocating openness to a wider range of scholarship and affirming the importance of teaching as consequential, intellectual work (Diamond and Adam, 1995). Though not all of the groups invoked the language of the scholarship of teaching and learning, the general spirit of the idea was clearly in evidence.

Over the following decade (sometimes but not always in conjunction with CASTL, which convened scholarly and professional societies and offered seed grants to support their work), many of these groups turned their resolutions into action, for instance by creating new journals dedicated to the scholarship of teaching and learning in their field, or by making a place for such work in existing, high-visibility journals, as was true in history (see Pace, 2004). Other groups established new conferences and venues, bringing scholars of teaching and learning together. Some created training programs and pursued new funding sources. The National Academy of Engineering called for work on engineering education to be recognized as research, and created the Center for the Advancement of Scholarship on Engineering Education, and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute gave out \$1 million grants to 20 Howard Hughes Medical Institute fellows for scholarly projects on teaching and learning. The American Society for Microbiology has used National Science Foundation money to train some 90 biologists in the scholarship of teaching and learning, and is moving to increase that number (Chang, e-mail to Hutchings, January 4, 2010).

As these examples suggest, the scholarship of teaching and learning has taken different forms in different fields, with each bringing its own traditions, values, and resources to bear (Huber and Morreale, 2002). Along the way, they are learning from one another, borrowing ideas, and working to advance the larger cause of teaching.

Campus Culture. Throughout the development of the scholarship of teaching and learning movement, and woven through debates about definitions, methods, forms, and formats, questions about the value and status of this work on campus have been a running subtext. And this is no surprise. Such work goes against the grain in many academic settings—and not only in those heavily tilted toward traditional research. Community college faculty have, for instance, had to sort out the place of such scholarship, as well (Tinberg, Duffy, and Mino, 2007).

Certainly there are signs of progress. For starters, it is worth pointing out that more than 250 campuses signed on to participate in CASTL over its decade-plus of activity: grappling with definitions, analyzing the campus context for serious work on teaching and learning, and undertaking action initiatives of their own design to bring the scholarship of teaching and learning more fully into the institutional mainstream. The program offered \$5,000 grants to a small number of campuses to support this work in the early years, but institutions were required to commit significant resources of their own as an indication of local commitment.

As might be expected, their efforts “took” more firmly in some places than others, but data on campus developments are promising. As of 2002, for instance, seventy percent of institutions reporting their work to Carnegie were providing stipends, grants, or released time for individual faculty or departments doing the scholarship of teaching and learning; ninety-five percent had sponsored campus-wide and departmental conferences, workshops, and retreats; and seventy-one percent reported developing new infrastructure (like a teaching center) to support and facilitate the work, with many pointing to its impact on professional development, where the focus on asking and answering questions about students’ learning was seen by one participant as a new “lingua franca” (Ciccone, 2004, p. 49).

Over the years, policies explicitly identifying the scholarship of teaching and learning as work that counts for promotion and tenure have also been put in place (see, for example, O’Meara and Rice, 2005; Post, 2004; Roen, 2004). And although such policies do not tell the whole story—whether the work will really count depends on many factors much closer to the ground, including the scholar’s ability to make a strong case to colleagues—the stage has been set for further progress with a menu of strategies for the peer review of teaching (Hutchings, 1996); extensive experience with new tools (most notably course portfolios) for documenting the scholarly work of teaching and learning (Bernstein, Burnett, Goodburn, and Savory, 2006); and case studies of individuals who have found a place for the scholarship of teaching and learning in their careers (Huber, 2004).

It should be said, as well, that promotion and tenure are not the only significant indicators of a campus’s embrace of this work. As the following comment suggests, more subtle shifts in culture, leadership, and language can also be important:

Our experience [with the scholarship of teaching and learning] has taught us that one initiative in an institution creates ripple effects in other parts . . . effecting systemic change. As a result of our campus conversations [about the scholarship of teaching and learning] we are . . . beginning to convert catchphrases like “the importance of teaching” and “teaching institution” from vague slogans into affirmations of the value of teaching and learning as institutional priorities. (Albert, Moore, and Mincey, 2004, p. 192)

An Integrative Vision

As readers of this volume know well, many promising reform efforts in higher education fail to make a long-term difference. This happens for many reasons, but one, certainly, can be that the effort’s very success—its ability to attract a group of practitioners and champions—creates a kind of silo or cult, separate from the ongoing work of the institution. I will confess that I have worried, at times, that this might be the fate of the scholarship of

teaching and learning. The challenge is to weave this “movement” into the ongoing rhythms of academic life and institutions; to move from “catch-phrases” . . . to “systemic change,” as the quote above suggests.

Moving toward this kind of transformation has been a hallmark of recent developments in the scholarship of teaching and learning, as campus leaders have found ways to harness its principles and practices to larger, shared agendas and institutional priorities. To be clear, the engagement of individual faculty exploring their own students’ learning and sharing what they learn with others who can build on it will likely (and rightly) continue to be the *sine qua non* and prime mover of this work. However, it is now possible to see such efforts converging around more collective agendas, whether by happenstance, as scholars pursuing similar questions and goals discover one another and find ways to pool their efforts, or by design, where the scholarship of teaching and learning is framed from the outset as a road toward larger changes.

Examples of this more collaborative, cross-cutting approach are now multiplying, for instance in the form of collections of work by scholars of teaching and learning in different settings but organized around a common theme (see, for example, Garung, Chick, and Haynie, 2008; Smith, Nowacek, and Bernstein, 2010). The Visible Knowledge Project, a multi-campus scholarship of teaching and learning effort involving faculty in history and cultural studies, resulted in powerful webs of influence and knowledge building in which projects were informed by one another (Bass and Eynon, 2009). Within CASTL, a group of campuses joined forces to use the scholarship of teaching and learning to improve their approaches to undergraduate research (Beckman and Hensel, 2009). And a number of campuses are exploring fruitful intersections between the scholarship of teaching and learning, assessment, and accreditation, as well (Cambridge, 2004; Ciccone, Huber, Hutchings, and Cambridge, 2009).

Developments like these reflect an understanding of the scholarship of teaching and learning not as a discrete activity or approach but as a way of thinking about the ongoing work of teaching and learning: a vision in which faculty habits and values as scholars are brought to bear on their interactions with students. Indeed, one of the most powerful lessons of this work over recent years has been the value of involving students—both undergraduate and graduate—by inviting them into this work not (or not only) as objects of study, but as participants in exploring and shaping their own learning. Such involvement has been the guiding principle of a growing group of institutions that collaborated to describe their experiences of (as the title of their volume says) *Engaging Student Voices in the Study of Teaching and Learning* (Werder and Otis, 2010). In some settings this has meant involvement in curricular reform; in others, participation in powerful discussion with all members of the academic community, or engagement in forms of undergraduate research that are explicitly focused on the learning experience. For many students, these experiences are transformational. As one of

them noted, “it flipped a switch, and once it’s flipped it can’t be turned off” (quoted in Huber and Hutchings, 2005). This student is now a teacher.

The scholarship of teaching and learning is a work in progress. It is built on the “big idea” that teaching, like learning, is intellectual work, work that can be improved through systematic inquiry, critique, and collaboration within a diverse community of learners, be they teachers or students; indeed, it strives to make better learners of both. Such a shift can be strange or even scary for those brought up in an academic culture that has treated pedagogy as a private enterprise, to be conducted behind closed doors—and it is not without risks. But the risks come with significant benefits, for when our work as educators is undertaken in a spirit of curiosity, intellectual honesty, and generosity, new new directions for teaching and learning will surely emerge.

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