

## The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

“A scholarship of teaching is *not* synonymous with excellent teaching. It requires “a kind of ‘going meta,’ in which faculty frame and systematically investigate questions related to student learning—the conditions under which it occurs, what it looks like, how to deepen it, and so forth—and do so with an eye not only to improving their own classroom but to advancing practice beyond it.”

[Hutchings and Shulman (1999)]

Patti Clayton, Ph.D.  
[phclayton@mindspring.com]  
[www.curricularengagement.com]

Senior Scholar, Center for Service and Learning, IUPUI  
&  
Visiting Fellow, New England Resource Center for Higher Education

June 2009

# Service-Learning as SoTL: A Case Study Involving Critical Reflection

[Ash, Clayton, & Atkinson (2005)]

This example suggests various scales at which a SoTL project might be undertaken: within an individual instructor's course, across multiple courses at the same institution, and across multiple institutions.

Service-learning practitioner-scholars ....

- articulated an issue we wanted to understand better in our implementation of service-learning (arising from central challenges we were facing)
  - How can we help students deepen their learning?
- developed a hypothesis that using Paul's standards of critical thinking and Bloom's Taxonomy would support deeper learning
- developed user-friendly tables on the standards of critical thinking (CT) and on hierarchically-expressed learning objectives (LOs) for our students and an associated CT rubric
- developed reflection prompts that were well-matched to the learning objectives
- assigned reflection activities to our students at multiple points throughout the semester
- used the CT standards and LOs in giving feedback on our students' draft reflection products throughout the semester
- collected and de-identified draft and final reflection products from our students from early in the semester and late in the semester
- gathered a team of students and faculty to collaboratively score the draft and final reflection products against the CT and LO rubrics
- examined the scores to answer specific research questions
  - Does use of the CT standards and LOs improve the quality of students' thinking across drafts, e.g., from a first draft to a final draft?
  - Does use of the CT standards and LOs improve the quality of students' thinking across the semester, e.g., from an early first draft to a late first draft?
  - Are there any differences in student improvement using these tools across the categories of learning objectives (academic, civic, personal growth)
- refined the prompts, tools, and rubrics in accordance with the research results
- integrated this refined work into faculty development processes and into our own teaching
- presented on this research at a conference and published an article on it in a peer-reviewed journal
- shared the model we were refining with other campuses
- launched an inter-institutional SoTL project to expand the applications of the core reflection model
- developed a student Tutorial on the reflection model and associated CT and LO tools
- are presenting on and publishing the work while also launching spin-off SoTL projects on multiple campuses [including cross-course assessment of student learning – see Jameson, Clayton, & Bringle (2008)].

## The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: An Overview

“... *all* faculty have an obligation to teach well, to engage students, and to foster important forms of student learning—not that this is easily done. Such teaching is a good fully sufficient unto itself. When it entails, as well, certain practices of classroom assessment and evidence gathering, when it is informed not only by the latest ideas in the field but by current ideas about teaching the field, when it invites peer collaboration and review, *then* that teaching might rightly be called scholarly, or reflective, or informed. But in addition to all of this, yet *another* good is needed, one called a scholarship of teaching, which ... we have described as having the three additional central features of being public ("community property"), open to critique and evaluation, and in a form that others can build on... A fourth attribute of a scholarship of teaching, implied by the other three, is that it involves question-asking, inquiry, and investigation, particularly around issues of student learning...

A scholarship of teaching is *not* synonymous with excellent teaching. It requires “a kind of ‘going meta,’ in which faculty frame and systematically investigate questions related to student learning—the conditions under which it occurs, what it looks like, how to deepen it, and so forth—and do so with an eye not only to improving their own classroom but to advancing practice beyond it.”

[Hutchings P. and Shulman L.S. (1999). *The Scholarship of Teaching: New Elaborations, New Developments*. *Change*. 31:5. 10-15.]

*Good teaching:*

- to engage students
- to foster important forms of student learning

*Scholarly teaching:* good teaching +

- practices of classroom assessment and evidence gathering, informed not only by the latest ideas in the field but by current ideas about teaching the field
- peer collaboration and review

*Scholarship of teaching:* scholarly teaching +

- public ("community property")
- open to critique and evaluation
- in a form that others can build on
- involving question-asking, inquiry, and investigation (particularly around issues of student learning)

## Standards of “Scholarship”

It is important to put our thinking about moving from “good teaching” to “the scholarship of teaching and learning” into the broad context of what constitutes scholarship.

Glassick et al (1997) offer a set of standards by which faculty work can be judged as “scholarship”:

- Clear goals – are the objectives well-defined and significant?
- Adequate preparation – is the work located in the context of existing scholarship, and does the scholar mobilize the skills and resources needed to conduct it?
- Appropriate methods – is the approach appropriate to the goals, and are the methods both well-chosen and modified as needed?
- Significant results – are the goals achieved, and are other areas of investigation opened as a result of it?
- Effective presentation – is the work shared effectively and appropriately with others, in an organized manner through appropriate forums?
- Reflective critique – is the work critically evaluated by the scholar, and is this evaluation used to improve future work?

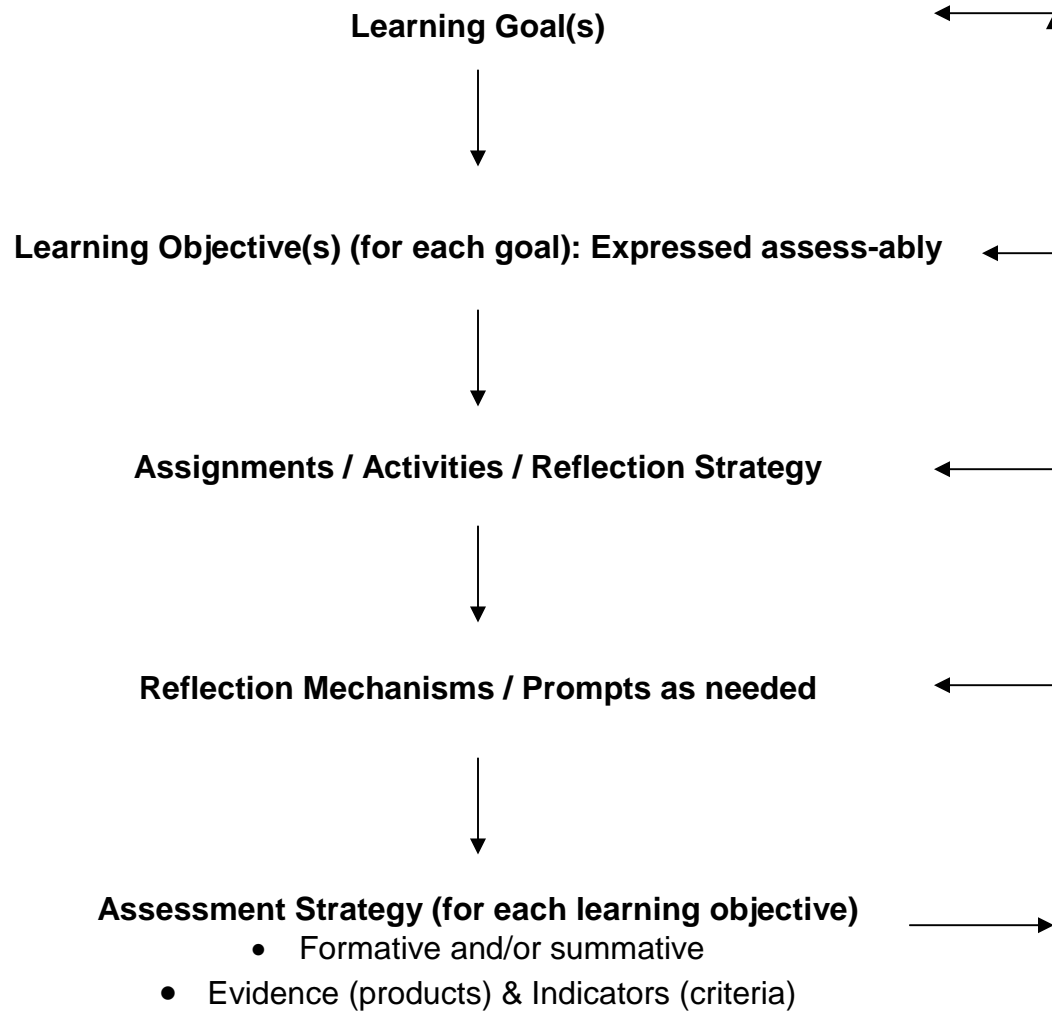
[Glassick, C.E., Huber, M.T., & Maeroff, G.I. (1997). *Scholarship assessed: Evaluation of the professoriate*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.]

Furco and others use characteristics of the scholarship of discovery as a basis for articulating standards for the scholarship of engagement. We can build on that to derive standards for SoTL, as follows:

Scholarship of Discovery	Scholarship of Engagement	Scholarship of Teaching and Learning – PHC DRAFT
Breaks new ground in the discipline	Breaks new ground in the discipline <i>and has direct application to broader public issues</i>	Breaks new ground <i>regarding teaching and learning</i> in the discipline <i>and/or more generally</i>
Answers significant questions in the discipline	Answers significant questions in the discipline <i>which have relevance to public or community issues</i>	Answers significant questions <i>regarding teaching and learning</i> in the discipline <i>and/or more generally</i>
Is reviewed and validated by qualified peers in the discipline	Is reviewed and validated by qualified peers in the discipline <i>and by members of the community</i>	Is reviewed and validated by qualified peers in the discipline <i>and/or by experts in the relevant pedagogy</i>
Is based on solid theoretical basis	Is based on solid theoretical <i>and practical bases</i>	Is based on solid theoretical basis <i>and frequently draws heavily on classroom practice</i>
Applies appropriate investigative methods	Applies appropriate investigative ( <i>and program evaluation</i> ) methods	Applies appropriate investigative ( <i>and assessment</i> ) methods
Is disseminated to appropriate audiences	Is disseminated to appropriate <i>academic and community</i> audiences	Is disseminated to appropriate audiences, <i>including educators within and beyond the discipline</i>
Makes significant advances in knowledge and understanding the discipline	Makes significant advances in knowledge and understanding of the discipline <i>and public social issues</i>	Makes significant advances in knowledge and understanding <i>regarding teaching in the discipline and/or more generally</i>

[Modified Source: Presented by Andrew Furco, Associate Vice President for Public Engagement, University of Minnesota, February, 2008]

## Instructional Design: A Basis for SoTL



## Worksheet: Getting Started in SoTL

Some important questions to ask yourself as you proceed from “good teaching” to “scholarly teaching” to “scholarship of teaching and learning” [modified source: Clayton & Moses 2008]:

### *Finding a focus:*

What interventions/strategies generate learning in my course or other learning environment?

How effective are those interventions/strategies at present? How do I know (what evidence do I have to support my judgment)?

Am I satisfied with the current outcomes? Why or why not? What particular struggles am I facing in my efforts to enhance these outcomes?

*Drawing on what is already known:* What do principles of good practice (in my pedagogy, in my discipline) suggest as possible ways to enhance student learning outcomes?

*Developing a hypothesis:* If I modify an intervention/strategy in accordance with these principles, what difference do I expect it to make? Why?

### *Collecting and analyzing results:*

How will I know if the revised approach has been successful in enhancing student learning outcomes?

What type(s) of evidence do I need to see, and how can I best gather it?

How can I best analyze the evidence I gather in order to help me better understand the effectiveness of the revised approach?

*Dealing with challenges:* What challenges will be associated with this revised approach and how will I handle them?

*Collaborating with others:* Who should I collaborate with in this process? Who are the leading scholars in my field who are engaged in SoTL? How can I build on the work of other scholars in this process?

*Disseminating results:* What are the best dissemination outlets for this work, and how might I connect with them? To what extent does my discipline support SoTL? Which conferences and/or journals include SoTL dissemination options?

*Refining implementation:* How can I best feed what I learn back into my teaching, for further modification of the same intervention/strategy or similar modification of another? What additional questions might arise as I act on what I learn?

*Complying with regulations:* What is the Institutional Review Board policy on my campus governing use of student products in scholarship, and what will I need to do in order to comply with it?

*Taking into account cultural opportunities and constraints:* To what extent does my departmental and/or institutional context support and reward the scholarship of teaching and learning / the scholarship of engagement? What are the implications for me?

# **Service-Learning as SoTL: A Second Case Study Involving Counter-normative Pedagogy**

[Clayton & Ash, 2004]

*Writing as an assignment to express learning that has already occurred → Writing as a vehicle for ongoing learning*

Writing and speaking are not merely the end products of a thought process developed to fulfill an assignment or to demonstrate thinking that has already been done. Rather, they can be also be vehicles for ongoing learning and deeper thinking about who we are and the work we are doing. This shift in perspective includes the realization that understanding includes being able to articulate learning, and that quality of thought rather than quantity of writing is key in effectively learning through writing. By approaching assignments in this light, we can see them as meaningful vehicles for important learnings rather than as “busywork” to satisfy a requirement.

## **Characteristics of writing in traditional vs. engaged pedagogies**

**Traditional:** Write one version and receive a grade  
Instructor comments may only highlight shortcomings  
The writing is solitary in nature  
Length, format, grammar, spelling are often primary concerns  
The writing is product-oriented

**Engaged:** Revise through multiple drafts before being graded  
Instructor/peer feedback challenges / deepens thinking  
The writing (and thinking) is collaborative in nature  
Quality of ideas is generally the key concern  
The writing is process- as well as product-oriented

## **Categories of differences**

Understanding of and approaches to assessment  
Role of the instructor  
Meaning of assignments

## **Shifts in perspective**

Write after learning → Write for learning  
Feedback as justification of grade → Feedback as valuable stimulus to improved thinking  
Objective is to generate static product → Objective is to undertake thinking process

## **Shifts in practice**

Student: Ignore instructor comments → Carefully study and use instructor comments  
Student: Set aside one block of time to write → Set aside several blocks of time for writing process  
Instructor: Provide limited feedback → Provide substantial feedback

## **Facilitating these shifts**

Share draft writing with students and solicit and use their feedback  
Reward improvement in writing / thinking over the course of multiple drafts / of the semester

## Documenting the Work as Scholarship

[Excerpted and modified from Clayton, P.H. & Moses, M.G. (2006). *Integrating Service-Learning: A Resource Guide*. Boston: Jumpstart.]

Having integrated [applied] learning into your teaching and begun to conduct scholarship on it, it is very important that you appropriately document your work, so that it can enhance your portfolio and be an asset when the time comes for review.

Criteria for documenting faculty work vary campus by campus, but some general guidelines are emerging. For example, it is generally recommended that faculty categorize service-learning as “teaching” rather than as “service”; this may sometimes require justification depending on how familiar your department chair and other reviewers are with the pedagogy.

As with documentation of any other teaching activity, the [applied] learning components of your portfolio will be strengthened by including evidence of intentional design for student learning outcomes. This is one specific way that moving from teaching with [applied] learning to scholarship on [applied] learning can strengthen your portfolio: the SoTL process will not only generate evidence of student learning outcomes but will make explicit your commitment to using assessment data to improve the quality of your teaching. Remember: that you taught [with an applied learning pedagogy] may not, in and of itself, on most campuses, substantially strengthen your portfolio – that you taught [with an applied learning pedagogy] and thereby generated evidence-based outcomes and that you are systematically investigating the relationship between those outcomes and specific components of your teaching in order to improve your implementation and advance understanding of the pedagogy and of its links to your discipline is another story entirely.

You will need to determine where in your portfolio you can best position your scholarship of teaching and learning work, depending on the nature of your appointment and the definitions of “scholarship” in your department. Include peer-reviewed articles and presentations that derive from your scholarship of teaching and learning activities. It is often useful to include as well a narrative statement that links your implementation of [applied] learning and your scholarship on it to your evolving philosophy of teaching.

Including students as co-investigators in a scholarship of teaching and learning project may allow this work to be counted as a mentoring activity. And it can dramatically enhance your thinking about the important questions to ask and the most effective ways to gather the evidence that you need in the context of the course, while also building the students’ capacities as scholars.

Above all, be sure that your design of these projects, from the beginning, includes outlets for your work. As you design your SoTL project, consider the potential value of gradually intensifying your dissemination: perhaps you can conduct a small-scale project in your own course, share that experience and what you are learning at a local or state conference, revise your implementation and collect data in a more rigorous and comprehensive way the following semester, bring in other faculty to collaborate in your data analysis and then to develop a cross-course study, and then write-up this multi-faceted project for presentation and feedback at your disciplinary association conference before finalizing it for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Give yourself opportunities to learn – ideally in collaboration with others – how to approach [applied] learning as the scholarship of teaching and learning; and, in doing so, create for yourself multiple opportunities to disseminate your work, both for the purpose of feedback and for the purpose of portfolio documentation.