

Editorial: Scholarly Activity and Ways of Sharing

Balbir Gurm, EdD, Alice Macpherson, MA

The concept of teaching as scholarly work was first proposed by Ernest Boyer, former Carnegie Foundation President in 1990 in the report *Scholarship Reconsidered* and later (1997) by Charles Glassick, Mary Taylor Huber, and Gene Maeroff in *Scholarship Assessed*. In 1998, the Carnegie foundation began an initiative called the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL). The goal of the CASTL program is to “support the development of the scholarship of teaching. Under this umbrella are several Institutional Leadership programs. One such program is building Scholarship of Teaching and Learning communities. Members of this cluster are The Ohio State University (Ohio, USA), Kwantlen Polytechnic University (British Columbia, Canada), Dartmouth College (New Hampshire, USA), University of Glasgow (Scotland), Queens University (Ontario, Canada), Southeast Missouri State University (Missouri, USA) and Ryerson University (Ontario, Canada). This cluster of the seven diverse institutions is focusing on “influencing the academic culture to recognize that there is a continuum of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) activities, establishing common and rigorous outcome measures with personal, progression, and programmatic implications and disseminating successful SoTL initiatives” (November 2006 CASTL Gathering, Washington, DC).

A part of the commitment Kwantlen made to our Cluster and the Carnegie Foundation was to create a journal to create a community of scholars to dialogue about the scholarship of teaching and learning. The call for this electronic journal issue was aimed at obtaining a wide range of digital submissions about sharing scholarly activities about the scholarship of teaching and learning.

There is an ongoing discourse in the international literature on what constitutes scholarship and what constitutes scholarly activities. In British Columbia, there is much debate about what scholarship is and what constitutes scholarly activities. The Federation of Post Secondary Educators of British Columbia held a special conference called Professional Development & Scholarly Activity Conference on March 29, 2008 with the intent of helping post-secondary faculty members in British Columbia come to rich understandings about the terms in ways that bring everyone to a common ground. Richard Gale, Nancy Randall, Alice Macpherson, and I were among the panelists. Richard Gale and I had the specific task of presenting definitions and this is a compilation of our ideas. We believe in a broad definition that includes scholarly teaching which we define as the application of teaching and learning principles to the practice of teaching to enable more effective teaching strategies and learning outcomes. Scholarly activity is a range of intellectual and creative engagement activities driven by intellectual curiosity for the pursuit of scholarship. The purpose of scholarly activity is to engage in scholarship. Scholarship is characterized as increased understandings about phenomena (s) or object (s) and takes multiple forms Discovery, Integration, Application, Service, Teaching and Learning and Creative Artistry. For definitions of all

types of scholarship you can visit

http://kwantlen.ca/TD/resources/Scholarly_Activity_BC_Definition&Purpose_BG.pdf

The scholarship of teaching and learning is about transforming and extending knowledge, interrogating the act of teaching and a process of interaction that creates new understanding. Scholarship of teaching and learning is:

“The public display of the individual understandings and truths that educators have around their roles and what they do with that knowledge.”

This includes what we know about our diverse disciplines, subject matter, and how students learn coupled with our reflections on how we utilize this knowledge within the educational process. A vital part of this scholarship of teaching is our reflections on our practice as we further our understanding of the interplay of both process and content. We believe that teaching and learning is the heart of everything we do as educators” (Gurm & Macpherson, 2005)

It is about making the work we do behind closed doors visible. Anytime we share our understanding with proximal plus one, we are being public (Gale, 2008). As well, the different types of scholarships are not distinct and isolated. They all overlap. There are many products of scholarship including self-reflections, conversations, artistic artifacts, literature reviews, presentations, course development, professional development, scholarship proposals, journal articles, and other publications – books, websites, videos, poems and PowerPoint and other digital presentations. For ways to recognize and support scholarly activities in ways that promote student and faculty development and nurture scholarly collegial learning communities, see

http://kwantlen.ca/TD/resources/Scholarly_Activity_BC_Access&Utilization_AM.pdf

This issue was to highlight the many artifacts of scholarship. The responses to this issue’s call for submissions have all been paper submissions ranging from self reflection to literature reviews. Therefore, I would like to challenge all of you to think about other artifacts and share your ideas on the evaluation of scholarly products in future journals. In this issue are excellent papers on SoTL. Please read and dialogue.