

# **Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL): What promotes, what prevents?**

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## **What is it about?**

The scholarship of teaching (and learning) is a term that has found increasing currency since its coining, with the scholarship of discovery, integration and application, by Boyer in 1990, but what does it mean to New Zealand Universities today and should it be more widely recognised within the tertiary environment? Kreber and Cranton (2000) have proposed a model that neatly identifies various dimensions of SoTL into content, process and premise reflection, as well as defining the domain of knowledge construction as being instructional, pedagogical and curricular. This session foreshadows a project that aims to explore the factors that promote and prevent SoTL within New Zealand.

Trigwell, Martin and Prosser (2000) have also proposed a model for the scholarship of teaching that can be used to identify an individual's engagement with SoTL. Four dimensions are included, engagement with SoTL literature, the focus of reflection, the quality of communication about SoTL and the individual's conception of teaching. This model incorporates Shulman's (1999) view that a scholarly act becomes scholarship when it is made public.

Work by Lueddeke (2003) in the United Kingdom has investigated disciplinary variation in 'teaching-scholarship' that has suggested that teaching conception influences engagement with SoTL. What is unknown is the extent to which individuals and institutions, within New Zealand, engage in SoTL.

## **Why is it important?**

The term scholarship of teaching shares ground with teaching excellence, scholarly teaching and expert teaching. SoTL has been identified as having various benefits including; building partnerships through common teaching interest (learning communities), increasing engagement, enhancing reputations, recording educational effectiveness and contributing to student satisfaction (Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, University of Iowa).

The importance of recognising scholarship outside the traditional arena of discovery lies in the promotion and sharing of knowledge for improving learning. The aim of work in the SoTL area should be focused on enhancing students' experiences of learning.

## **How the session will be run?**

The workshop will consider the concept of SoTL in New Zealand university education and will outline a project examining engagement with SoTL in the sector. Workshop attendees will consider the usefulness of the concept and definitions of SoTL and evaluate two models (Kreber & Cranton's and Trigwell, et al). Discussion will explore the usefulness of the concept of SoTL, how it is promoted within New

Zealand institutions, and if it is not what barriers to its practice exist and how these might be overcome.

## References

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