Closing the Loop on SoTL: Moving to Publication[1]

by

Kay Gillespie[2]

The "Faculty Showcase" is an annual event sponsored by the Faculty Teaching and Learning Center at the University of Central Florida (UCF); and it is designed to recognize and honor the work that has been done by UCF faculty members in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, which we now commonly term "SoTL." UCF is unusually supportive of this area of research and scholarship, more so than most U.S. higher education institutions; and the administration is to be commended for its significant financial support of this effort.

I also commend the staff members of the Faculty Teaching and Learning Center for their implementation and ongoing support of the effort. They clearly offer a high level of expertise to those faculty members who choose to pursue explorations in SoTL through the guidance of individual projects, the resources available on the Center's web site, the coordinated series of workshops offered, and the partnerships with other units of the University such as the Library and its personnel – all of which are designed to bring an institutional focus to SoTL and to support it well.

Framework

The framework, indeed, the very underpinning of any discussion of SoTL, is the important work of Ernest Boyer, who, while serving as the President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, wrote *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate* (1990). In this important work, Boyer proposed a refreshing way of looking at scholarship. The new perspectives he offered encouraged the academy to move beyond the traditional perspective on academic scholarship, which focused on basic and applied research in the disciplines. His conceptualization was based upon the articulation of four categories of scholarship: the scholarship of discovery, the scholarship of integration, the scholarship of application, and the scholarship of teaching.

The last of these four terms, the *scholarship of teaching* was not clearly defined in Boyer's explanations. However, in the intervening twenty years since *Scholarship reconsidered* was released, the term has metamorphosed into the *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*; and understanding has expanded. There has been much discussion about the meaning of this term over the past twenty years (e.g., Huber, 2004; Hutchings, 2000; Shulman & Hutchings, 1999),

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[1] This material was first presented orally as a presentation for the "Faculty Showcase," sponsored by the Faculty Teaching and Learning Center at the University of Central Florida, April 7, 2010. This manuscript was subsequently prepared for the use of the UCF Faculty Teaching and Learning Center. Any material used from this manuscript should be appropriately attributed to Kay Gillespie.

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and I believe one can now legitimately say there is an overall generally accepted understanding of what it means. To guide its SoTL efforts UCF defines the term as follows:

> The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) uses discovery, reflection, and evidence-based methods to research effective teaching and student learning. These findings are peer reviewed and publicly disseminated in an ongoing cycle of systematic inquiry into classroom practices. This work benefits students and colleagues and is a source of personal renewal. (*SoTL*, n.d.)

As an aside, I would enjoy discussing further with UCF personnel the concept of "evidence-based methods" and the idea that SoTL work can serve as a "source of personal renewal", both of which I find to be interesting ideas underpinning the SoTL effort. However, these ideas are not germane to the substance of this presentation/article.

The widely recognized final step of SoTL, is "*closing the loop*", that is, "going public" through conferences or publication. Indeed, the involvement of UCF faculty in the annual "Faculty Showcase" event is one first step in "going public", by the very submission of work for the proceedings of this event. However, it is perhaps only a small step towards "going public." Conference presentation beyond UCF environs would be a next step, but that venue is also not the substance of this presentation/article. (Staff at the UCF Faculty Center are well prepared to give advice on regional, national, and international conferences that offer a focus for SoTL work.)

The big step to be taken in *really* closing the loop is publication, most likely journal publication; and that was the topic of this oral presentation at the UCF Faculty Showcase, 2010, which is further developed in this article. Publication in refereed journals is indeed the final step in SoTL; it is that which makes the results of one's scholarship "community property", in Shulman's phrasing. (Note: I am not addressing matters of book publication.)

Going Inside the Publication Process

It must first be made clear that I speak only for the journal with which I am involved as editor, the journal of *Innovative Higher Education* (IHE), which is published in both electronic and print versions. I do not speak for all journals. For readers' information, we conduct all journal affairs electronically. Thus, explanation of our processes serve as one example of the conduct of a journal review and publication process.

Relationship with Authors

We view our relationship with authors as one of partnership, for without authors there would be no substance for a journal. Thus, we seek to be as courteous as possible. We strive for rapid response to receipt of a manuscript by acknowledging it within 48 hours and sending it out to reviewers as soon as possible. (N.B. I am well aware that there are horror stories about extensive delays in this process, to the detriment of authors and the currency and relevance of scholarship, no matter what the discipline may be – SoTL or a traditional discipline.)

For this reason, we also seek to provide detailed information to authors about reviewer and editorial response to manuscripts.

The Review Process

Editorial review is the first step, that is, an editor makes a preliminary judgment about the suitability and potential of a manuscript for the journal in question. If a manuscript clearly is of extremely poor quality or inappropriate substance, there is no point in wasting external reviewers' time. Thus, sometimes a manuscript is "rejected" by editorial review only; in that instance, we (IHE) explain the reasons why this judgment has been made. Sometimes, we recommend that it would more appropriately be placed with another journal; and, if possible, we provide specific suggestions for such journals.

The next step is to place the manuscript into the blind review process. IHE has an Editorial Review Board of 30 persons, representing different areas of expertise. Each manuscript is reviewed by three external reviewers; and quite often one of these is a guest reviewer, who is invited to conduct the review because of particular expertise. Reviewers have six weeks to return the reviews, and we then make the decision on the manuscript as soon as possible, so our turnover time is generally within two months. This process can be slowed, however, depending on manuscript load and time of year in the academic calendar. If there is going to be any delay in sending the manuscript out for review, we so inform authors and then let them know when it has been placed into review.

Judgments

We have four possible judgments about manuscripts. The first is "*publish as is"*, which hardly ever happens. In fact, since I have been involved with editing the journal of *Innovative Higher Education*, it has never been a clearly rendered judgment from three reviewers. Indeed, it is seldom that even an individual reviewer renders this judgment.

The second possible judgment is "*minor revision*, " and this means it is quite likely that the manuscript will ultimately be accepted for publication. In the case of "minor revision", we return a closely edited manuscript to the author(s) and also reviewers' comments. "Closely edited" means that there will be both substantive and mechanical corrections made or indicated on the copy returned to the author(s). There are also likely to be comments, questions, and recommendations on changes in the structure or organization of the manuscript. This editing is done in Word "track changes" mode.

Manuscripts may also be judged to be in need of "*major revision*", or they may be "*rejected*." In either instance reviewers' comments and sometimes additional comments from the editor are provided to the author(s). By way of encouragement, if the manuscript is returned as needing "major revision" and if the authors take the recommendations seriously and persist, ultimately, more frequently than not, such a manuscript can reach publication.

I am well aware that there are journals and editors who do not react as quickly as we seek to do; perhaps there are some which react even more quickly. There are also journals that simply send one a rejection notice with no indication as to why and no suggestions for improvement as the work is continued. However, we believe authors benefit from understanding why a particular judgment has been made – this is an essential professional courtesy in our opinion. Moreover, we consider it to be an obligation to the academy as we seek to promote a high level of scholarly integrity.

A caveat is necessary: For IHE all contact with authors (and reviewers) is electronic. We all know that cyberspace is not perfect, and it behooves authors to check further by contacting the journal if an acknowledgement of receipt of the manuscript has not been received or if the timeline communicated for review of the manuscript has been significantly delayed. While it happens very seldom, occasionally a manuscript or communication has gone astray – for whatever inexplicable cyberreason.

Steps in Achieving Publication

There are several steps in achieving publication, and these are explained below. Readers should note that all of these comments are predicated upon the assumption that the researcher obtained human subjects research approval in accord with institutional protocol.

Step 1: Recognition of Work Done
The first step in achieving publication is recognizing that you can and do bring, as individual academicians rooted in your differing original disciplines, the same skills of inquiry and research to an SoTL effort as are brought to discipline-specific applied or basic research. This recognition is significant for the academy as a whole and for you as an individual. Indeed it is vitally important as we reconsider faculty roles and rewards, and we will return to this later. The efforts to provide new perspectives on, for example, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's 18th century drama *Faust* or to develop new uses for LIDAR in physics or to develop a stronger disease resistant strain of rice are based upon the same set of skills that are brought to a well executed, quality research effort within the framework of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

To do such work we refine and use our academic skills of curiosity, inquiry, and investigation to explore the questions of teaching and learning effectiveness within our individualized context. We then seek ways of sharing our experience, results, and knowledge with peers.

Step 2: Decision to Pursue Publication
The next thing that must occur is your decision to pursue publication, and there are two reasons for so deciding.

First and foremost, it is the essence of the academy and the obligation of its academicians to generate knowledge and share that knowledge with peers. In this instance it is knowledge generated about teaching and learning processes, which can be shared just as we may share our new knowledge about aspects of microbiology, ecological advances and discoveries, laser physics, a point of historical linguistics, or new anthropological discoveries. In the instance of SoTL it is the *discipline of examining teaching and learning effectiveness.*

Secondly, there is a pragmatic reason for pursuing publication, that is, it can contribute to one's academic record of publication, the need for which is a basic fact of academic life. I doubt, however, that the prime motivation for UCF participants in SoTL activities is that of concern about promotion and tenure factors.

Step 3: Determination of the Nature of the Effort
In order to select an appropriate publication outlet the next decision is to determine the depth of the nature of your efforts; and to do so you can ask yourself such questions as the following.

- Has the project resulted in a relatively simple teaching/learning improvement in your discipline?
- Does the project represent an in-depth and complex research project?
- Does the project, and its results, represent something innovative, or have you replicated or tested results already disseminated in conferences or publications?

If you answer "yes" to the first question, then it is possible that your SoTL research reporting might be more appropriate for a newsletter-type publication rather than a peer reviewed journal. However, this depends a great deal on the nature of your explorations, the expectations of your original discipline, and the nature of publications in your discipline and perhaps beyond. If your answer to the first question is "no" and your answer to one of the next two questions is "yes," then it is appropriate that you consider print publication and seek a suitable outlet.

Step 4: Selecting an Appropriate Publication Outlet (Note: Step 5 might precede Step 4.)
This step requires more effort than the first three actions, which basically involve "thinking about things." Remembering that the focus of this article is on journal publication rather than book publication, one must now seek to choose the most appropriate journal for the manuscript you will or are preparing. Making this selection is far easier today than it would have been 15 years ago because of web resources.

The first decision to be made is to determine if a discipline-specific outlet would be more appropriate than a journal with a general higher education readership. (I assume that readers will have some acquaintance with the publications about teaching and learning in their own specific disciplines.) If you are considering a journal that is not discipline-specific, this decision requires that you have some acquaintance with the literature of teaching and learning, which is a very large field. However, the task of informing oneself need not be overwhelming in light of the technological capabilities now available for searching and the ready advice and expertise available at UCF in the staff of the Faculty Center and the Library.

A list of possible journals is available on the web site of the UCF Faculty Center. Also, an extensive list of general journals and discipline-specific journals that deal with matters of teaching and learning effectiveness can be found on the web site of the POD Network (Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education) at [http://podnetwork.org/ resources/periodicals.htm]. A quick search of the web will also lead to additional listings of journals appropriate for SoTL work.

The first thing to do is to inform yourself about the goals of possible publications and to review them closely. A few examples are provided below, and I have highlighted particular points of interest in these descriptions.

The journal I represent, ***Innovative Higher Education***, has a general higher education readership, and it is a long-established journal, now in its 35th year of publication. It is a refereed scholarly journal with a distinguished and internationally known editorial review board. The editorial goals of this journal are as follows:

- To present descriptions and evaluations of innovations and provocative new ideas with relevance for action beyond the immediate context in higher education;
- To focus on the effect of such innovations on teaching and students;
- To be open to diverse forms of scholarship and research methods by maintaining flexibility in the selection of topics deemed appropriate for the journal; and
- To strike a balance between practice and theory by presenting manuscripts in a readable and scholarly manner to both faculty and administrators in the academic community.

One notes that the key words and phrases here are *innovation*, *provocative new ideas*, *research methods*, and a *balance of practice and theory*. It is also a journal with a wide focus, that is, not restricted to teaching and learning effectiveness.

Most SoTL research relates to undergraduate education. However, there is good reason to explore the effectiveness of teaching and learning at the graduate level, where the consequences of ineffectiveness may have a significant and negative impact on a student's life plan. ***Studies in Graduate and Professional Student Development*** offers a potential outlet for such work. It has a general readership and focuses widely on graduate education and development. The goals of this publication are explained as follows.

> This edited book series serves as a guide to the study of improved training, employment and administration of graduate and professional student development programs. A new publication that addresses a critical need in higher education. The series is designed to highlight those aspects of professional development which prepare graduate and professional students for the multiple roles they play as assistants as well as for the multiple roles they will play as professionals upon leaving graduate school. The full range of issues involved in the administration of development programs are [sic] addressed.

The explanation and purposes of the discipline-specific *Journal of Management Education* offer encouragement to SoTL research by mentioning it specifically. Their explanation also reflects significant courtesy in the relationship with authors. This journal

> …is dedicated to enhancing teaching and learning in the management and organizational disciplines. Over the course of the journal's 35-year history, its development reflects changes in the conceptualization, organization, and practice of management education as well as a long-standing editorial commitment to growth, learning, and innovation. As a leading voice in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) in management, the *Journal of Management Education* welcomes contributions from all management educators who seek to reflect on their professional practice and to engage readers in an

> exploration of what or how to teach in order for students to learn and practice effective management. While its target audience is university educators teaching in the management and organizational studies domain, a broader constituency includes administrators, managers, trainers, consultants, and coaches. The editorial team is committed to using a developmental approach in working with authors throughout the peer review process, assisting those with great ideas to communicate them clearly to others.

Another important way of assessing whether or not a journal is an appropriate fit for one's manuscript is to look at the articles that have been published in it; in fact, this is one of the first things one should do. The web site for *Innovative Higher Education* offers abstracts going back to 1989, and there is a topical listing of articles that can enable one to find similar topics rather quickly.

One can research a journal or journals of interest in further ways, keeping in mind that the kind of information and detail available will vary from journal to journal. For example, it is worthwhile to look at the membership of the Editorial Review Board, which can give one an idea of the kinds of persons who will be reviewing the manuscript. It may be of interest to inquire about the acceptance rate for the journal, which can provide indication as to the rigor of scholarly expectations. For example, a journal with an acceptance rate of 50% is clearly less selective in the manuscripts published than is a journal with an acceptance rate of 20%. If the acceptance rate is not available on a journal's informational web page, an email to an editor should bring a quick response.

Frequently, one is advised to check on the number of citations from a journal, as a measure of quality. However, such information may not be all that worthwhile. Citation databases are frequently not up to date, and they may very well not be accurate. Moreover, the nature of the discipline must be taken into account. This perspective was well summarized in a note that appeared recently on the listserv of the POD Network (Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education).

> Prestige often depends upon citation frequency, unfortunately, and too many forget that citation frequency depends upon the size of the content discipline. If the size of the specialty is small, they may have only one journal.
>
> Size is not related to importance of the specialty. For example, only a few schools grant mining engineering degrees, so there will not be many people publishing in that discipline. There likewise will not be many references to their work in the "citation index."
>
> But try building a developed civilization without these specialists. For one day, use nothing a mining engineer was not involved in producing, and report back on your day's experience. (Ed Nuhfer, POD listserv, 3/15/2010)

One could also inquire about subscription or "download" statistics to get an idea of the coverage of the journal. For example, *Innovative Higher Education* appears in both online and print versions, and we can provide download statistics month by month.

Sometimes authors contact editors to inquire if a manuscript topic would be "of interest," and journals have different practices relating to such inquiries. For *Innovative Higher Education* we do not render judgment about a manuscript without placing it into the review process; and, thus, we decline to make a determination about the appropriateness of a manuscript for submission. Sometimes there is a note of arrogance about such inquiries, which can be rather irritating to the editors. For example, we recently received the following inquiry.

> I have included the abstracts from five of my articles that are partly completed. Each of these articles will be approximately 1,100 words and they are written in a scholarly, yet approachable format. I am sending brief abstracts to determine if there is much initial interest in the topics.

Clearly this author has not reviewed at all the expectations of *Innovative Higher Education*, and the email reflects both thoughtlessness and a degree of scholarly arrogance.

Step 5: *Prepare your manuscript (Note: this step might have preceded Step 4.)*
Above all, the most important piece of advice is to be attentive to the requirements of the journal you have selected. Doing so will contribute to a positive reception of your manuscript. Vice versa, not doing so is likely to impact the reviews of your manuscript negatively.

We now list on the home page for our journal (http://www.uga.edu/ihe/ihe.html) some absolute minimum requirements as follows:

> Upon first receipt of a manuscript it will be reviewed for observance of the following minimum standards. A manuscript not meeting these standards will be returned to the author(s) for modification and will not be placed into the review process until these standards have been met.
>
> - The entire manuscript must be double-spaced, including references. There should be no triple or quadruple spaces between paragraphs or sections.
> - Page numbers should be placed in the upper right hand corner.
> - All paragraphs should be indented with the "tab" key.
> - Authors are also reminded to be attentive to the requirements of APA style and to review the "tips for authors" section under the "Submission Guidelines" to be found on this web site.

Reproduced below is the "Tips for Authors" section from the web site of *Innovative Higher Education"*. I include it here because other journals will have similar expectations – whether stated or unstated.

> It is helpful to you as authors and also helpful to the journal's editorial staff if your manuscript is as well written—both substantively and stylistically—as possible before sending it out to reviewers. To aid you in doing so, you will find listed below some tips to address areas that are frequently in need of attention.

- You must be attentive to the requirements of APA style, as indicated on submission guidelines. Failure to do so can erode the impression your manuscript makes on reviewers. There are several specific areas that you should check, and these are listed below.
- Pay close attention to the style of references, as stipulated in the APA manual. All details of references should be closely checked before submission. The most common errors are failure to include the issue number for a journal reference, capitalization errors, and formatting of a reference for a chapter/book in a series.
- Be sure that all citations in the text are also on the reference list and vice versa. Be attentive to the spelling of authors' names both in citations and on the reference list and also to the dates of publication.
- Use the tab feature for paragraph indentation; do not space over as a substitute.
- Double-space throughout the manuscript. Do not use any triple or single spacing.
- If your manuscript reports on a study involving human subjects, you should have obtained approval for this study through the appropriate processes and structure at your institution. Please indicate in the text that you have obtained this approval. We require this approval for any research involving human subjects.
- APA style for headings should be followed. Generally, articles do not have more than three levels of headings, if that. The first level of heading is centered and in bold face. The second level is aligned left and printed in italics. The third level, if needed, is indented with the tab feature, italicized, and followed by a period.
- Your title should be aligned left and printed in bold face. Do not list author's names on the manuscript, only on a title page.
- Manuscripts are blind reviewed, and there should be no mention of institution or authors' names anywhere in the manuscript. If your article is published, these can be inserted later, if and where appropriate.
- Do not change fonts in the manuscript. Use 12pt font throughout.
- Page numbers should be placed in the upper right hand corner.
- The abstract should be inserted below the title and before the text begins, prefaced by the word "Abstract:" in italics.
- All tables, figures, or diagrams must be camera-ready and appear on separate pages at the end of the manuscript, after the references.
- Any acknowledgments you wish to make should appear at the end of your text and before the references.
- Frequently, the word "universities" may not be the best choice for what you wish to say. Remember that this leaves out all institutions that are not universities. "Institutions" may be the better choice. Also, remember that the word "campus" can leave out some institutions as well, keeping in mind the changing nature of our higher education system.
- Avoid such words as "seem" and "etc." These are weak words.
- Avoid using "s/he" or singular forms of either "he" or "she." Unless there is compelling reason to do otherwise, try to use the plural forms of pronouns and nouns, i.e., "they," "instructors," or "students."
- Avoid the passive voice to the greatest extent possible.

- Reading your manuscript aloud to yourself can be quite helpful in identifying stylistic problems, inconsistencies, and lack of clarity.
- Please provide your email address along with your regular address information.

The selection of the manuscript title merits mention. It should accurately reflect the content of the manuscript; and I suggest that authors not strive for "cute," which does not impress reviewers. Also, note that one can have quite a nice and appropriate title *without* a colon.

The abstract is also extremely important because, after the title, it is the first element of the manuscript to be read by editors and reviewers. If it makes a poor impression, the progress of the manuscript to publication could end right there. The abstracts selected for inclusion in the 2010 Faculty Showcase publication, which is entitled "Celebrating SoTL at UCF," provide examples of good abstracts.

Step 6: *Write – revise, write – revise…*
One always reads of this kind of advice in articles about the writing process, and that is because it is *great* advice. After a manuscript is "done," it is advisable to put it aside for a time period and then to return to it for revision. It is also very helpful to invite someone else to read the manuscript, a trusted colleague, preferably someone with expertise outside the scope of the manuscript. This provides the perspective of the general reader; and the uninvolved but scholarly reader can identify issues relating to clarity, organization, and correctness of language. Another *very* helpful thing to do is to sit alone and read the manuscript aloud for oneself.

Step 7: Submission of the Manuscript
Having readied the manuscript and reviewed it yet one more time to ascertain that the expectations of the journal have been taken into account and that the journal is likely to be an appropriate fit with the substance of the manuscript, it is now time to prepare the cover letter and either make the trip to the post office or punch the right buttons on the computer for electronic submission. A final word: make sure you get the name of the journal correct in your cover letter. It does not make a good impression on an editor when the name of the journal is incorrect in the cover letter!

Pet Peeves

Dare one use such a slang descriptor in a presentation and web publication such as this one? My answer is a resounding "yes!" because they impact publication decisions. Pet peeves are dreadful and undefined personal irritants that will not be listed on any journal web site but that will definitely impact the impression made upon reviewers and the editorial judgment rendered, We all have them! As examples, here are some of mine.

- Inattentiveness to detail about journal requirements and expections
- Repeated errors in basic punctuation, particularly commas
- Purposeful obfuscation of language
- Overuse of passive voice and jargon
- Making up words, e.g., "incentivize", "anonymize", "massification"

- Redundancy, which generally reflects a lack of good organization and clarity of thought
- AOL = acronym overload

To illustrate some of these pet peeves, I offer a few examples from my personal "terrible language" file. The sample sentences below have been taken from unedited manuscripts submitted to *Innovative Higher Education*..

- This article describes a conceptualization of essentially and simultaneously negotiating the risks and realities of partnerships that has developed through this foundational project in particular. (Say what?)
- Thus an examination of possible differences between male and female resilient students, and ultimately on how exceptional female college students have actuated their resilience is justified. (An example of befuddling, incorrect grammar and weird wording!)
- It may be noted, here, that XXX's experiments of a century ago devastated the theoretical notion of "mental discipline" at the time, which played an important role in influencing college mathematics requirements, trending the terminal course away from symbolic manipulation-based mathematics courses such as college algebra and trigonometry toward "general mathematics" courses that often find current manifestation as liberal arts mathematics. (Made up words, unnecessarily complicated language, obfuscation of meaning)

Here is another favorite example taken from instructions provided for authors for a particular journal, one appropriate for SoTL submissions, the *Journal of XXX Education*: "The past tense of verbs is used to discuss methods and results. Present tense is used to refer to existing literature or general truths and to state conclusions. *Active voice is preferred.* Jargon and sexist language are avoided." (Emphasis added.) Clearly, the person or persons who prepared this statement do not recognize the irony of what they have written.

Authors are to be reminded, however, of the fact that, in general, editors will work with the authors if the substance of the manuscript warrants it. I can only speak for the journal which I represent, but we do and will work with authors to improve writing and clarity of appropriate substance. However, there must also be some basic standard of decent writing before an editor can do that.

***Really* "Closing the Loop"**

Earlier in this article I wrote the following, and I repeat these comments here for emphasis.

> The first step in achieving publication is recognizing that you can and do bring, as individual academicians rooted in your differing original disciplines, the same skills of inquiry and research to an SoTL effort as are brought to discipline-specific applied or basic research. This recognition is significant for the academy as a whole and for you as an individual. Indeed it is vitally important as we reconsider faculty roles and rewards…. The efforts to provide new perspectives on, for example, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's

> 18th century drama *Faust* or to develop new uses for LIDAR in physics or to develop a stronger disease resistant strain of rice are based upon the same set of skills that are brought to a well executed, quality research effort within the framework of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

I think we can safely say that every discipline has a hierarchy of research endeavors. For example, in my original discipline, Germanic Languages and Literatures, this hierarchy can be summarized as follows:

1) traditional literary research,
2) linguistics, and
3) research on effective teaching and learning in the foreign languages, which was far behind the first two.

You could most probably make a similar, hierarchical listing for areas of research within your specific scholarly discipline.

At the University of Central Florida, there is a strong level of institutional support for the faculty's SoTL efforts; and this effort is built upon a significant commitment of institutional dollars. As someone coming in from outside the institution, I hope you also have equivalent recognition for the value of this work. If your SoTL work is published in a journal such as *Innovative Higher Education* or other journals with similar rigor and high expectations, this accomplishment should be accorded worth equal to applied or basic research in your regular discipline. If this is not the case, it is likely an example of institutional hypocrisy.

There has been much discussion over at least the past two decades, the roots of which had arisen earlier, about the need to introduce change in the roles and rewards systems for faculty members so as to balance research and teaching accomplishments appropriately and in accord with changing responsibilities and institutional and societal expectations. The national effort to examine "Faculty Roles and Rewards"guided by the now defunct American Association for Higher Education was quite significant, and these discussions continue in many ways. There is no doubt that there has been a lot of positive movement in this regard; however, the change is still in process, and barriers still exist. In 2002 Kathleen McKinney, the [K.Patricia] Cross Endowed Chair at Illinois State University, addressed the issue of "barriers"; and she commented as follows in her remarks at the installation ceremony.

> These barriers include, for example, conflicting institutional messages about the value and rewards for SoTL, insufficient training and development, lack of funding and other rewards, lack of knowledge by peers about how to evaluate SoTL work, colleagues who are "hostile" to SoTL work, and isolation of faculty doing SoTL from faculty members doing "traditional" research, etc. We are challenged to find ways over and around these barriers, as well as to remove them (para. 8).

It is critical to realize that changing the system is in the hands of the faculty itself because of the strong tradition of faculty governance in U.S. higher education. Quite simply, faculty members are the frontline of such change, particularly those who serve on promotion and tenure committees, evaluation committees, and as department chairs. It is indeed in "our" power to respond to Boyer's initial call and challenge (1990), which was the starting point of the evolution of the Scholarship of Teaching and learning. **We must simply make the choice to do so**.

Conclusion

Thus, does the individual "close the loop" on SoTL by achieving publication in a respected scholarly journal; and the institution closes the loop by according this kind of scholarship the same level of respect accorded to traditional basic or applied research and publication in a particular discipline. We are perhaps creating a new research discipline as we engage in the complete cycle of the *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.*

I am delighted to extend my personal and professional congratulations to those of you involved in this important effort!

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N.B. There is a great deal of literature relating to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, and many fine and worthwhile resources are available. A quick search of the web, a conversation with a faculty developer, or a meeting with a librarian will quickly lead one to the abundance of what is available.