11-2-2007

Positioning the scholarship of teaching and learning in the academic arena

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Positioning the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in the Academic Arena: Challenges and Strategies.
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Abstract

This paper begins by indicating the differences in perception of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. The paper underscores the need to further operationalise the term ‘SOTL’ for it to be fully embraced by higher education institutions. The paper then discusses the challenges faced by SOTL as an emerging discipline within the traditionally research oriented higher education institutions. The presentation particularly focuses on the challenges of evaluating the SOTL by identifying some of the complexities involved. The paper highlights some of the currently suggested evaluation criteria for the SOTL work and their shortcomings and makes suggestions on what else could be included in order to standardize SOTL work. The paper then explores some of the strategies that could be used to address the challenges faced by the scholarship of teaching and learning. A proposal on some form of acceptable criteria for evaluating the SOTL work to help distinguish SOTL from past traditions in higher education such as classroom assessment is then made. The presentation ends by making suggestions on some standard procedures and practices that could be incorporated into SOTL work for it to be embraced world wide.

KEY WORDS: scholarship of teaching, scholarly teaching, research, academic disciplines, evaluation, and profiling.
Introduction

When first introduced in the 1800’s, teaching was the primary mandate of higher education institutions in North America. Over time, however, a focus on the advancement of knowledge through research, or scholarship, overshadowed teaching as priority (Van Melle, Flynn, Dagnone, & Maitland, 2006:1).

Recently, the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) has become an important international movement in higher education which has the potential to improve the quality of education (Hughes, 2006; Huber & Hutchings, 2006). In the scholarship of teaching, teachers systematically investigate questions related to student learning with a view not only to improving classroom practice but also advancing practice beyond the classroom.

Citing Weimer (2005), Hughes argues that the proponents of the scholarship have suggested that scholarly work on teaching and learning holds much promise for improving the quality of teaching and learning in higher education, grounding instructional practice in knowledge base, professionalizing the field, and valuing and rewarding college and university teaching. However, attempts to understand the scholarship of teaching and learning has raised debate amongst many academics employed in Higher Education due to the differences in perception about the scholarship (Bell et al., 2006). Kreber (2002a:163-164) for example, describe international differences in conception of the scholarship of teaching and learning suggesting that in Britain and Australia:
The scholarship of teaching is conceived as…a campus activity, as an endeavor aimed at promoting an institutional environment that is supportive of teaching and learning. Whilst in the USA:

The scholarship of teaching has been conceived of as both a campus activity and as an activity or career path individual faculty may wish to pursue.

In a study conducted by Kreber (2002a), that used Delphi methodology, participants were asked to identify issues surrounding the scholarship of teaching which they considered unresolved to date. The participants contended that clearer definitions were needed to distinguish the meaning of the concepts such as teaching expertise, teaching excellence, and the scholarship of teaching.

Serow (2000:449) also indicates that in recent years, research has been occupying “an even more pivotal position within university structures”. One reason for this was that many institutions have responded to reduce financial reliance on government by encouraging professorial enterprise in contract research, product development and other forms of corporate consulting and collaboration (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997; Court, 2000).

While teaching is recognized as integral to the mission of a college or university, and indeed constitutes a significant part of the workload of faculty members (Allen & Field, 2005), for many years in North America at least, little importance was made of the need for college and university instructors to be effective teachers (Cambridge, 2000; Kreber, 2002b). The same case applies to many colleges and universities in Africa. In some other countries such as Britain and Australia, preparation for teaching was required, but this
has not been general practice internationally (Cambridge 2001; Hutchings & Shulman, 1999).

Lack of consensus on what actually constitutes the scholarship of teaching has resulted in little if any progress towards implementing its principles into action. Gordon et al. (2003) argue that despite compelling arguments, progress in the implementation of effective policy, systems and initiatives that support the scholarship of teaching has been slow. The bottom line is that faculty career paths are still defined mostly by the conventional research metrics: publications and grants received (Clarke, 2005). It is against this backdrop that this paper discusses the challenges that face the scholarship of teaching and learning and attempts to identify some strategies that could be used to position the scholarship in the academic arena.

**Challenges to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning**

A critical issue often raised in the scholarship of teaching discourse is the difficulty academics may have in pursuing this endeavor (Lynch, Sheard, Carbone, & Collins, 2005). Kreber (2002a) citing (Trigwell et al., 2000) agrees that while programmes that support and foster the scholarship of teaching now exist on many campuses and the implications for staff development have been recognized, for scholarship of teaching to be granted equal recognition to research in future, discussions now need to continue and perhaps focus at the level of disciplinary associations. These developments aside, both practitioners and policy makers recognize that very little progress has been made in the
support and promotion of this form of scholarship (Lynch et al., 2005). (Bitzer, 2006:385) for example argues that Research dominates and will probably continue to dominate higher education at the systemic level and at most higher education institutions around the globe mainly because research implies greater prestige and more income, and hence professors and other academics will continue to pursue their status and rewards through research and publications.

Many have speculated about the impediments to promoting the scholarship of teaching, with the relative valuing of research over teaching being the most cited obstacle to more sustained enquiry by academics into their own teaching practices (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1999; Gordon et al., 2003; Ramsden, Margetson, Martin, & Clarke, 1995).

The question that is being asked is, “Why did SOTL come to be devalued since it was the primary mandate of higher education institutions especially in North America by 1800? How might the status of SOTL be restored and promoted alongside other forms of scholarship?” How can higher education institutions be encouraged to support the SOTL work?

One of the challenges that face SOTL is how to relate it to traditional educational research (McKinney (2002). Is it possible to find a common ground that allows understanding and collaboration between SOTL and traditional research?

Witman and Richlin (2007:3) contend that … ‘the sad truth is that many departments, disciplines, and institutions do not count ‘pedagogical scholarship’ as part of a faculty member’s scholarly production’.
So why does the individual need to go through this rigorous process if the work will not be recognized for faculty rewards? Why can’t individuals carry out investigations and put their ideas into a textbook which will earn them faculty rewards? Why follow this long process if the ultimate aim is to get published?

Is there a way of merging SOTL with the traditional research approaches that have been used and are rewarded in higher education institutions? What factors will motivate an individual to pursue the scholarship of teaching and learning as opposed to conducting traditional research? A study conducted by Lynch et al. (2005), that investigated individual and organizational factors influencing academic decisions to pursue the scholarship of teaching ICT, the researchers identified individual motivation as a key factor. From their findings, “much of the discussions of prioritizing areas of work and the relative valuing and rewarding of different aspects of academics’ work were premised on the assumption that university teaching is not valued as highly as other areas of academics’ work (Lynch et al., 2005:226).

If teaching is to be valued equally with research, then like research, teaching must open itself to the scrutiny of theoretical perspectives, methods, evidence and results (Martin et al., 1999). We must change the status of teaching from private to community property (Shulman, 1993:6).

The necessary requirement that the scholarship of teaching be made public creates an ironic dilemma. Academics often think first (and only) of making scholarship public and available for peer review through refereed journal articles. However, limiting the scholarship of teaching to refereed journal articles is reductionist and perhaps even
counterproductive. If the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning is operationalized only as publishing in journals, we have simply begun to emphasize another research area. By narrowly defining the scholarship of teaching as only refereed publications, we do our students, our discipline, and ourselves an extreme disservice. We will have missed the opportunity to extract the maximum intellectual and social benefits from work that the large majority of us spend our time doing. Teaching as art, craft, and scholarship will continue to be devalued. We will not have acknowledged the intellectual value of the process of teaching and the importance of student learning. The academy will not be transformed. The status quo will prevail. Limiting Scholarship of Teaching and Learning to refereed publication will assure that Scholarship of Teaching and Learning will have little or no impact (Atkinson, 2001:1224).

According to Allen & Field (2005:10), creativity in the production of teaching materials must be recognized in the same way as discipline-specific chapters in books and journal publications. They further add that evaluation and promotion standards based on narrow definitions of scholarship must change so that faculty members who engage in this form of scholarship are recognized. Thus, criteria for evaluation of both scholarly teaching and scholarship of teaching should be clearly articulated in order to evaluate the work of individual faculty members.

Healey (2000:178) adds to this debate by arguing that if the development of the scholarship of teaching is to make progress, it is important to develop the complementary nature of these different activities. If the mutual benefits of teaching and research are to be maximized, this is a process that may need to be managed (Healey, 2000:178). But
the question to ask is, ‘how can this process be managed?’ Bass (1998) suggests that changing the status of the problem in teaching from remediation to ongoing investigation is precisely what the movement for scholarship of teaching is all about.

Bitzer, (2006:379) argues that some institutions give prominence to research above teaching in the way it is reflected in institutional mission and vision statements, as well as in their strategic priorities. Lynch et al. (2005:229) also contend that, “the organizational factor seen as the most significant determinant as to whether organizations were supportive or inhibitive was the value placed on teaching compared to that placed on discipline specific research and the reflection of those values in staff promotion practices”. For example, no or little recognition for teaching excellence and scholarship is given to those departments and staff who carry heavy teaching loads (basically) forming the backbone of any institution’s income.

Similar experience can be cited from my own university (University of Swaziland). The mission of the University of Swaziland clearly states that, “the University reaffirms its faith in the principles of academic freedom and autonomy and endeavors to provide a congenial learning environment …which shall facilitate excellence in teaching and learning, research, community service, and provide opportunity for consultancy, professional leadership and enterprise development” (University of Swaziland Strategic Plan, 2000, p.iii). However, a simple analysis of the Academic and Administrative Staff Committee Application for promotion to Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor, or Professor ranks reveals that weighting is skewed in favor of research oriented
publications. What is referred to as “scholarship” in the promotion application form covering areas such as; conference paper in unedited version, conference paper in edited version, article in refereed journal, monographs, editor of a published book, editor of a journal, author of a published book relevant to discipline and university teaching, co-author of a published book relevant to discipline and to school teaching, etc. are allocated a weighting of 32 points while teaching including teaching load, writing of teaching materials/modules, supervising undergraduate students’ research projects, supervising Master’s Thesis, or delivering public lectures in relevant discipline are all allocated a maximum of 9 points. What is even more interesting is the fact that administrative roles such as being a Faculty Dean, Head of Department, Faculty Tutor, or member of a Committee at University level are allocated 10 points (University of Swaziland, undated). This clearly demonstrates that the scholarship of teaching is not highly valued in the University of Swaziland though the university mission clearly states that it would facilitate excellence in teaching. The only evidence to the value attached to the scholarship is a student evaluation form which is completed by students attending different courses. This evaluation form is given to lecturers who are interested in evaluating their own courses but is not mandatory for all lecturers.

With the introduction of the SOTL, we need to redefine the way we view research, teaching and learning. How should we define the scholarship in the context of higher education? What status should the scholarship of teaching and learning hold in the promotion criteria within the higher education institutions? What are the implications of
the scholarship on teaching practices? Is it possible for universities to redefine the teaching versus research debate in more creative ways?

Teaching should be valued more highly in allocating faculty rewards than has been for the past several decades, especially in relation to discovery (research) (Abler et al., 1994:14-15). However, according to Healey (2000:176), the main constraint in implementing these ideas is the perception that it is more difficult to identify excellence in teaching compared to excellence in research. But if we are to promote the scholarship of teaching, can we develop acceptable criteria for identifying excellence in teaching comparable to the one in research?

Teaching is a professional undertaking acquired through training in the theory and practice of teaching. Scholarly teachers approach the art of teaching by applying educational principles to their practice and developing creative and effective interaction with their students (Kreber & Cranton, 2000). The scholarship of teaching requires knowledge of the discipline as well as knowledge of teaching and learning (Allen & Field, 2005:6). So can anybody who is involved in college and university teaching then be expected to take part in the scholarship of teaching and learning even when they are not trained to teach? Should there be need for all those involved in the scholarship of teaching to undertake courses in teaching methodology?

An argument being put forward is that all faculty staff should strive for scholarly teaching but not all will engage in the scholarship of teaching (Allen & Field, 2005:5). This
argument is supported by Kreber (2002a:164) who established from a study conducted among panelists engaged in the scholarship of teaching that not all academic staff should be required to make the scholarship of teaching the focus of their career, and that rewards for teaching excellence and the scholarship of teaching needed to be different.

The argument presented above contradicts the view expressed by (Bitzer, 2006:373) that, “notwithstanding the centrality of research, few members of the academic profession are exempted from teaching responsibilities”. Hence every faculty member should engage in scholarly teaching due to its centrality to the mission of any university.

Cambridge (1999) describes scholarly teaching as coming from teachers who explore the challenges of fostering student learning, seek feedback from both students and staff, are involved in curriculum development activities and read literature about pedagogy in their field. They are described as informed teachers who benefit from the scholarship of others. Scholarly teachers apply educational theory and research to their own practice (Weimer, Menges, and associates, 1996). Scholarly teaching requires that teachers and their teaching be informed not only by the latest ideas in their field but by existing theory, research, and practical ideas about student learning and teaching in their field, instructional design, teaching and learning styles, and methods of assessment.

The question to ask is whether it is possible for one to be a scholarly teacher if they have not been trained in the theory and practice of teaching.

D’Andrea and Gosling (2005) view both the scholarship of teaching and scholarly teaching as key elements of the scholarship of teaching and learning, overlapping at
times, distinct from each other at tomes, but both aimed at the improvement of student learning though a systematic process of investigation.

If the scholarship of teaching is to be promoted, attention needs to be given to the organizational context of university teaching in terms of the symbolic and resource support. Lynch et al. (2005:233) suggest that resources and symbolic support should be provided to enable and reward individuals who pursue professional development activities, such as formal teacher education training, attendance of education-focused conferences, and training in educational evaluation.

A challenge posed to higher education institutions however is how to link research and teaching effectively in order to promote the scholarship of both (Bitzer, 2006:381). While scholarship of teaching and learning involves systematic inquiry, not all what is done can necessarily be classified as research. As Allen and Field (2005:1) indicates, scholarship of teaching has two main components; first is the use of creativity to develop original materials such as video tapes, CDs, and games that can be used beyond the boundaries of an individual instructor and two, a systematic evaluation of teaching and learning which could involve both informal and traditional research on teaching and learning or curriculum-related issues. So what criteria will universities use to evaluate creativity in teaching?

Many writers on SOTL (Huber and Morreale, 2002, Healey, 2003) have firmly situated SOTL at the discipline and departmental level, emphasizing different disciplinary styles
(Huber and Morreale, 2002) and strong allegiance of academic staff to their subject or profession (Becher & Trowler, 2001).

Richlin and Cox, (1990:6) also argue that … “as the scholarship of teaching begins to develop, it seems natural that faculty will first consider methods of observation and of drawing conclusions similar to those in their disciplines. On the other hand, the natural setting –the roots for this scholarship is in the social sciences. Unfortunately, academics in the natural sciences and humanities are not usually familiar with the basics of social science research.

Is it possible for the academics coming from diverse backgrounds to embrace the SOTL which is founded of the basic principles of social science research? Can we be able to create a common ground for the academics from humanities, natural sciences, and the social sciences to embrace the SOTL?

There is a strong perception among the academics that there are significant differences among the disciplines in what academics do and how these activities are described and valued (Healey, 2000:173). Secondly, for the most academic staff, their allegiance is to their subject or profession and their sense of themselves as staff at a given institution is secondary (Becher, 1994; Gibbs, 1996a; Jenkins, 1996).

Moses (1990) has demonstrated that attitudes to teaching and research tasks, as well as patterns of communication, differ in different disciplines, while Donald (1997) has shown that learning goals vary between disciplines. These findings point to the need to consider how the characteristics of disciplines define limits on the extent to which studies in one area can be generalized to areas whose subject matter is different (Biglan, 1973, p.213). It
is important therefore, that the scholarship of teaching in higher education is not divorced from the content of the discipline being taught (Healey, 2000: 173). However, it is increasingly being recognized that a focus only on content-based research does not advance educational strategies necessary to promote scholarly teaching (Allen & Field, 2005:10). The question to ask is how do we promote the scholarship of teaching and learning across disciplines in order to gain wider acceptance of the SOTL movement?

In a study reported by Witman and Richlin (2007), which was conducted in the US focusing on four groups of academic disciplines namely; Humanities, Natural Sciences, Professions, and Social Sciences; it was found out that SOTL had achieved varying levels of acceptance across disciplines. Natural Sciences and Professions seem to have most firmly accepted the SOTL while Social Sciences and Humanities were somewhat less attached. This raises a concern regarding the acceptance of SOTL across all disciplines that are offered in higher education institutions. Without being widely accepted, we can not expect the professors and lecturers to embrace SOTL work in their scholarly work.

Trigwell, Martin, Benjamin, and Prosser (2000:156) add their voice to the debate on the SOTL by arguing that; “What becomes immediately apparent from this analysis is the enormous variation in the ways scholarship of teaching is represented. We are unaware of the existence of models of scholarship of teaching that currently capture this variation.

A critical question that also needs to be addressed concerning the scholarship of teaching and learning relates to assessment and evaluation. Allen & Field (2005:7) contend that “the criteria on which to evaluate the scholarship of teaching are largely absent” while

Citing Boyer, Felder (2000:2), argues that Boyer’s proposal of making the scholarship of teaching a legitimate basis for awarding tenure and promotion to faculty members who chose to make education a major focus of their careers has predictably encountered considerable skepticism and some outright hostility from administrators and professors and can only gain widespread acceptance only if criteria for evaluating the scholarship of teaching are established and generally agreed upon. While student ratings have been the primary means of evaluating teaching in higher education for a long time (Knapper & Cranton, 2002), criteria other than student evaluations have rarely been used (Shaw, Fisher, & Southey, 1999).

In many instances and in many institutions, this form of evaluation has been controversial and has been received with a lot of resistance and even with open hostility from lecturers in higher education institutions in Africa and elsewhere (England, Hutchings, & McKeachie, 1996). Hutchings (1996) points out that although student ratings of teaching are essential, they are not enough as there are substantive aspects of teaching that only faculty can judge and assist each other with. Even today, student ratings are still controversial as most lecturers are sensitive about being evaluated.

Bitzer, (2006: 388) argues that in spite of previous efforts, no proper indicators and criteria for evaluating and valuing teaching scholarship currently exist at most institutions- particularly in Africa. He continues to add that more thought and creative effort needs to be invested in this area. Those institutions that are serious about
promoting teaching scholarship will have to put more effort into investigating evaluative possibilities. Allen & Field (2005:9) also echo the same view by arguing that, “there is less guidance in the literature as to ways that the scholarship of teaching can be evaluated.

Teaching is a complex and personal activity that is best assessed and evaluated using multiple techniques and broadly-based criteria. If multiple perspectives are represented and different techniques used, the process will be more valued, the conclusions reached will be more credible, and consequently more valuable to the individual being assessed or evaluated (Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning, 2002).

Huber (1999) identified university teaching staff’s lack of teacher training as one of three reasons why critical discourses about university teaching have been slow to develop. The other reasons were lack of reward in promotion practices and the fact that teaching is difficult to evaluate.

As Boyer (1990) argues, if the scholarship of teaching is to match that of research, there needs to be comparability of rigor, standards and esteem. For this to happen, teachers need to learn how to adopt a scholarly approach to teaching and how to collect and present rigorous evidence of their effectiveness as teachers. This involves reflection, inquiry, evaluating, documenting and communicating about teaching.

Britzer (2004:28) raises the following question concerning evaluation, “how do the institutions and other stakeholders in the academic enterprise ensure that quality results emerge from the money that is being spent on higher education?”
Should scholars in higher education be left alone to employ their knowledge and expertise in ways they see fit? How could the quality of something be evaluated which cannot be clearly specified or compared to something similar? Shouldn’t the criteria for assessing and evaluating SOTL work be made public and known to all interested parties?

The issue of profiling the scholarship of teaching and learning has been identified as an area of concern. Bitzer, (2004:29) lists a number of problems that are encountered in the process. Among them include the following:

- It is a complex process and no single view of scholarly quality is adequate. The combined views of various constituents (students, colleagues, peers, administrators and self) are required for reasonably reliable and valid judgment.
- It is an evolving process and requires the criteria, standards, and evidence used by institutions to be disseminated clearly, fully and in writing.
- Staff profiling is both a process and a result- a way to determine goals, appraise the process, and assess the extent to which they have been met.
- Staff profiling must be administratively manageable and cost and time efficient.
- Profiling system must provide support to improve staff performance.
- Many academics genuinely fear that disclosures from evaluation for improvement of profile will be misapplied to tenure, promotion, and retention decisions.
- The cornerstone of any profiling process is the acceptance by the staff, which rests on confidence in the system’s integrity which, in turn rests in part on the staff’s active participation in the development thereof.
• Many staff find it awkward to profile performance expectations and require training for the task.

The challenges facing the scholarship of teaching and learning could be summed up as follows:

• Overcoming barriers such as conflicting institutional messages about the value and rewards for SOTL.
• Isolation of faculties doing SOTL from faculties doing traditional research.
• How to make traditional research and SOTL fit together.
• Balancing between SOTL and traditional disciplinary research and institutional or faculty mission.
• Future vision of SOTL- e.g. changing the view and roles of academic staff working to enhance student learning since the practice of SOTL is critical to the improvement of teaching and learning.
• How to institutionalize SOTL work to pedagogical, curricular, and institutional reform.

**Strategies for promoting the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning**

One way of exploring the issues surrounding SOTL in academic institutions has been through the establishment of learning communities (Bell et al., 2006). Learning Communities (LCs) allow a comfortable environment in which academic staff may explore ways to develop professional scholarship in relation to individual disciplines. This can be achieved through sharing of ideas and fostering a multidisciplinary approach
to SOTL by establishing contact with other academics that may not otherwise have the chance to meet. This view was supported by participants in a workshop at Salford (UK) where the discussion generated indicated clearly that whether SOTL was located within disciplines, or more broadly within the institutional or external context, the discourse it can engender is strongest when there is synergy between the disciplinary, institutional and external environment (Oakey, Coates, & Roberts, 2004). A similar sentiment was expressed by the Faculty of Health Sciences at Queen’s University concerning the establishment of communities of practice to bring together educators into teams which could facilitate their ability to pursue their educational goals (Van Melle, Flynn, Dagnone, & Maitland, 2006).

Our universities are administratively and academically organized into discipline-specific faculties and departments. We have academic specialties and sub-specialties – we have organized knowledge into bins and throughout our professional lives we acquire the trappings and identities of our discipline – as researchers. In other words, in our lives as researchers, we belong to communities of practice. It is however a challenge, albeit a very worthwhile one, to acquire the vocabulary and codes of a discipline outside our own (Clarke, 2005). Healey (2000:178) echoes the same sentiments when he acknowledges that sharing information about one’s disciplinal teaching practices with practitioners from other disciplines is important for the development of the scholarship of teaching.

This evidently calls for the need to conduct the scholarship of teaching and learning outside the conventional disciplines. After all teaching is professional undertaking acquired through training in the theory and practice of teaching and scholarly teachers approach the art of teaching by applying educational principles to their practice and
developing creative and effective interaction with their students (Kreber & Cranton, 2000).

Recent statistics (Sanders, 2005) shows there are increasing numbers of academics on teaching-only contracts. The trend is evident at the University of Glasgow where in November 2002, a new category of academic staff – the University Teacher (UT) was introduced (Bell et al., 2006). The UTs are expected to show evidence of scholarship in their own discipline and scholarship in support of teaching. However, this has already become a challenge. For many UTs, the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning is relatively unfamiliar and the need to engage in, and provide evidence of SOTL has caused some anxiety (Bell et al; 2006:4). Perhaps the way to go to address this problem is to develop generic and discipline-based courses in higher education which could assist the university teachers and others who are engaged in the scholarship of teaching and learning to understand the practice involved in the scholarship.

The organizational domain is a major strategy that could be used to promote the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. If the scholarship of teaching is to be promoted, attention needs to be given to the organizational context of university teaching in terms of the symbolic and resource support. Lynch et al. (2005:233) suggest that resources and symbolic support should be provided to enable and reward individuals who pursue professional development activities, such as formal teacher education training, attendance of education-focused conferences, and training in educational evaluation.
A report by American Sociological Association (ASA) task force, “Recognizing and Rewarding the Professional and Scholarly Work of Sociologists,” (Howery 1998:11), cited seven “core elements” of scholarship that could be used as criteria to judge teaching as scholarship: “reveals an up-to-date knowledge base; shows an appropriateness and effectiveness of content and method; has demonstrable scope, importance, and impact; is innovative and creative, and pushes the scholarly base of knowledge along; can be replicated or elaborated; can be documented and can be peer reviewed.”

Atkinson, (2001:1225), suggests that sociologists could use these criteria to evaluate the products of teaching that are broadly conceptualized. Such products could include curriculum development, grants, establishment of programs, web pages, evaluations of teaching practices, materials, theories; instructional techniques, student evaluation tools, media products, software, course materials, simulations, role playing exercises, etc. In my view, the same criteria could be used to evaluate the products of teaching and learning in other disciplines.

Edgerton, Hutchings and Quinlan (1991) suggest dozens of products of teaching that one might assemble in a portfolio for peer review. Such products could be made public and documented in some way. They could be included in a teaching portfolio, published in a collection of teaching materials, put on the World Wide Web or presented in another public forum. But the question to ask is; “will the reviewers be looking for the same things? Are there agreed standards against which the reviewers will assess the portfolio?”

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Bitzer (2006:4) recommends a useful framework for understanding the link between teaching and research that was developed by Griffiths (2004), elaborated on by Healey (2005) and reported in Jenkins and Healey (2005). This framework suggests four approaches the teaching-research model could use. These include: (1) teaching could be research-led where the curriculum is structured around subject content and based on research interests of teaching staff, (2) research-oriented where the emphasis is on understanding the process by which knowledge is produced as attention is given to the teaching of inquiry skills and acquisition of research ethos, (3), teaching is research-based as the curriculum is designed around inquiry-based activities rather than subject matter, and (4) research-tutored as the curriculum emphasizes learning that focuses on student writing and discussion involving essays and papers.

Similar sentiments are expressed by Hyland and Walker (2007:3) when they identify teaching-led research as a major characteristic of a teaching-led university. According to them, there is need to build expertise in pedagogical research though an academic staffing policy which recognizes its importance.

Felder (2000:2) proposes that evaluation of the scholarship of teaching and learning should entail answering the following questions:

1. *To what extent did the teaching qualify as a scholarly activity?* Answering this question requires evaluating the faculty member’s subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, commitment to growth as an educator, and involvement in educational research and development.
2. **How effective was the teaching?** How well has the faculty member’s teaching motivated students to learn and promoted their acquisition of desired knowledge, skills, and attitudes?

3. **How effective was the educational research and development?** How well were the faculty member’s innovations designed, implemented, assessed and evaluated, and disseminated?

Data that could be used to answer these questions fall into four categories:

- **Archival data** (lists of courses developed and taught, representative instructional materials and students’ products, disciplinary and education-related conferences and workshops attended, education journals subscribed to, articles and books and courseware published).

  Focus on end-of-course rating. Students comment on the extent to which a teacher appears prepared for class sessions, communicates clearly, stimulates interest, and demonstrates enthusiasm and respect for students.

  Focus on mid-course and periodic student feedback.

  Use of colleagues as peer reviewers—colleagues who have expertise in the discipline being taught and training in what to observe can provide important evaluation information through classroom visits and review of course materials and instructional contributions.

  Evaluation of classroom teaching—colleague make visits to the classroom and observe aspects of teaching such as appropriateness of materials and methods, inclusion of recent developments in the discipline.
Evaluation of course materials- colleagues can evaluate course materials such as syllabi, textbooks, handouts, assignments, graded exams, etc.

- **Learning outcomes assessment data** (test results, evaluation of written or oral project reports and other students’ products, student self-assessments).
- **Subjective evaluations by others** (students’ end of course ratings, peer ratings, awards and recognition received, reference letters).
- **Self-assessment data** (statement of teaching philosophy and goals, self-evaluation of progress towards achieving the goals).

This perhaps suggests the need to use both formative and summative evaluation procedures.

Kreber (1999) has produced a list of indicators that may be used specifically for the formative and summative evaluation of what she calls teaching scholarship. These indicators emphasize processes as well as outputs by looking at what scholars do as well as what they produce (Kreber, 2000). She identified three different knowledge domains:

- Instructional knowledge-knowledge that a teacher needs to acquire in the area of instructional design.
- Pedagogical knowledge – refers to what we know about how students learn, and
- Curricular knowledge – which refers to the goals, purposes and rationale of a course or program.

Felder (2000:3) proposes that for the ratings of the scholarship of teaching to be reliable and valid, the evaluating department should take the following steps:
• **Formulate and announce an assessment and evaluation plan.** Decide which items listed in the matrix will be collected in the teaching portfolio, taking into account both institutional guidelines and considerations specific to the department. Choose a system to rate each of the items in the portfolio (e.g. rate items on a scale from 0-10), weighting factors for each item, and weighted scores that serve as criteria for adequate and superior scholarship. Describe rating system to all departmental faculty members who may wish to include educational scholarship in their credentials.

• **Provide training to portfolio raters.** Give detailed explanations of the evaluation criteria to faculty members who will be serving as raters and provide guided practice on sample portfolios.

• **Collect at least two independent ratings of each portfolio submitted and have the evaluators reconcile their ratings to arrive at a consensus rating.** Incorporate the consensus rating into the overall tenure/promotion dossier evaluation process.

Bitzer (2004:33) contends that the quality of performance in any of the four areas of scholarship by Boyer might be assessed on the basis of evidence that speaks directly to the standards for judging the work. The challenge however is identifying the sources of materials that provide evidence of that quality since some scholarly activities are more readily documented than others. This can lead to a skewed assessment in terms of the overall performance. A possible suggestion is to agree with a scholar on a yearly basis what the priority areas of his or her work will be evaluated and what types of documentation might suffice for that purpose (Bitzer, 2000). Bitzer, (2004:33-34) shows
us where to begin when he suggests what is needed to create a scholarly portfolio. According o him, this could be carried out in four phases;

Phase 1: Summarize scholarly responsibilities.
Phase 2: Select criteria for effective appraisal of scholarly performance
Phase 3: Arrange the criteria in order of importance
Phase 4: Assemble the support data- e.g. reports on completed research projects, examiner reports, article contribution on particular areas of expertise.
Phase 5: Incorporate the portfolio into a peer driven performance appraisal system. The professional portfolio is then incorporated into the appraisal system of the academic unit to form a basis for discussion between the department head and appraisal committee.
References


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