

■ KRISHNA S. DHIR, Feature Editor, Campbell School of Business, Berry College

## The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Putting Your Money Where Your Mouth Is on Teaching Effectiveness

by Cynthia V. Fukami, Daniels College of Business, University of Denver

Can good teachers be good researchers? Can good researchers be good teachers? When I began my career, an either-or mentality prevailed in the academic world. If you were a good teacher, you weren't taken seriously as a researcher. If you were a good researcher, you weren't expected to be a good teacher. Today, I'm more optimistic about the choices faculty members have. One reason for my optimism is the introduction of the concept of the scholarship of teaching and learning (SOTL). Instead of forcing faculty to choose between research and teaching, SOTL recognizes that teaching is an integral part of faculty scholarship. In my opinion, business schools, and more importantly, our students, would be better served if SOTL was formally incorporated into our faculty performance and reward systems.

In his classic article, "On the Folly of Rewarding A, While Hoping for B," Steven Kerr cites numerous examples of reward systems that are backwards. That is, they fail to overtly reward desired behavior, relying instead on "hope" to produce these activities. One of his examples hits close to home. Kerr notes that the typical university "hopes that professors will not neglect their teaching responsibilities but rewards them almost entirely for research and publications" (Kerr, 1975, p. 771, emphasis added). Professors must allocate their scarce time between teaching, research, and other obligations. Since rewards for good teaching—and punishments for poor teaching—are often rare, it follows that teaching would merit a lower priority for faculty attention. On the other hand, rewards for research—and punishments for failure to accomplish publications—are common. As Kerr concludes, "it is rational

for university professors to concentrate on research, even to the detriment of teaching and at the expense of their students" (Kerr, 1975).

In other words, academic leaders tend to pay lip service to good teaching. They tell prospective students (and their parents) that teaching matters at their institutions. But a careful examination of their performance and reward systems would likely reveal that few significant consequences are associated with excellent teaching. In fact, I know of one institution where the "reward" given to the annual "best teacher" is a year off from teaching! Why should a prospective student be attracted to apply to a university where teaching is a secondary priority to its faculty?

So, efforts to improve teaching and learning should be welcome at business schools. Kerr's article suggests that a good place to start the effort would be to examine, and overhaul, the system we use to evaluate and reward faculty performance. SOTL may provide us with a vehicle to accomplish this end.

While some earlier examples of the notion of SOTL exist, a very important milestone was *Scholarship Reconsidered*, written by Ernest Boyer, then President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (Boyer, 1990). In this book, Boyer argued that the role of the university professor was broader than the traditional tripartite model of research, teaching, and service. He argued that the work of professors included four separate but overlapping functions: the scholarship of discovery, the scholarship of integration, the scholarship of application, and the scholarship of teaching. Essentially, Boyer elevated the status of teaching by recognizing that



**Cynthia V. Fukami**

*is a professor of management in the Daniels College of Business at the University of Denver. She earned her BA in psychology and her MA in organizational behavior from the University of Illinois, and her PhD in organizational*

*behavior from Northwestern University. In addition to her disciplinary contributions, Cindi has published various articles and presented papers at a number of scholarly meetings on the scholarship of teaching and learning. She has served as chair of the Academy of Management's Teaching Committee, and on the Organizational Behavior Teaching Society's board of directors, including two years as chair. She was associate editor of the Journal of Management Education from 1997-2000, and is currently serving as an associate editor of Academy of Management Learning and Education. Cindi is a fellow of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.*

[www.du.edu/~cfukami](http://www.du.edu/~cfukami)

---

teaching has a scholarly component—a set of problems worth pursuing as an ongoing intellectual quest.

Just about any teaching experience will produce examples of such problems, from the philosophical to the nuts-and-bolts. Why do some students perform better than others? How do students come to understand concepts? How can we use teams more effectively in the classroom? The classic method of addressing such teaching problems has been to seek out a wise priest, an expert advisor in whom to confide our problems and seek solutions. SOTL suggests we can better address teaching problems through the scholarly method. In other words, we can use the same intellectual process we follow in our disciplinary work in order to improve our teaching and our students' learning. Most, if not all, of our doctoral training was devoted to scholarly work in our discipline. We learned the literature, we learned how to frame questions, and we learned the scientific method of inquiry. So, to use the term "scholarship" toward our teaching implies that we apply those same learnings and standards for evaluating our work in teaching as we apply in our disciplinary research.

It is critical to note that this broader view of scholarship does not and should not translate into lower standards of quality. A common reaction to SOTL is to ask, "So does this mean that every time I walk into a classroom, I'm producing scholarship?" My answer to this question is simple—yes, you are producing scholarship, but not of very high quality. Using an analogy from disciplinary research, teaching a class is like having a conversation with a colleague about a possible research project. You would hardly list such a conversation on your vita, or include it in your annual performance report. Like any scholarly work, there is a continuum of quality in SOTL.

Pat Hutchings, senior scholar, and Lee Shulman, current president of the Carnegie Foundation, make an important observation about this point in identifying three levels of SOTL (Hutchings & Shulman, 1999). The first level is what they call "excellent teaching." They argue that all faculty have an obligation to teach well—to engage students and to foster important forms of student learning. When this is accomplished, excellent teaching has oc-

curred. Typically, we include student evaluations of teaching in faculty performance reviews, and this would be a way of holding faculty accountable for excellent teaching.

The second level of SOTL is "scholarly teaching." Scholarly teaching, while excellent, also includes assessment and evidence gathering, is informed by the latest ideas in one's discipline, and invites peer review and collaboration. Scholarly teachers are reflective and informed. To evaluate scholarly teaching, we might include teaching portfolios or peer evaluations in our faculty performance reviews.

The third level is SOTL. SOTL moves beyond excellent and scholarly teaching by adding the community that is necessary for quality scholarship to occur. Instead of being private about their teaching, faculty engaged in SOTL make their work public, open to critique and evaluation from others. This allows others in the community to build on previous work, thereby creating a body of knowledge. Finally, SOTL introduces the importance of student learning into the equation. SOTL could be evidenced in faculty performance reviews by the appearance of our work in refereed journals directed toward teaching, by presentations at conferences devoted to teaching, and by other elite outputs.

As with other scholarly activity, there is a wide range of examples of SOTL (Hutchings, 2000). In a literature review of SOTL in the Management Sciences, we identified four categories of work (Frost & Fukami, 1997). These included "teaching practice," such as research on teaching to different learners, teaching diversity, service learning, grading, and pedagogy (games, simulations, experiential exercises, movies, videos, and the use of humor and cartoons). A second, and rapidly growing, category of SOTL was "technology in the classroom." These studies examine the use of computer-mediated technology and distance learning. A third category of SOTL was "evaluation," and included work both on student evaluation of teaching effectiveness, as well as evaluation of student learning. A fourth category of SOTL was "classroom-as-organization," which investigated organizational behaviors such as the use of teams in the classroom setting.

I am convinced that business schools can be leaders in SOTL because of the fun-

damental synergy between our disciplines and the substance of SOTL. Using my field as an example, Management is a discipline in which *how* we teach, and the tools we use, most closely mirror important aspects of *what* we teach (Frost & Fukami, 1997). In short, the field of Management is about understanding human behavior in organizations as well as understanding the organizations themselves. Thus, our classrooms can be thought of as organizations, and, as such, provide a real time laboratory in which to illustrate, and perhaps test, most of our important disciplinary concepts. This observation is not lost on our students, who often recognize the parallels between the content we are delivering on effective management and the process we use to manage the classroom. To not be sensitive to this would be at best to ignore, and at worst to contradict the lessons I'm trying to teach. Why would my students become Theory Y managers when I've been a Theory X teacher?

We also can't ignore our need to be better teachers, because our students deserve deep understanding of the concepts we are attempting to teach. Simply put, there is much room for improvement in student understanding. The Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics has produced a thought-provoking video, *A Private Universe*, which illustrates this point (Schneps & Sadler, 1987). It portrays a group of students and faculty at Harvard on graduation day being quizzed about some basic concepts of science. Virtually all graduates interviewed failed to answer correctly. In a parallel vein, the video moves to a high school classroom where the teacher experiences great difficulty in getting bright students to move beyond their misconceptions and have accurate understanding of concepts. Watching this video reminds us that we need to consider what is happening in the minds of our students—to not just focus on our teaching, but on their learning. The use of evidence, obtained through SOTL, is more likely to help us understand student learning than the anecdotes and advice from our wise priests.

The reality is that the cultures of many business schools are just beginning to be receptive to SOTL. And some are not at all receptive, forcing scholars to make irrational choices about practicing it anyway. In

order to foster SOTL, and hence attention to effective teaching and learning, our reward systems need to change. To truly embrace and develop teaching as a scholarly activity, there must be alignment with your unit's strategy and performance measurement and reward systems. We need to remove, or at least to try to minimize, the risk associated with SOTL. Next, we need to start adding rewards for SOTL. Finally, in order for SOTL to flourish, we need a culture and an infrastructure to support it. As the old adages go, "What gets measured gets done," and "What gets rewarded, gets repeated."

My institution, the Daniels College of Business at the University of Denver, provides a model for such support. We are the eighth oldest business school in the United States, founded in 1908. One of the original group of business schools accredited by the AACSB, we have been continuously accredited since 1923. Our mission is to foster enlightened practice, professional achievement, and community commitment. We assert that teaching is the key in achieving our mission, but also that great teaching is associated with great scholarship.

In 1997, after several years of development, our faculty formally adopted the aforementioned Boyer model and developed a scholarship document that governs its use. Faculty now report their performance within the four categories annually, in our merit increase process, and in our two-year pre-tenure, three-year post-tenure, and promotion and tenure deliberations. We document our performance in a data base where we indicate the type of outlet, and Boyer category, for each activity.

To support our scholarship model, we merged three previously stand-alone committees (research, faculty development, and cases) into one Scholarship Steering Committee. The committee awards seed grants in the four scholarship areas three times per year, holds faculty development events once a month, and presents annual awards for excellence in each of the four scholarship areas. In addition to this infrastructure, the scholarship model is also reinforced through our annual merit increase system. Interestingly, faculty receive the same raise whether they publish a "discovery" article, or a "teaching" article. This means that we don't have to make a choice

between our teaching and research—we are equally rewarded for quality output in both.

In promotion and tenure decisions, the norm is that a faculty member must be "excellent" in one of the four areas, and "acceptable" in the remaining three. The system does not value discovery over application, or integration over teaching, etc. A faculty member may choose, with the input of his or her chair, which of the four areas to emphasize. Again, we can choose to emphasize the Scholarship of Teaching, so long as we have achieved acceptable records of performance in the other three areas.

In my biased opinion, this model has been successful for us. Symbolically and pragmatically, we have put our money where our mouth has been on the importance of teaching *and* research. Dean Jim Griesemer does not cross his fingers when he tells prospective students (and their parents) that teaching matters at Daniels.

We are not optimistic enough to believe we have completely solved the teaching-research conundrum. Even with great support and results, there has been some resistance. As with any shift in the power structure and the reward system, there will be winners and losers. Change can be painful and slow. A key factor has been the leadership and support of senior faculty toward this model. Another key issue will be to continue to insist on and to nurture quality scholarship, no matter what the category of work. Time will tell what other challenges exist down the road.

If you are interested in traveling down this road, there are a number of resources where you can find information, encouragement, support, expertise, and an emerging literature to guide your way. The Carnegie Foundation, most notably through its Carnegie Scholars Program (in which I was privileged to participate), campus programs, and work with scholarly societies, has made tremendous contributions on SOTL. The American Association for Higher Education partners with the Carnegie Foundation on campus programs, holds an annual Faculty Roles and Rewards Conference that emphasizes SOTL issues, and has published many works on SOTL.

The AACSB has sponsored an important peer review of teaching project, and

business disciplinary professional organizations such as DSI and the Academy of Management support SOTL in their conferences and divisional activities. SOTL outlets are popping up everywhere. In business disciplines alone we have journals such as the *Journal of Management Education*, *Journal of Marketing Education*, *Issues in Accounting Education*, *Simulation and Gaming*, *Biz Ed*, and *Academy of Management Learning and Education*.

SOTL supports our individual and professional roles, our practical responsibilities to our students and our institutions, and our social and political obligations to those who support and take responsibility for higher education. Rather than hoping for great teaching, SOTL has the potential to encourage and reward faculty members for both creating knowledge and fostering student understanding. Faculty should be able to prioritize their work in such a way that they can achieve, and be recognized for, great teaching and great research. Join in and celebrate those who are already on this journey. As I think our students would agree, it is a journey worth taking.

## References

- Boyer, E. L. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. Princeton, NJ: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
- Frost, P. J., & Fukami, C. V. (1997). Teaching effectiveness in the organizational sciences: Recognizing and enhancing the scholarship of teaching. *Academy of Management Journal*, 40(6), 1271-1281.
- Hutchings, P., Ed. (2000). *Opening lines: Approaches to the scholarship of teaching and learning*. Menlo Park, CA: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
- Hutchings, P., & Lee S. S. (1999). The scholarship of teaching. *Change*, 31(5), 10-16.
- Kerr, S. (1975). On the folly of rewarding A, while hoping for B. *Academy of Management Journal*, 18, 769-783. ■

Krishna S. Dhir, Feature Editor  
Dean, Campbell School of Business  
Berry College  
kdhir@campbell.berry.edu