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"Breaking Barriers in Teaching and Learning" - Reading to Improve Teaching and Learning

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AFTERWORD

Reading to Improve Teaching and Learning

John Zubizarreta
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Scholarship on teaching and learning has exploded in volume and influence in recent decades, providing all of us who are dedicated to improving our roles as professors with a dizzying array of books and other resources. Faculty development as a specific area of study and professional growth and centers designed to promote and support better teaching (often called CETLs for Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning or CATLs for Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning) have multiplied on campuses around the globe.

The United States is home to a number of support networks, including POD (Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education), NEFDC (New England Faculty Development Consortium), SRFIDC (Southern Regional Faculty and Instructional Development Consortium), and HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) Faculty Development Network. These support networks have also proliferated worldwide. Country-specific organizations include groups such as SEDA (Staff and Educational Development Association, U.K.), HERDSA (Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australia), STLHE (Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Canada), JAED (Japan Association for Educational Development in Higher Education), and SFDN (Swiss Faculty Development Network). ICED (International Consortium for Educational Development) is one example of a fully international association that holds its biennial meetings in locations such as South Africa, Canada, Sweden, Thailand, Spain, Australia, United States, Germany, and Finland. Even specialized journals such as

The Journal of Faculty Development and the *Journal on Centers for Teaching and Learning* are now widely circulated as resources for faculty development and improvement of teaching and learning.

Many instructional and organizational initiatives have also produced new approaches and rekindled traditional strategies for better teaching and deeper learning. Collaborative learning, cooperative learning, problem-based learning, team-based learning, integrative learning, team teaching, flipped classrooms, interdisciplinary courses and programs, professional and student learning portfolios, outcomes-based curricula, reflective practice, active-learning pedagogies, scholarship of teaching and learning, evidence-based practice, neuroscience and learning, online education, differentiated educational programs, developmental education, learning styles or preferences, learning mindsets, resilience, the first-year experience, high-impact practices, service learning, backward design—all of these (the list goes on and on) have become ubiquitous mantras in higher education. Such movements have sparked much attention to the art and craft of teaching and the complexities involved in inspiring the kind of meaningful, transformative, and lasting learning that we prize in honors and in all our academic and experiential programs designed for promoting excellence in our students' learning. All of these strategies and ideals undergird the ideas and practical suggestions found in this volume.

But where do we begin to study the myriad resources available on teaching and learning? In this volume, each of the chapters contains useful references that provide a starting point for further reading on a variety of topics. The wealth of information available in print and online journals and in websites is enormous, and I trust that today's professors are skilled enough to search for them in standing libraries and in the rapidly changing landscape of the Internet. In my long tenure in honors education, however, I am regularly and pleasantly surprised by how hungry new as well as seasoned honors faculty, administrators, and students are to learn more about the complexities of teaching and learning. At one conference after another, at one institute after another, in one NCHC listserv post after another, questions about recommended

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resources abound. This hunger is a sign of the dynamic character of honors professionals and students who are dedicated to academic excellence.

In the following section, I offer a selected list of many books that readers may find helpful in discovering or revisiting ways to improve our work as instructors and scholars of teaching and learning. From the venerable lecture to the flipped classroom, from Socratic discussion to online threaded forums, from test design to electronic portfolios, the books I share represent some of the best thinking, research, and writing in our field. One of the lessons we may glean from inspecting such resources is how honors has long been at the forefront of many of the inspiring theories and best-practice applications found in decades of scholarship on teaching and learning. The essays in this volume are a glimpse into the creativity and vitality of our programs, faculty, and students. Honors has never been behind the curve.

Considering the exemplary pedagogies and examples shared by our present authors, I suppose that one of the challenges that lies ahead for honors and that we should embrace with urgency is how to reimagine and retool higher education so that all our students—honors or not—enjoy the benefits of the deep, transformative learning we value in honors. The time for breaking barriers in teaching and learning is now.

Happy reading!

