

## Growing the scholarship of teaching and learning through institutional culture change

Sarah M. Ginsberg<sup>1</sup> and Jeffrey L. Bernstein<sup>2</sup>

*Abstract: The scholarship of teaching and learning represents an important movement within higher education. Through this work, the profession of teaching is able to build upon itself through sustained inquiry and an evidence-based culture. However, for the scholarship of teaching and learning to take hold on a campus, a culture shift often needs to occur, during which time actions by campus leaders, change agents and facilitators lay the groundwork for, and effect, institutional change. This paper uses an organizational theory approach to sketch out a model by which this culture change can occur. It then uses our experiences at a regional comprehensive university in the Midwestern United States to elaborate on culture change models. Our experiences teach valuable lessons about how the scholarship of teaching and learning can become an important element within a campus culture.*

*Keywords: institutional culture, organizational change, institutional change.*

### I. Introduction.

On May 17, 2009 at Eastern Michigan University (EMU), representatives from 11 universities came together as members of the *SOTL Collaborative* to discuss how to support the scholarship of teaching and learning (SOTL) on each campus. The meeting took place the day before the first SOTL Academy Conference at EMU, which would attract 150 people. As those present at the first meeting of the Collaborative began discussing common goals for increasing engagement in SOTL on campuses, many began to make comments about the need to change the “culture” of their institutions in order to gain support for, and acceptance of, work in the scholarship of teaching and learning. What we believe that they meant was that in order for SOTL to gain a foothold within an institution, the core technology<sup>3</sup>, or mission, of many institutions might need to be expanded from either teaching or “pure” research (what Boyer, 1990 called the “scholarship of discovery”), to include scholarly investigation of teaching and learning, perhaps culminating in publications based on these investigations. Those in the room believed that teaching needs to be valued, recognized, and rewarded more, in order for this to occur.

Changing the dominant core technology of a long-standing, large scale institution is not an easy task; universities typically have a history of being known for a specific type of work and are also large bureaucracies not prone to rapid change (Scott, 1998). In this context of culture shifts, we then began to consider how our efforts have contributed to changing the culture of our own institution to promote SOTL, to consider what else we need to do, and to reflect on the applicability of the lessons we have learned to other institutions.

---

<sup>1</sup> Department of Special Education, Eastern Michigan University, 115 Porter Building, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

<sup>2</sup> Department of Political Science, Eastern Michigan University, 601 Pray-Harrold, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

<sup>3</sup> In the organizational theory literature, the word ‘technology’ is used to refer to the work that an organization performs, transforming “inputs into outputs” such as transforming students into professionals (Scott, 1998, p. 21; see also Thompson, 1967).

The idea of culture, which accepts a key set of ideas and perhaps rejects another, conflicting set of ideas, is not something that can be imposed, but must develop over time and with the support of continued social interactions (Morgan, 1997). At many colleges and universities, minimal focus is placed on the competing technology of SOTL. This is largely because the primary mission of the institution focuses either on teaching or on research, rarely both, and seldom focuses on research about teaching and learning. The barriers to accepting and valuing this work are quite different in teaching-focused institutions (which may need to be convinced that giving faculty course releases and financial support for this research can be a good investment) and at research universities (which may need to be convinced that this work represents legitimate scholarship that ought to count, along with disciplinary research, in tenure and promotion decisions). These foci of teaching and disciplinary research may be quite important to colleges and universities, whose identities and place within the marketplace of higher education arise through their identity either as a teaching or research institution.

However, if institutions that emphasize teaching or discipline-based research have much to gain from involvement with the scholarship of teaching and learning movement, then a culture shift becomes vital. The technology of SOTL must gain support within the organization and among its membership in order to bring about a change in the culture of the institution. At both teaching and research institutions, changing the underlying institutional culture is important for legitimizing this work. “Legitimacy refers to the degree of cultural support for an organization” (Scott, 2001, p. 59); there can be no movement toward SOTL without increasing its legitimacy and value on campus.

## II. Why the scholarship of teaching and learning?

Before we can reasonably advocate for change in institutional culture to promote the scholarship of teaching and learning, we should address the value of this work in general. The scholarship of teaching and learning starts from the idea that teaching is serious, *scholarly* work, rather than work that academics do separate from their scholarship (Boyer, 1990; Glassick Huber and Maeroff, 1997).<sup>4</sup> Shulman (1993, 1998) suggests that academics do not talk enough about teaching, or build upon our knowledge about good teaching to construct a scholarship around it. According to Shulman (1998, p. 6):

A scholarship of teaching will entail a public account of some or all of the full act of teaching – vision, design, enactment, outcomes and analysis – in a manner susceptible to critical review by the teacher’s professional peers and amenable to productive employment in future work by members of that same community.

In this vision, scholars of teaching and learning can build on our knowledge of good practice, in an evidence-based manner, and generate a body of scholarly work (through the peer review process) similar to what we do in our disciplinary research.

Clearly, not all faculty must engage in the scholarship of teaching and learning. Faculty do not have the time to pursue all areas of scholarly work – some might choose (quite reasonably) to focus on work in the scholarships of discovery, integration and application

---

<sup>4</sup> As one telling example, our university’s tenure and promotion process requires candidates to put forward evidence of their work in service, teaching, and scholarship. Teaching, as conceived here (and at many other universities), is placed in a completely different category than scholarship; this division of an academic’s portfolio is certainly the norm in higher education.

(Boyer, 1990).<sup>5</sup> However, at the institutional level, and for the academy in general, a flourishing scholarship of teaching and learning becomes critical. As Hutchings and Shulman (1998) argue:

[T]he scholarship of teaching *is* a condition – as yet a mostly absent condition – for excellent teaching. It is the mechanism through which the profession of teaching itself advances, through which teaching can be something other than a seat-of-the-pants operation, with each of us out there making it up as we go. As such, the scholarship of teaching has the potential to serve *all* teachers – and students. (*italics in original*)

To this, we would add that the scholarship of teaching and learning has a significant home in the disciplines – as Huber and Morreale (2002) remind us, while good teaching has elements in common across disparate fields, teaching and learning is also significantly different across the disciplines (see also Gurung, Chick and Haynie, 2008). Thus, SOTL work has the potential not only to advance teaching and learning generally, but also to focus these advancements within one's disciplinary home; engaging in SOTL does not mean turning one's back on disciplinary work. Ideally, work in SOTL enhances a scholar's contribution to his or her discipline, albeit in a non-traditional fashion.

### **III. Research-based principles of change: A theoretical framework.**

Assuming the reader sees value in SOTL, the next step becomes making our institutions more hospitable homes for this work, both to support those engaging in this work and to enable the work to enhance the core mission of the institution. Kezar (2001) notes that organizational culture is one of the major perspectives or theories that can be used to examine change in institutions. Organizational culture is “what a group learns over a period of time as that group solves its problems of survival in an external environment and its problems of internal integration” (Schein, 1990). Shared perceptions, thoughts, and beliefs must first shift for individuals members in order to facilitate a transformation of the larger culture to incorporate new perspectives. People may be reticent to accept new views as an organizational culture experiences stability and its members experience reduced anxiety as patterns of responding and thinking become more automatic (Schein, 1990). This equates to a fear of change, in which individuals and institutions prefer to maintain consistency rather than attempt to deal with the uncertain effects of new ideas.

Change is slow. This is a result of the long standing histories in institutions of higher education and of the sense of comfort that is often associated with the accepted culture of the organization (Kezar, 2001). One of the key mechanisms of change in the organizational culture model is the leader (Morgan, 1997; Schein, 1990). The leader within an organization has the opportunity to model a set of beliefs and behaviors that the group members identify with and want to emulate. Leaders can encourage cultural change when they demonstrate that a new belief is valued within the organization by members of the institution, such as by dedicating resources

---

<sup>5</sup> We would, however, argue that all faculty members have a professional obligation to practice good teaching (defined by McKinney (2004) as “promot[ing] student learning and other desired student outcomes” (p. 8) and also to engage in scholarly teaching, in which they “reflect on their teaching, use classroom assessment techniques, engage in systematic course design, update their courses, discuss teaching issues with colleagues, try new teaching techniques, and read and apply the literature on teaching and learning in their discipline.” (p. 8) Whether they take the next step toward the scholarship of learning is, and ought to be, their own decision about how to structure their time and professional goals.

to SOTL. They can also encourage cultural change by making official statements of endorsement to the organization, such as by including SOTL in a strategic plan. The challenge for using leadership to successfully change the culture of a university is that if the members do not find the leader credible or close enough to their own thoughts, they may turn away from him or her as a leader, or separate into a subculture (Schein, 1990).

In addition to the leader, we would suggest two other categories of actors play a critical role. The first is the *change agent*, the individual (or individuals) on the ground who most strongly advocate for change. The change agent often has the strongest desire to see this change occur, as well as perhaps the most to gain from seeing it happen (and the most at risk in case this change does not happen, or in case it happens with deleterious consequences). The change agent may have the specific substantive expertise that the leader does not possess, but may lack the institutional clout or role to effect this change. Thus, in addition to the change agent, the process of bringing about institutional change may also require a *facilitator*, someone in the position to be the bridge between the change agents (with the passion and on-the-ground expertise) and the leader (with the institutional clout to make things happen). Ideally, the facilitator possesses enough of each to enable culture change to occur. As noted by Scott (2001), roles played by different actors within the context of the organization can be critical to bringing about action, or cultural change. The roles, and the positions of the individuals filling them, are shown below in Table 1 for easy reference; the actions of specific individuals will be discussed later in the paper.

**Table 1. Roles involved in bringing about culture change.**

Role	Importance	Person Playing Role
Leader	Possesses institutional power and influence to help change institutional culture	Associate Provost (AVP)
Change Agent	Possesses passion and on-the-ground substantive knowledge to help make change occur	Faculty Members (authors of this article)
Facilitator	Possesses combination of institutional clout and on-the-ground knowledge to help smooth the process of change	Director of Faculty Development Center

Cultural change is also slow because culture “perpetuates and reproduces itself” through socialization within the organization (Schein, 1990, p. 115). As new members join an organization, they seldom have a full understanding of the cultural assumptions that are held by long-standing members of the culture. Therefore, as we accept new members into our organizations, such as hiring new faculty, it is up to each of the senior members to indoctrinate the new person about what the members of the culture value. This can be done by the change agents, facilitators, and the leaders, each acting in their appropriate institutional roles. This process takes time. As new beliefs are incorporated into the culture, it may take a number of years before enough new members are brought in and identify with the newer aspects of the culture, such as the value of SOTL. In addition, longer-standing members of the community may continue to challenge changes to the accepted cultural norms. While there will always be subcultures (Schein, 1990), the numbers of those willing to adopt the new ideas into their culture will likely need to outweigh the numbers who are unwilling to accommodate the new ideas

before true cultural shifts can take place. Challenges and conflicts over beliefs are common in periods of cultural change (Scott, 2001).

Given the size and history of most post-secondary institutions, gaining cultural support for a new and competing technology such as SOTL represents a significant challenge. To bring about change, understandings of a goal or a technology must be altered at all levels, from broad groups (such as administrators) down to the individual faculty members (Kezar, 2001). Kezar outlined a “complex set of research-based principles” (p. 5) that is the basis of change in higher education. Using a number of these principles, we will examine, as a case study, our efforts to begin changing the culture of Eastern Michigan University such that SOTL may become an accepted technology within the institution. The following description of the steps we took to move our institution’s culture toward one of accepting SOTL as a competing technology are matched with a number of the principles of change (Kezar, 2001). Our reflections on our actions, and the resulting impact that each had on EMU’s culture, often address more than one of the principles of change at each individual step.

#### **IV. A case study of organizational change: SOTL at EMU.**

Having sketched out a vision for how institutional change can occur, our next task is to use this model to shed light upon our case. Below, we report on the process by which the scholarship of teaching and learning has become a more significant part of the institutional culture at Eastern Michigan University. Our discussion of the case study is largely chronological, and makes explicit reference to the elements of change identified by Kezar and other scholars of institutional change; the key elements of the case study, and the links they make to the theoretical model, are detailed below in Table 2, along with a timeline of when these steps first occurred.<sup>6</sup> We note in the final section of this case study that change has not occurred to the full extent to which we would hope, but that our progress to date has revealed more than modicum of success, and given us much to build on.

##### *A. Promote organizational self-discovery.*

The *formal* work of the scholarship of teaching and learning at Eastern Michigan University began with Bernstein’s selection as a Carnegie Scholar in the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) Program for the 2005-06 academic year.<sup>7</sup> As a condition of his being accepted for the program, Eastern Michigan University needed to agree to provide institutional support for SOTL. As part of this support, the director of EMU’s Faculty Development Center and agreed that Bernstein would lead a faculty development seminar on the scholarship of teaching and learning during the 2006-07 academic year (as of this writing, the seminar continued for four years with four classes of fellows under his direction; Ginsberg is

---

<sup>6</sup> In the timeline, we concentrate on when these actions were initiated, in connection with the first meeting of the SOTL Collaborative and the first iteration of the SOTL Academy Conference. The activities we describe are, of course, ongoing activities. In describing the process by which we brought about this culture shift, however, we focus most on the early stages of these activities, as they were institutionalized.

<sup>7</sup> This is not to suggest that there was no work being done in this area before that point. Some faculty (like Ginsberg) had been doing and publishing work in the scholarship of teaching and learning before that – Ginsberg had been a regular participant in SOTL conferences by that point. And others (including Bernstein) had been doing work that fits within the framework of the scholarship of teaching and learning even if he had not been specifically framing his work around the SOTL movement.

currently running a modified version of the seminar). Ten faculty members joined the seminar the first year, representing all five of the university's different colleges.

**Table 2. Principles of Change applied to growth of SOTL at Eastern Michigan University.**

<b>Principles of Change</b> (drawn from Kezar, 2001)	<b>Example of Actions Taken</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Promote Organizational Self-Discovery	-EMU agrees to provide institutional support for SOTL per Carnegie's CASTL program	2005-06 – Bernstein is Carnegie Scholar 2006-07 – First SOTL Seminar held (ongoing)
Articulate Core Characteristics Lay Groundwork for Change	-SOTL symposium establishes the breadth and depth of SOTL for wider campus audience	Winter 2008 – SOTL Symposium begins (ongoing) April 2006 – Randy Bass lecture December 2008 – Dan Bernstein lecture
Realize That Change in Higher Education Is Often Political	-Obtain support and endorsement of AVP of research	Winter 2008 – Gain Support from AVP (Leader)
Connect the Change Process to Individual and Institutional Identity	-Garner support from campus facilitators/boundary spanners (college Deans and FDC Director)	Winter 2008 – Gain Support from Faculty Development Director (Facilitator) Fall 2008 – Gain Support from College Deans
Balancing External Forces and the Internal Environment	-Formation of SOTL Collaborative	Fall 2008 – Contact institutions to offer membership in Collaborative May 2009 – First Collaborative meeting

As part of the seminar, faculty members spent the fall term designing an inquiry into teaching and learning in one of their winter term classes. They spend the winter term implementing the project, collecting data on student learning, and analyzing the data they had collected. Throughout the year, the group came together as a cohesive unit, relishing their time together to talk about issues of student learning that were often marginalized in other segments of the university. These faculty members (and the ones who participated in the seminar in subsequent years) were an interdisciplinary mix of individuals who together became strong supporters of the work, and advocates for it within their departments and colleges.

Each year of the seminar, participants wrote chapters in a book published by the Faculty Development Center. While the chapters were occasionally uneven and the book lacked the cachet that would be associated with publication by an external press, the essays were generally of high quality. The book itself became an artifact, an object people could hold in their hands and point to as representative of what could be done in the scholarship of teaching and learning at EMU. With the publication of each volume, this work was made visible to others (in part through a well-attended Book Launch in which the editor and authors each speak briefly about their chapters). As participants in the seminar came up for tenure and promotion (close to half were untenured when they participated in the seminar), their presentation of these chapters as evidence of scholarly work began to push the envelope and slowly establish the case that scholarly

inquiries into student learning represents true scholarship that should be counted as such by the university. An additional advantage of working with many untenured faculty is that once they became tenured, they would likely remain at the university for a long time and continue to be strong supporters of the scholarship of teaching and learning at EMU during their careers at the school.

The university initially agreed to support Bernstein in his efforts as a Carnegie scholar by providing institutional support for SOTL upon completion of his time as a Carnegie Scholar. However, it is unlikely that they had any idea as to what shape that support would take, nor how it would impact the campus. The SOTL Seminar, as implemented by Bernstein and supported by the Faculty Development Center's director, began the process of the organization self-discovery (Kezar, 2001). It was not necessarily their intention to do so, but it was an eventual outcome.

### *B. Articulate core characteristics.*

As the seminar was starting to take on a life of its own, we began to explore ways to enhance the visibility of this work (and to provide more opportunities for discussion of teaching and learning). One vehicle we have used for this has been the SOTL Symposium, a regular seminar series in the scholarship of teaching and learning. This began in the winter 2008 semester, in the middle of the second year of the Faculty Development Seminar. We have held approximately four talks a semester, with half coming from EMU faculty (usually alumni of the Faculty Development Seminar) and the remainder coming from faculty at nearby campuses. These talks showcase some of the best work coming out of our campus, and also provide an opportunity for EMU faculty to learn from experts in this work outside our campus. We generally average around a dozen people per talk, with participants representing a diverse range of faculty, lecturers, and often students.

A second component of our articulating the core characteristics of SOTL has been the outside speakers we have brought to campus (apart from the SOTL Symposium). In the last four years, we have hosted Randy Bass to provide a workshop on the scholarship of teaching and learning (as well as a keynote address at a Teaching and Learning Fair) in April 2006 and Dan Bernstein to do a workshop on course portfolios (as well as a SOTL Symposium talk on the Peer Review of Teaching Project) in December 2008. Both workshops drew large and appreciative audiences.

The process of expanding SOTL from the initial small group of faculty who participated in the SOTL Seminar began establishing for a wider campus audience just what the characteristics of SOTL included. These symposium presentations, which were open to the university community, allowed participants to see variety in the work of SOTL scholars and begin identifying key features that articulate the core characteristics of SOTL, such as the emphasis on student learning and value being placed on reflection in the teaching process (Kezar, 2001). Bringing in acknowledged leaders in the field provided opportunities for the campus community to learn about some impressive work and to expand their understanding of the shared, core characteristics associated with SOTL. Inclusion of these speakers in campus activities not only clarified the characteristics of SOTL, but they allowed people to see the possibilities for which we could reach here on campus. The exposure to a variety of SOTL work from those within the campus and across the country allowed participants to increase their understanding of SOTL characteristics and provided germination of the SOTL culture in new members.

*C. Realize that change in higher education is often political.*

In late 2007, the two of us began to discuss the idea hosting a regional SOTL conference on our campus. One of our primary goals was to increase the visibility and recognition of SOTL work happening on our campus. In addition to the work that we were doing, we knew there were many colleagues who were making strong contributions to the SOTL literature as well. A conference was an opportunity to highlight this work, possibly bringing notoriety to our campus, as well as bringing together colleagues from nearby campuses. Through a series of networks that each of us had in place at neighboring institutions, we were aware of what we believed to be a fair interest in SOTL in the region. We looked around at schools playing a leadership role in the scholarship of teaching and learning movement and saw no reason we could not do the same.

The next step, as we saw it, was to determine if the higher levels of the university would endorse our efforts to form and host this conference. We immediately identified one of the university's two Associate Provosts as the likely *leader* for our efforts. Bernstein had been involved in a small reading group on SOTL with this individual, when he had been the administrator on a team of four faculty and one administrator that composed and submitted EMU's application to be part of the Carnegie Foundation's Campus Leadership Program in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Bernstein had been pleased to learn that the Associate Provost had previously done some research on student learning in his classes and that he continued to have an interest in this kind of work. As Associate Provost, he controlled some resources that could aid a conference, and also had institutional clout that would be essential in pushing this work along. His support for the conference would be necessary for us to move forward.

The Associate Provost was immediately supportive of the idea, albeit with an administrator's eye for the big picture of the institutional mission and the institutions' place among the greater higher education community. We had presented him with plan for generating interest in the conference, along with the best evidence we could muster that we could do so. We also shared with him a budget showing various scenarios for how the conference could break even, based upon likely attendance, fixed and discretionary expenses (we aimed to be frugal, but also not to make the conference appear cheap), and registration fees. Based on our preparation and previous reputation for getting things done, the Associate Provost offered the go-ahead to the conference. We began publicizing it and immediately ramped up our planning.

The support he offered at the beginning of the process continued throughout, up to and including the days of the conference (when he participated in a panel discussion at the conference and took time out of his busy schedule to attend many sessions and both keynote addresses). We believe we helped maintain this support through periodic updates as the conference planning was moving along. As he saw what we were doing, and how careful and conservative we were being in the planning, he began to commit more resources in support of our efforts. As noted below, he also began to use the power of his office more and more to increase our reach.

By providing support from a leadership role, this administrator modeled his belief that SOTL would be of value to the institution and that support of it could be valuable to the technology of "Education First," the university's marketing tag line. Additionally, he demonstrated an awareness of the image of the institution within the greater community, another principle of change (Kezar, 2001, p. 6). As leaders can effectively do, he provided the movement



with credibility by making an official endorsement of it and by providing us with key financial resources in the form of seed money (Morgan, 1997; Schein, 1990). The political nature of the leadership support was invaluable to the forward momentum of SOTL on campus (Kezar, 2001). A leader's support of this nature signaled to other university leaders above and below him that SOTL was of value to the institution. It also signaled to the faculty community that SOTL would be accepted, to some degree, in our scholarly agendas.

*D. Connect the change process to individual and institutional identity.*

In an attempt to both build attendance at the conference, and to build campus-wide support for the scholarship of teaching and learning, we next began to broaden our conversations on campus in support of the conference. A first conversation was with the director of our institution's Faculty Development Center. Long supportive of this work, the director was eager to help support the conference. This involved much expert guidance, many intangible contributions and small kindnesses, and a generous contribution of funds toward the registration fee for every EMU presenter at the conference. Besides making it easier for EMU people to attend the conference, her support was a powerful signal that the institution was supportive of the conference.

A second strategy that we pursued for reaching out was to approach the Deans of EMU's different colleges. We discussed with them possible panels that they might like to see at the conference (a few of which ended up appearing on the program). We also solicited their support for the conference through encouraging their faculty to attend and signaling to them that their college Dean considered this to be valuable work. One conversation, with the Dean of the College of Technology, was particularly valuable as we learned of his long-standing commitment to the work of the Faculty Development Center, that we were previously unaware of. He offered to pay the remainder of the registration fee for any faculty member from his college who attended, and agreed to be part of a panel on SOTL and Academic Careers at the conference.

By reaching out to individuals who were able to facilitate change, such as the director of the Faculty Development Center and the college Deans, we extended the individual connections we were making beyond faculty and one administrative leader. The financial support from a Dean was indicative to members of the culture under his leadership that the institution was embracing this technology as part of its identity. The Director of the Faculty Development Center's commitment of funds also signaled to a broader section of the university community, above and below her, that this work was worthy of integration into our institutional identity. These key individuals also had the capability of helping us connect the change to the institutional identity (Kezar, 2001) as their public support of the conference signaled to the faculty that the institution valued SOTL work.

*E. Balancing external forces and the internal environment.*

As we were working toward planning a conference, we began to consider a variety of ways to involve other institutions in the conference. One motivation for doing this was partially the desire to increase attendance at the conference, and hence increase the revenue we brought in. We were both familiar with conference models that offered group discounts to schools that brought a certain number of people to the conference. We liked this idea, but wanted to do more

with it. We aimed to build something larger that might contribute to building capacity for SOTL within the surrounding community.

The idea we settled on was to build, from the grassroots, a community of schools that would come together to support the scholarship of teaching and learning. We called this group the SOTL Collaborative. Functionally, we asked each participating school to pledge \$500 in support of the Collaborative. In exchange, anybody from their institution attending the conference would receive a \$25 discount on the conference registration. We also planned a meeting of each school's Collaborative representative for the night before the conference, in order to talk about these ideas some more.

The Collaborative attracted thirteen schools, from a wide range of institution types (ranging from research-intensive schools to regional comprehensives to liberal arts colleges). In forming the Collaborative, we sent a signal within our own institution that the work we were doing in advancing SOTL had receptive audiences outside our school. We also positioned Eastern Michigan University as a leader in this kind of work in our region; this leadership role was attractive to the administration of our school.

Bringing together all of these institutions provided useful ideas for advancing this work; it also enabled us to form valuable partners that we continue to call on. As we proceed, we have discovered that finding a place for the SOTL Collaborative outside its role as a vehicle for supporting the conference presents a challenge. After a few attempts, we are currently working with member schools to create a workshop for people new to SOTL that will be conducted before the 2011 conference, and can be transported to member schools at a reduced rate. We are also exploring other ways to pool resources and link the schools together. The Collaborative remains an excited, albeit uncertain, work in progress

Universities, like other large institutions, do not exist in a vacuum, but are situated in a context of peer institutions, community constituents, and internal members (Morgan, 1997). Understanding of the intersection between the demands of the environment, including the balance between those that are internal and those that are external is a key component to bringing about change. The external environment can energize the organization through its provision of resources, including funds and intangible support, such as encouragement and shows of support. By enticing those constituents in the external community to invest in our process, we brought about a balance between the leaders' desire to promote our institution's contribution to SOTL and our collaborating institutions desire for their own success. The greater value and investment placed on our efforts by colleagues from the external environment, the more likely our own leaders were to see that the culture shift move the image of our institution forward as a leader in SOTL (Morgan, 1997; Kezar, 2001).

## **V. Conclusion: Looking forward.**

At this time, we cannot declare that the culture of our institution has completely changed to the point that SOTL is embraced by all members of the institution. However, progress is definitely visible in a number of key areas. The leadership of the university continues to support the SOTL Academy conference, now in its third year. The active support has moved further up amongst the leaders as the Provost has not only joined us to welcome conference attendees, he has suggested to other leaders on campus that information regarding SOTL is valuable to student academic success. As a result, our opportunities to share information about SOTL and our efforts on campus reach new audiences and legitimacy increases (Scott, 2001). Recently the Provost

requested that we make a presentation about the SOTL work on campus in an Academic Student Success Summit. This request signals to us that the higher levels of administration are recognizing the value of SOTL within the culture of our institution.

Yet, our challenges also continue. As change agents, we now are confronting the fact that both our leader (the Associate Provost) and facilitator (Faculty Development Director) have left the university in the past year. Once new people are inserted into those positions, we will need to build support among these people as we seek to continue the process of cultivating institutional change. As noted earlier, new members joining an organization may bring their own set of values and it will be our responsibility to share our vision of the role of SOTL within the culture of the institution in order to enable ongoing support from the individuals in these roles.

We continue to reflect on our process and the actions that we can take to further support SOTL on our campus and within our community. In an effort to continue leveraging the external forces to help change the culture (Kezar, 2001), we have begun to incorporate participation from key members of the SOTL Collaborative in growing both the conference and the Collaborative itself. In this way, our internal efforts are reinforced by those outside of our environment, and are at the same time strengthened by their participation and support. At the time of this writing, the results remain to be seen, however, we are optimistic that the increased functions of external constituents will serve to support the acceptance of SOTL on our campus and on theirs.

The process of changing the culture of a large institution, such as a long-standing university, is a slow one (Scott, 1998). For those would be agents of change, the process can be frustrating and seemingly without success, particularly in the early stages. However, Kezar's (2001, p 5-6) research-based principles of change suggest that there are indeed mechanisms that can be successful in bringing about the type of change that is required in order to move a teaching or research oriented institution forward to embracing a new and possibly competing core technology such as SOTL.

While our work here does not represent a fully-fleshed image of a model of change from a cultural theory perspective (Kezar, 2001; Morgan, 1997; Scott, 1998) it does hold the potential to enlighten and encourage others who would like to see their higher education institutions begin to embrace SOTL. For those who are, as we were, lamenting the need for the need for cultural shift within their institution, our case study connected can be a model of just one possibility. It is important to keep in mind that no one action is going to have a far-reaching effect. Rather it is the sum of parts, implemented over a long period of time that will hopefully add up to equal more than just the sum of individual steps taken. The opportunity to reflect back on the steps taken and their resulting movement forward in changing a culture is a valuable one.

## References

- Baker, P.J. (1986). The helter-skelter relationship between teaching and research: A cluster of problems and small wins. *Teaching Sociology*, 14(1). 50-66.
- Boyer, E.L. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. Princeton: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
- Glassick, C.E., Huber, M.T. & Maeroff, G.I. (1997). *Scholarship assessed: Evaluation of the professoriate*. San Francisco: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Ginsberg, S. M. and Bernstein, J. L.

Gurung, R.A.R., Chick, N.L. & Haynie, A. (2008). *Exploring signature pedagogies: Approaches to teaching disciplinary habits of mind*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Huber, M.T. and Morreale, S. (2002). *Disciplinary styles in the scholarship of teaching and learning: Exploring common ground*. Washington, DC: American Association for Higher Education and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Hutchings, Pat & Shulman, L.S. (1999). "The scholarship of teaching: New elaborations, new developments." *Change* 31 (5), p. 10-15.

Kezar, A. (2001). *Understanding and facilitating change in higher education in the 21st century*. ERIC Digest. Washington DC: George Washington University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED457763).

Morgan, G. (1997). *Images of organization*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Schein, E. H. (1990). Organizational culture. *American Psychologist*, 45(2), 109-119.

Scott, W. R. (2001). *Institutions and organizations (2ed)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Scott, W. R. (1998). *Organizations: Rational, natural, and open systems*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Shulman, L. S. (1993). Teaching as community property: Putting an end to pedagogical solitude. *Change*, 6, 6-7.

Shulman, L. S. (1998). Introduction. In Pat Hutchings (Ed.) *The course portfolio: How faculty can examine their teaching to advance practice and improve student learning* (pp. 5-12). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Thompson, J. D. (1967). *Organizations in action*. New York: McGraw Hill.