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Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Developing a Culture of Assessment

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Presenter Information

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The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) initiative began as a conversation among four faculty from different disciplines (Behavioral Science, Early-Childhood Education, Humanities, and Natural Science) who were interested in establishing a viable support network for faculty interested in fostering a culture of assessment in order to document effectiveness of teaching and learning practices, regardless of experience, rank, or tenure.

The goal at the beginning was to invite like-minded faculty who were already involved in or curious about scholarship of teaching and learning practices. Included in the first two professional development opportunities were discussions on forming a question about current classroom practices, assessing the effectiveness of specific strategies, analyzing the results, and disseminating the results within the college and to the broader community. An underlying purpose was that participants would develop confidence and curiosity, regardless of field or expertise, and be able to overcome any reluctance to embark on research. This SoTL initiative is based on the platform that, by incorporating the expertise held by the individual faculty member in the discussion, the natural reaction would be inquiry and a desire to determine the results of classroom activity.

A focus of SoTL at this campus has been the internal-review process. At the earliest session, faculty were encouraged to reflect on what their expectations were and where they hoped to be within a year. Responses commonly centered on the professional need to publish and the often formidable process necessary to move from framing a question, collecting data, to analyzing results, to publication. Through very specifically designed presentations, faculty were encouraged to obtain the requisite certifications and to instigate a collegial conversation with the campus internal review liaison.

This presentation will outline the timeline for this initiative; the specific activities, presentations, and discussions for each session; and anecdotal narratives of what has been accomplished to date by participants. Presenters will lead a conversation on current research on SoTL. The intended outcome for those attending this presentation is that they will be able to return to their campuses prepared to initiate a conversation among faculty, chairs, coordinators, and administration about using the passion for instruction to support a culture of assessment in a collegial and structured format.