What is New or Different about the Scholarship of Teaching?

JERRY FEEZEL
S-A WELCH

S CHOLARSHIP *Reconsidered* (Boyer, 1990) summarized a new way of approaching higher education. This report presented higher education as a set of four scholarships, four means of accomplishing the goals of academe. The purpose of our report is to address the *scholarship of teaching*, both as an activity and as an assessment of such activity. This report will focus on the scholarship of teaching by addressing: What is the scholarship of teaching? What qualities exist in this form of scholarship? What are the requirements of this scholarship? How does one accomplish this scholarship? And finally, how can the scholarship of teaching be assessed?

TWO COMPONENTS OF THE SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING

What is the scholarship of teaching? To some, it is the act of teaching, while to others, it is more than that. There is ambiguity in the discussion of this fourth scholarship, and teaching is given the least space in Boyer's (1990) report. So what sense can we make of this controversy from a careful reading of the 1990 report and from others who have discussed it?

The scholarship of teaching stems from the professor's own *learning process*; it becomes scholarship by utilizing *active interaction* between professors and students. So a professor's teaching must involve these two components. In *Scholarship Reconsidered*, Boyer (1990) suggested that scholars are academics conducting research, publishing, and sharing their knowledge with students. To be scholarship, teaching matters only when "the work of the professor becomes consequential as it is understood by others" (Boyer, 1990, p. 23). There is an ambiguity in this definition. Is Boyer referring to teachers being understood by the students or to teachers being understood by reviewers and readers of published works? Because the former would seem simply to define effective teaching, which is the intent of all instructional communication, the latter or something additional must be intended by the Carnegie report committee.

The scholarship of teaching can be seen as the culmination of a teacher's active learning process. Given the active role research plays in the scholarship of teaching, Boyer (1990) suggested that non-researching instructors do *not* engage in teaching as scholar-

ship. They are not personally pursuing an active learning process. Rather, non-researching instructors are limited to presenting knowledge that others create and, therefore, may be placed in an inactive role in stretching the intellectual knowledge of a class. Because of the active interaction required for the scholarship of teaching, a non-researcher is not a scholar but a mere conveyor of others' ideas.

The brief discussion of the scholarship of teaching in Boyer (1990) explains that a professor is not only "widely read and actively engaged" but also "educates and entices future scholars" (p. 23). Thus a second element of the scholarship of teaching is active interaction and collaborative learning with students. Critical thinking is engendered in the classroom. Teaching is a dynamic endeavor where students learn from the teacher, and the teacher learns from the students.

There are many who view teaching as an art (Murray, 1997). Similar to teaching, the scholarship of teaching is also an art, but it is an art of sharing. This sharing is based on the use of accepted meanings of examining and studying a discipline. The scholarship of teaching indicates that there are not simply scholars, and not simply teachers. Rather, the scholarship of teaching suggests that faculty members are scholar-teachers.

Becoming Scholar-Teachers

The scholarship of teaching has only a few, but complex, requirements. It charges the professorate with addressing new ideas and expanding students' knowledge. This is accomplished by the very qualities of the scholarship of teaching: personal research that is further addressed in the classroom. Accomplishing the scholarship of teaching requires scholars to keep abreast of their field. *Scholarship Reconsidered* views this process as remaining intellectually alive (Boyer, 1990). Ways to keep intellectually alive include reading current literature and keeping well informed about consequential trends and patterns in the field. Doing this undoubtedly allows professors to ask questions that foster class discussions and thus add to the active learning process found in the scholarship of teaching.

Classroom Interaction and Active Learning

To accomplish the scholarship of teaching, professors need to know the knowledge level of their students. An inherent assumption in the scholarship of teaching is that students have a basic understanding of the material that would allow the students to discuss the material at a level higher than recitation. Knowledge of student level may result in choosing appropriate textbooks and other readings. According to Mills (1967), the role of a good textbook is to present the key ideas of a topic in an organized manner so that students will have a framework from which to operate. Mills noted that a good textbook allows the professor to spend more time addressing the interplay of ideas rather than focusing on the mere facts of a concept. A good textbook, read prior to class, increases the chance of active interactions between professors and their students.

Effective classroom discussions also reflect the knowledge level of students. Lowman (1996) discussed how emphasizing connections in classroom interaction is a useful learning tool. For example, if a model is being taught, class discussion might address what would happen to the model if one component were changed. According to Lowman, this type of discussion not only addresses each component individually, but also addresses how the components are connected. Class discussions, then, activate a learning process for both the teacher/scholar and the student.

The scholarship of teaching is also accomplished by teachers leading synthesis discussions wherein two current scholarly works containing opposing views on the same topic are used as the impetus for class discussion. The class discussion focuses on ways to synthesize or resolve the conflicting conclusions. Just as with emphasizing connections, these types

of discussions help students understand how concepts are connected. They also address how one concept can be studied in different ways, as well.

One final example of accomplishing the scholarship of teaching is using the classroom as a theoretical testing ground. In *Scholarship Reconsidered,* Boyer (1990) suggested that theory leads to practice but that practice and discussion lead to theory. As Boyer noted, teaching is most effective when it shapes both research and theory. So, when professors present a model and ask for discussion on its theoretical usefulness, they are operating within the realm of the scholarship of teaching.

HOW THE SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AFFECTS EDUCATION TODAY

Support for the scholarship of teaching resides in one of the primary ways that education is changing. Education has been recently refocused on how well students learn (e.g., outcomes assessment), rather than on how well teachers teach. Weimer (1996) noted that this change in focus allows many professors to change goals to meet the needs of students better. MacGregor (1990) suggested that a focus on the student allows knowledge to be "continuously evolving through dialogues with self and others" (p. 19).

Class goals and adequate preparation are essential in the scholarship of teaching (Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff, 1997). McKeachie (1994) suggested that lectures, regardless of content, could motivate students' interests by presenting a model of how to view a problem; this reduces student anxiety and, thus, increases interest.

In addition, appropriate teaching methods should be used in the classroom (Glassick et al., 1997). Brookfield (1990) suggested that teachers should not lecture just because students expect it. Rather, there are several reasons why teachers might consider giving lectures. One goal—to encourage learners' interest in a topic—attempts to increase student motivation. According to Brookfield, this is often done when the lecturer shows important connections between the material and other interests of the students. Another reason to lecture is to set a moral culture for discussions. This goal fits in with the active interaction between professor and students, which the scholarship of teaching considers crucial.

Cooperative learning in groups is another educational method teachers can use. Brookfield (1990) noted that students often resent traditional group assignments because they view such assignments as pushing the professor's responsibility back onto the students. However, he noted, there is a trend in education to utilize what he termed "reflective speculation." Reflective speculation allows students to discuss a topic in greater depth once a lecture has been given on the same topic. According to Brookfield, this allows students to use independent and critical thinking, features implicit in the scholarship of teaching.

Donald Schön (1995) saw the teacher/scholar's "reflective practice" as central to the scholarship of teaching. Teachers need to understand the strategies involved in the process of teaching. Schön argued, "if teaching is to be seen as a form of scholarship, then the practice of teaching must be seen as giving rise to new forms of knowledge" (p. 31). Consistent with Schön's (1995) position, "reflective critique" is one of the six standards for assessing teaching and his work is cited by Glassick et al. (1997, pp. 31-35).

So, the scholarship of teaching affects teachers' choices of class activities, goals behind various classroom methods, and the ways in which they are used. These features move scholar/teachers toward active interaction and toward the scholarship of teaching.

ASSESSING SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING

One final issue surrounding the scholarship of teaching is assessment. The ultimate goal of the scholarship of teaching is student learning and effective teaching facilitates this

goal. According to Wilson, Gaff, Dienst, Wood, and Barvey (1975), effective teaching stresses development of interest in ideas and the personal openness to pursue them. However, this image of teaching creates a problem with assessing it. According to *Scholarship Reconsidered*, teaching is still held in lower esteem than research for many schools, so equally vigorous assessments of teaching and research is one way to improve the image of teaching on campus (Boyer, 1990).

Boyer (1990) proposed assessment using three different sources. *Self-assessment* would require the faculty to make statements about courses taught, addressing goals, procedures, and course material. *Peer evaluation* should involve a systematic review of a faculty member applying defined criteria for the review. *Student evaluation* of faculty can also be considered evidence of teaching effectiveness. Accordingly, this three-source evaluation of faculty members should present a balanced view of teaching performance. Boyer reported in *Scholarship Reconsidered* that such threefold assessments were already in use in some places, but they are not fully implemented in all programs and institutions.

Scholarship Assessed (Glassick et al., 1997), a follow-up publication of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching that addressed the responsibility of assessing how well we accomplish our scholarship goals, suggested that professors use multiple data based on agreed upon standards. This would allow the advantage of peer reviews conducted with standards and evidence of these standards.

The assessment responsibility of the scholarship of teaching lends additional credibility to this form of scholarship. Using both student based and professor based means of assessment allows the multi-data view suggested by *Scholarship Assessed* (Glassick et al., 1997). The key goal of assessment is to demonstrate that course content matched agreed upon goals of the institution and that students were advancing in both their knowledge and their thinking. Without this, the scholarship of teaching faces many obstacles in demonstrating its uniqueness.

There are two approaches available for institutions and professors to take in assessing a course's quality. First, the student-based approach focuses on student performance in the course's discussion and on exams. This approach to assessment should aim for clear indication of improvement in students' knowledge. Ways of assessing this improvement could be test scores and level of class discussion. Questions that could be asked to assess student improvement might be:

❏ Do the students show a greater understanding of the material?

❏ Can the students use this understanding to build on to gain further understanding?

❏ Do the students arrive at questions on their own that advance their thinking?

Professors may build a portfolio using sample works of students (papers, journals, and exams) as evidence.

The professor-based approach to assessment focuses on how well the professor obtains the agreed upon goals of his/her institution. Professors could document how they used their own knowledge or research in the classroom to accomplish course goals. The professor could collect exercises used in class, exam questions, and any handouts that were distributed.

The scholarship of teaching is grounded in research (Boyer, 1990; Glassick et al., 1997). The research that professors do affects the teaching they accomplish. Boyer noted that excellence is the yardstick by which all scholarship must be measured, and thus this yardstick must use quality and not just quantity as its criteria.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Important examples for assessing teaching scholarship would include teaching portfolios, curriculum design, teaching innovations, and instructional materials (e.g., CDs, web-based materials, videotapes, instructor manuals). Pedagogical publications in refereed journals such as *Communication Teacher*, of course, should count in this area, but they may overlap with other areas of scholarship. Important also are the observations and analyses of peers, the mentoring and advising of students, and the direction of theses and dissertations. These three examples fit the interaction or sharing with colleagues and students that *Scholarship Reconsidered* emphasized.

The scholarship of teaching is not without controversy. For example, one controversy surrounding the concept is whether or not teaching is enough. Some professors feel that when attempting to blend teaching and scholarship in the classroom, they find themselves in an ambiguous setting filled with confusion and complexity. So then, one could ask, "Why do this? Isn't teaching information to students enough?" In retrospect, we are bothered by one of our institution's definition of teaching scholarship as "the act of teaching as well as the planning and examination of pedagogical procedures." Although the "as well as" phrase is consistent with the Boyer report, the first part (act of teaching) is not what the scholarship of teaching refers to. There seems to be a distinction between "teaching" and "scholarship of teaching" that should not be blurred. According to our reading of the scant discussion of the scholarship of teaching, just teaching is not enough. However, with the passing of Ernest Boyer, various interpretations and applications seem to be rampant in higher education.

An implication of the varying ways to define the scholarship of teaching pertains to the publications of our field. Are the articles of the type appearing in *Communication Teacher* scholarship, or only those published in *Communication Education*? Of course a sweeping conclusion cannot be made because of variations of kind and quality in both outlets.

In addition, the two predominant methods of assessing the scholarship of teaching are flawed by reliability and validity problems. A 1994 survey revealed a heavy reliance on student classroom evaluations, with 98% of those colleges surveyed using these, and the next highest method was a statement of self-evaluation (with 82% using these and 12% considering it) (Glassick et al., 1997, p. 40). These two methods are perhaps the easiest but not the best methods of assessing teaching and are even more suspect for assessing teaching as scholarship. The lowest ranked of the 10 methods listed in the survey (with fewer than 50% of the schools even considering them) was "evidence of the impact of teaching" on research and applied scholarship. This evidence would be important if teaching is to be treated as scholarship.

The 1994 survey of provosts also indicated that 80% of the institutions were broadening the definition of teaching. Under "new methods of evaluating faculty," teaching was the highest area being considered (by 69% of the schools), twice as many as the next highest response (Glassick et al., 1997). However, these results may be inflated by provosts overstating their institutions' actions and plans so they do not appear behind the trends or doing nothing to change with the times.

However, missing from the 1994 survey was another method of assessment that is gathering momentum, the teaching portfolio. Boileau (1993, saw portfolio development as not only a method of assessment but also an important way to promote the scholarship of teaching. In his article, we again see the prevalence of reflective practice from Schön (1995) as part of the portfolio. Teaching portfolios also "create conversations" on teaching, a sharing with colleagues and mentors that is so important to all scholarship (Boileau, 1993, pp. 22-23). These concepts of sharing and reflection seem to be central to going beyond

just the act of teaching to teaching as scholarship. So teaching portfolios may be at least one important way of doing this.

As was the case in *Scholarship Reconsidered*, the scholarship of teaching is once again placed fourth or last in *Scholarship Assessed*. It might be argued that this is not intentional devaluing, but the placement consistency and less space devoted to teaching seem to imply that. Both publications of the Carnegie Foundation appear to treat teaching scholarship as a lower priority than the others, and perhaps this is because the scholarship of discovery is treated first. We are not sure how to really measure scholarly teaching and so it may get neglected, despite the lip service paid to its value. Certainly, on the downside, there are many negative aspects of the scholarship of teaching. Reliance on student evaluations can lead to increased grade inflation (to garner high student ratings, as some research has found). Although portfolios are being encouraged and seem a legitimate means of assessment, they have a subjective and positively biased nature. Who would construct a bad or inadequate portfolio? If so, what does it look like? Equivalency of publications in each of the four scholarships becomes an issue frequently. How do we weigh a text workbook or class website in relationship to a research monographs? These questions will need answers as teaching as scholarship is incorporated into promotion, tenure, and retention criteria.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

Jerry D. Feezel (Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1971) is Professor of Communication Studies at Kent State University, Kent, OH.

S-A Welch (Ph.D., Kent State University, 1996) is Assistant Professor of Communication at Hanover College, IN.

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ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR TEACHING

Self-Assessment
- Statement of goals and objectives
- Description of procedures and materials
- Teaching portfolio

Peer Evaluation
- Curriculum design
- Teaching innovativeness
- Instructional materials

Student Evaluation
- Student performance
- Increased understanding/skill