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CREATING AND SUPPORTING
AN INCLUSIVE SCHOLARSHIP
OF TEACHING

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This essay explains the development of the notion of the scholarship of teaching, points out a problem with its current conceptualization, solves the conceptual problem in a way that creates a comprehensive and inclusive scholarship of teaching, and comments on what univers-ity teaching and learning centers can do to promote and support the scholarship of teaching.

Surely, American higher education is imaginative and creative enough to support and reward not only those scholars uniquely gifted in research but also those who excel in the integration and application of knowledge, as well as those especially adept in the scholarship of teaching. Such a mosaic of talent, if acknowledged, would bring re-newed vitality to higher learning and the nation (Boyer, 1990, p. 27).

Research, teaching, and service supposedly comprise an equally valued trinity of the professoriate, at least in the rhetoric of traditional promotion, tenure, and merit guidelines. However, in practice, they typically constitute a strict hierarchy of importance. First comes research, followed in a distant second by teaching, and trailed in an even more distant third by service (if service is valued at all beyond merely being a good citizen of the university, profession, and community). Each year, the Chronicle of Higher Education seems to carry a story about the winner of a prestigious university teaching award being denied tenure at the same university. Often, universities do not even have distinguished service awards (beyond jumping tracks from faculty to executive administration and a higher salary). However, if they did, the Chronicle would undoubtedly have an annual story about a university’s winner of its top service award being denied tenure.

Further confusing the reward structure is the fact that research has been equated with publication. We all know that publication and scholarship are
usually related but certainly not the same thing. Notwithstanding this fact, somewhere along the line, publication became the indicator of scholarly productivity, and now publication has somehow replaced scholarship in significance. Professors can be outstanding scholars, but if their productivity does not take the form of publications, then often they are not perceived as such. For example, George Herbert Mead, an early 20th century University of Chicago professor who was one of the founders of symbolic interactionism and shaped the thinking of generations of phenomenologically oriented scholars in a number of disciplines in the social and behavioral sciences and humanities, did not publish much. Despite his massive scholarship and its impact through his teaching, he probably would not receive tenure today.

So, in a professor's life, publication is the sure bet for reward. All else, including serious scholarship itself, is risky.

To this sad recognition – that good teaching is often not valued in the reality of faculty reward systems due to the double whammy of not being research and not being measurable by publications – add a pressing national agenda to improve the quality of college teaching. The overwhelming majority of American undergraduates are educated in large research universities that do not reward good teaching in any way approaching their reward of research (i.e., publication). This set of facts – that the majority of American undergraduates are educated by faculty who are essentially encouraged to spend as little time as possible teaching them (because that time takes away from research, which is rewarded, in contrast to teaching, which is not) – these facts have been perceived by some commentators on higher education as a national moral lapse, if not scandal. Undergraduates, in exchange for their massive tuition payments that help to finance the graduate education and research that gives their diploma its prestige, deserve much better teaching than they receive, many argue.

Where do we stand? Students deserve better teaching; faculty are not rewarded for better teaching; faculty are not motivated to do things for which they are not rewarded; telling faculty that they should do things for which they are not rewarded at the expense of doing things for which they are reward – i.e., dunning faculty to do things that are destructive to their careers and to their own and their family's welfare – can torque faculty to unhealthy levels of anger and depression. “Houston, we have a problem.”

In an effort to solve this problem, a national movement has developed in the last decade around the phrase, the “scholarship of teaching.” In this essay, I briefly explain the concept, describe a significant problem with it, present a solution to the problem, and identify things that university teaching and learning centers can do to promote it.
The Concept

I will develop the meaning of the "scholarship of teaching" by discussing the work of three outstanding contributors (among many): Ernest Boyer, Patricia Cross, and Lee Shulman.

Ernest Boyer

In 1990, Ernest Boyer made an important attempt to resolve the research versus teaching dichotomy by subsuming both activities within an overarching concept of scholarship (Boyer, 1990). At the time, Boyer was President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and had formerly served as the United States Secretary of Education. He enjoyed a good deal of respect in higher education; he was a tireless speaker and writer; and the Zeitgeist for his ideas was favorable. As a result, his ideas had a large impact, and in fact, they have become the basis for the reform of promotion, tenure, and merit guidelines at a number of American colleges and universities. Boyer wanted to expand the hallowed concept of scholarship beyond mere research to include an array of faculty work, all of which would be equally valued and which would potentially interrelate to produce important synergies. Boyer grouped this array of faculty scholarship into four categories, which are now briefly described.

Scholarship of discovery. This scholarship involves creating new knowledge.

[The] scholarship of discovery... comes closest to what is meant when academics speak of "research." No tenets in the academy are held in higher regard than the commitment to knowledge for its own sake, to freedom of inquiry and to following, in a disciplined fashion, an investigation wherever it may lead. Research is central to the work of higher learning, but our study here, which inquires into the meaning of scholarship, is rooted in the conviction that disciplined, investigative efforts within the academy should be strengthened, not diminished. . . . The intellectual excitement fueled by this quest enlivens faculty and invigorates higher learning institutions, and in our complicated, vulnerable world, the discovery of new knowledge is absolutely crucial (Boyer, 1990, pp. 17-18).

Scholarship of integration. This scholarship involves synthesizing new knowledge broadly and giving it larger meanings.

In proposing the scholarship of integration, we underscore the need for scholars who give meaning to isolated facts, putting them in perspec-
tive. By integration, we mean making connections across the disciplines, placing the specialties in larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating nonspecialists, too. In calling for a scholarship of integration, we do not suggest returning to the "gentleman scholar" of an earlier time, nor do we have in mind the dilettant. Rather, what we mean is serious disciplined work that seeks to interpret, draw together, and bring new insight to bear on original research. . . . Today, interdisciplinary and integrative studies, long on the edges of academic life, are moving toward the center, responding both to new intellectual questions and to pressing human problems. As the boundaries of human knowledge are being dramatically reshaped, the academy surely must give increased attention to the scholarship of integration (Boyer, 1990, pp. 18-21).

Scholarship of application. This scholarship involves using knowledge to solve real-world problems as well as the generation of new knowledge as a result of that use.

The first two kinds of scholarship—discovery and integration of knowledge—reflect the investigative and synthesizing traditions of academic life. The third element, the application of knowledge, moves toward engagement as the scholar asks, "How can knowledge be responsibly applied to consequential problems? How can it be helpful to individuals as well as institutions?" And further, "Can social problems themselves define an agenda for scholarly investigation?" . . . Clearly, a sharp distinction must be drawn between citizenship activities and projects that relate to scholarship itself. To be sure, there are meritorious social and civic functions to be performed, and faculty should be appropriately recognized for such work. But all too frequently, service means not doing scholarship but doing good. To be considered scholarship, service activities must be tied directly to one's special field of knowledge and relate to, and flow directly out of, this professional activity. Such service is serious, demanding work, requiring the rigor—and the accountability—traditionally associated with research activities. The scholarship of application, as we define it here, is not a one-way street. Indeed, the term itself may be misleading if it suggests that knowledge is first "discovered" and then "applied." The process we have in mind is far more dynamic. New intellectual understandings can arise out of the very act of application—whether in medical diagnosis, serving clients in psychotherapy, shaping public
policy, creating an architectural design, or working with the public schools. In activities such as these, theory and practice vitally interact, and one renews the other (Boyer, 1990, pp. 21-23).

**Scholarship of teaching.** The definition of this scholarship was left vague by Boyer. Does it involve the scholarship required to develop high quality course content – e.g., a groundbreaking lecture, or whole course? Is it focused on the teaching and learning process within the context of one’s course? Content? Process? Boyer seems to say, “Both.” Or is he describing teaching excellence? Is teaching excellence different, although related, to the scholarship of teaching? The following general description resulted in some confusion about the meaning of the scholarship of teaching.

Finally, we come to the *scholarship of teaching*. The work of the professor becomes consequential only as it is understood by others. Yet today, teaching is often viewed as a routine function, tacked on, something almost anyone can do. When defined as *scholarship*, however, teaching both educates and entices future scholars. Indeed, as Aristotle said, “Teaching is the highest form of understanding.” As a *scholarly* enterprise, teaching begins with what the teacher knows. Those who teach must, above all, be well informed, and steeped in the knowledge of their fields. Teaching can be well regarded only as professors are widely read and intellectually engaged. One reason legislators, trustees, and the general public often fail to understand why ten or twelve hours in the classroom each week can be a heavy load is their lack of awareness of the hard work and the serious study that undergirds good teaching. Teaching is also a dynamic endeavor involving all the analogies, metaphors, and images that build bridges between the teacher’s understanding and the student’s learning. Pedagogical procedures must be carefully planned, continuously examined, and relate directly to the subject taught. . . . Further, good teaching means that faculty, as scholars, are also learners. All too often, teachers transmit information that students are expected to memorize and then, perhaps, recall. While well-prepared lectures surely have a place, teaching, at its best, means not only transmitting knowledge, but *transforming* and *extending* it as well. Through reading, through classroom discussion, and surely through comments and questions posed by students, professors themselves will be pushed in creative new directions (Boyer, 1990, pp. 23-24).

Following Boyer’s death in 1995, his project team published a volume that
attempted to define further what these four scholarships meant and to set standards for their evaluation (Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff, 1997). However, the volume has not enjoyed nearly the extensive readership and familiarity that Boyer’s original statement did and has functioned to clarify Boyer’s meaning much.

**Patricia Cross**

In the late 1980’s, at about the same time that Boyer was working on his expanded conception of scholarship. Patricia Cross was leading an effort, which she called *Classroom Research and Classroom Assessment*, to encourage and empower teaching professors in all disciplines to do serious research on teaching and learning within their various classrooms (Angelo & Cross, 1993; Cross & Steadman, 1996). The usefulness of classroom assessment techniques (CATs) in helping college teachers to receive quick and relatively unobtrusive feedback and therefore to make rapid, data-based course adjustments in mid-stream made them popular and widely used. The scholarship of teaching – as the serious study of teaching and learning within one’s own classroom, in contrast to the serious study of one’s subject – now had a powerful array of easy-to-use tools and the backing of a national movement. Cross’s work had the effect of defining the scholarship of teaching as being about the learning of the subject rather than about the subject itself.

**Lee Shulman**

Then comes Lee Schulman, who followed Ernest Boyer as President of the influential Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and whose disciplinary background was education. Shulman provided the valuable service of further defining the scholarship of teaching by identifying the key elements of scholarship – any scholarship – and then relating those scholarly elements to teaching.

For an activity to be designated as scholarship, it should manifest at least three key characteristics: It should be public, susceptible to critical review and evaluation, and accessible for exchange and use by other members of one’s scholarly community. We thus observe, with respect to all forms of scholarship, that they are acts of mind or spirit that have been made public in some manner, have been subjected to peer review by members of one’s intellectual or professional community, and can be cited, refuted, built upon, and shared among members of that community. Scholarship properly communicated and critiqued serves as the building block for knowledge growth in a field (Shulman, 1998).
Shulman held teaching up to these three standards and found teaching— as typically practiced— wanting as a form of scholarship.

These three characteristics are generally absent with respect to teaching. Teaching tends to be a private act (limited to a teacher and the particular students with whom the teaching is exchanged). Teaching is rarely evaluated by professional peers. And those who engage in innovative acts of teaching rarely build upon the work of others as they would in their more conventional scholarly work (Shulman, 1998).

However, Shulman presents a vision for the scholarship of teaching that is much clearer than the one originally given by Boyer.

When we portray those ways in which teaching can become scholarship . . . , we seek approaches that render teaching public, critically evaluated, and usable by others in the community. What do we mean by “teaching”? Too often teaching is identified only as the active interactions between teacher and students in a classroom setting (or even a tutorial session). I would argue that teaching, like other forms of scholarship, is an extended process that unfolds over time. It embodies at least five elements: vision, design, interactions, outcomes, and analysis (Shulman, 1998).

Unfortunately, he also further reinforced the definition of the scholarship of teaching as centered on learning the subject rather than on the scholarship focused on the subject itself. Shulman came from Stanford’s college of education, and he began academic life teaching the psychology of learning. In Shulman’s experience, his subject was often the same as the subject of student learning. He encouraged college teachers to “go meta” on their teaching, which would seem quite natural to him given his disciplinary background. For professors with other disciplinary backgrounds, “going meta” on the teaching and learning processes at work in their courses was not in their job description, disciplinary traditions, or interest areas.

The Problem

To be succinct, the problem that has resulted around the definition of the scholarship of teaching is, rightly or wrongly, that it has become dominated by a learner-centered teaching perspective, a frame of reference that defines teaching as facilitating student learning rather than disseminating knowledge. Within this perspective, the scholarship of teaching focuses essentially on educational
psychology within the context of specific college courses. Readers who share this perspective will shout three cheers and then ask, “So what’s the problem?” The problem is that meaningful diversity exists around the conception of the professor-as-teacher role. A large number of good teachers are left out (left unrewarded) by the learner-centered exclusivity. For example, professors with a profound love of their subject who routinely exhibit Herculean feats of scholarship that increase and deepen substantially the knowledge of that subject which the students experience will go unrewarded in this learner-centered view of the scholarship of teaching. If they do not take away from their teaching and their scholarship in order to publish the scholarly findings that they share in their courses, they will not be rewarded at all. Some of these professors may be excellent teachers, excellent teachers coming in many forms (Palmer, 1998; Robertson, 2000b; Tiberius, 2001). The “scholarship of teaching” movement was born to elevate the status of good teaching and to reward it. The problem is that sometimes with a learner-centered bias it does not accomplish its purpose.

A Solution

I propose a fairly straightforward solution to this problem of forging an inclusive scholarship of teaching: combine Shulman’s definition of scholarship with a comprehensive model that organizes and values the major teaching perspectives extant in college teaching.

Model of Teaching Perspectives

An extensive meta-analysis of the many literatures on college teaching yields what appears to be a useful model of the major perspectives held by college teachers (Robertson, 1999b, 2000b, 2001a; also see, Robertson, 1988, 1996, 1997, 1999a, 2000a, 2001b). The model is developmental and, as such, intends to explain the courses that professors-as-teachers’ perspectives generally follow if the professors continue to develop as teachers (not all do). Development involves adding something (cognitive, emotional, behavioral) to something that is already a part of oneself and by integrating that new thing having a transformation occur in one part or all of the self; development is addition plus transformative integration (Robertson, 1988). Professors-as-teachers may develop within their teaching perspectives, continuing to elaborate that perspective by adding new skills and knowledge that through their integration produce transformations in understanding and ability within that perspective. In addition, professors-as-teachers may develop the teaching perspective itself. That is, they may add and integrate something into their way of approaching their teaching that transforms their entire perspective. They may come to see teaching in a whole new way. The data suggest three primary teaching perspectives: (a)
teacher-centeredness, (b) learner-centeredness, and (c) teacher/learner-centeredness.

**Teacher-centeredness, or Egocentrism.** The literature seems fairly clear that professors-as-teachers begin their teaching careers by being focused on their own content mastery (1999b). Preparing three or four new courses, with little or no teaching experience, and having promotion and tenure hanging in the balance, will tend to make a person a little self absorbed. If they think of the students, it is usually as projections of their own inner life. They try to emulate positive teaching examples from their past and to avoid negative ones. The subject and their own mastery of it dominates their concerns, sometimes staying only nanoseconds ahead of the students. For many professors, this love of the subject and their own mastery of it can last a career. They see their teaching responsibility as being to know all that they possibly can about the subject, to disseminate it in an organized and responsible manner, and to evaluate the students' acquisition of the skills and knowledge which the teacher, as the master learner, disseminated and exemplified. For other professors-as-teachers, another teaching perspective evolves.

**Learner-centeredness, or Allocentrism.** As professors-as-teachers acquire increasing comfort with their knowledge of their subjects, they may add and integrate with that interest a strong curiosity about the learning process, how they might facilitate it, and what the learning characteristics of their students are (Robertson, 1999b). They add to, and integrate with, their own subject mastery, an overriding concern with learning. A profound shift occurs in their teaching perspective as they come to define teaching as facilitating student learning rather than only disseminating knowledge. At this point, teaching becomes an educational helping relationship akin to but different from other helping professions such as counseling, social work, psychotherapy, and ministry (Robertson, 1996, 1999b, 2000a, 2001b). As with the teacher-centered perspective they may stay in this perspective, developing within it, for the rest of their teaching career, or they may evolve to another perspective that adds to the two previous perspectives something new (remember that each perspective includes, rather than replaces, the previous perspectives; Robertson, 1988, 1999b).

**Teacher/learner-centeredness, or Systemocentrism.** In the first perspective, the focus is on the self (teacher). In the second perspective, it is on the other (learners). In the third perspective, it is on the self and the other simultaneously and in relationship (teacher/learners as intersubjective systems; Robertson, 1996, 1997, 1999a, 1999b, 2000b, 2001a, 2001b). In the learner-centered perspective, professors-as-teachers see themselves as learning facilitators; however, they tend to neglect paying attention to their inner lives in that role because they are so focused on the learners. They idealize themselves as
educational helpers and remain naïve to all the ways in which they as unique persons in that role affect the teaching and learning system. In teacher/learner-centeredness, they attend not only to knowing the topic but also to the subjective experience of the learners and of themselves and the way in which those subjectivities interact to form a teaching and learning system (Robertson, 1999b, 2001a).

Creating an Inclusive Scholarship of Teaching

The simple solution to the problem of a scholarship of teaching that inappropriately excludes potentially large numbers of teaching scholars is to apply the three criteria of scholarship – i.e., public, susceptible to critical review and evaluation, and accessible for exchange and use (Shulman, 1998) – to the three basic teaching perspectives – i.e., teacher-centeredness, learner-centeredness, and teacher/learner-centeredness (Robertson, 1999b). The result is to define the scholarship of teaching within the professors' own definition of teaching. Good teaching comes in many forms and cannot be crammed into a single teaching perspective (e.g., Palmer, 1998; Robertson, 2000b; Tiberius, 2001). This application of the basic elements of scholarship to the diverse array of predictable perspectives that college teachers bring to their work creates a comprehensive and inclusive approach to the scholarship of teaching that has clear standards (public, susceptible to critical review, and accessible for exchange and use by others) and yet does not exclude any of the diverse array of teaching perspectives (teacher-, learner-, or teacher/learner-centeredness).

Teaching and Learning Centers and the Scholarship of Teaching

Finally, I would like to comment briefly, in my role as Director of the Teaching and Learning Center at Eastern Kentucky University, on what university teaching and learning centers can do to encourage and develop the scholarship of teaching at their institutions. The following seven items essentially constitute the Teaching and Learning Center's agenda regarding the scholarship of teaching at Eastern Kentucky University, although they are intended to apply to teaching and learning centers in all varieties of colleges and universities:

1. Explain and champion generally an inclusive approach to the scholarship of teaching (see above) among faculty, administrators, university committees, alumnae, boards of trustees, pertinent elected officials, professional associations, accrediting agencies, and any other relevant university communities; specifically, promote the concept in promotion, tenure, and merit policy and practice at all levels within the university.

2. Provide consultation for faculty on scholarly projects that have to do
with teaching and learning (e.g., research design, literature reviews, methodological explorations, human subjects review).

3. Build networks, connecting faculty who are pursuing related topics in the scholarship of teaching.

4. Help to identify and develop opportunities for faculty to make their scholarship public, receive peer review, and be accessible for exchange (e.g., provide outlets in the university, such as teaching and learning workshops, websites, electronic or print journals or newsletters; identify outlets outside the university and post on the teaching and learning website).

5. Assist faculty in obtaining funding to support their scholarship of teaching projects and, if possible, also be a funding source.

6. Celebrate exemplary scholarship of teaching by identifying and establishing faculty reward programs and publicizing outstanding faculty accomplishments in the scholarship of teaching.

7. Guide faculty in their scholarship of teaching, where appropriate, toward national innovations in teaching (e.g., on-line education, service learning, cooperative learning, problem-based learning, multi-cultural education, classroom assessment) so that they may become involved with, and contribute to, teaching and learning issues that have a national significance.

Conclusion

The title of Charles Dickens' book *Hard Times for These Times* captured the cruel imbalance between England's huge industrial wealth and the sad condition of her poor. Dickens' words came to mind when I thought about the imbalance between these enlightened educational times in which we celebrate student diversity and our often-inflexible attitude toward teachers. Teacher diversity deserves to be respected both on humane grounds and for the sake of effective teaching. The diversity that is the concern of this essay is not that of ethnicity, gender, or age. It is the diversity of teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning, beliefs that guide the way we think about our teaching and the way we teach (Tiberius, 2001, p. 1).

The richness of faculty talent should be celebrated, not restricted. Only as the distinctiveness of each professor is affirmed will the potential of scholarship be fully realized (Boyer, 1990, p. 27).
In this essay, I have presented an approach to defining the scholarship of teaching that accommodates the wide range of legitimate perspectives that professors can bring to bear on their work as teachers. The discussion has traced the conceptualization of the scholarship of teaching; identified a creeping and inappropriate bias in its development, toward a particular teaching perspective; offered a correction to that bias; and delineated seven ways that university teaching and learning centers can encourage and support a comprehensive and inclusive scholarship of teaching. To improve college teaching, it must be rewarded and respected when done well. That simple truth drove, in part, the creation of the Boyer framework. This essay comes full circle back to that truth with a comprehensive vision of what teaching is.

References


