

# Foreword

My favourite definition of the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) involves three essential and integrated elements:

- engagement with the scholarly contributions of others on teaching and learning;
- reflection on one's own teaching practice and the learning of students within the context of a particular discipline; and
- communication and dissemination of aspects of practice and theoretical ideas about teaching and learning in general and teaching and learning within the discipline (Martin *et al.*, 1999, 327).

From first being popularised in North America by Boyer in 1990, the SoTL movement spread rapidly to Australasia and the UK. More recently it has extended to many countries in the rest of Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America. Despite a Journal - *The Asian Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (AJSOTL)* - being founded in 2011, this is the first book-length treatment, as far as I am aware, of SoTL in Asia.

By focusing on the stories of SoTL scholars in Asia the book emphasises the variety of experiences. Among the themes running through the accounts are:

- Who are you as a SoTL practitioner?
- SoTL's meaning and value to you
- Critical reflection on your SoTL projects
- Role of reflection in SoTL
- Professional development and teaching impact
- The present and future of SoTL in your context.

The picture that emerges is a nuanced account that emphasises the importance of context - cultural, disciplinary, and institutional, as well as the role of previous experience. The individual reflections counter the myth that there is an Asian approach to teaching and learning in higher education. The differences within Asia are as great, if not greater than, the differences between Asian teachers and learners and those in other continents.

This book provides a welcome addition to the literature on the importance of SoTL in enhancing the quality of student learning. It shows what colleagues can do to investigate teaching and learning in their context. It encourages readers new to SoTL in Asia to start their own SoTL journeys and for those already familiar with SoTL to reflect on their stories. For readers outside Asia, the chapters demonstrate that SoTL work in Asia has already reached maturity and is of a high quality. I commend this volume to you.

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## References

Boyer, E. L. 1990: *Scholarship reconsidered: priorities of the professoriate*. Princeton University NJ: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. <https://depts.washington.edu/gs630/Spring/Boyer.pdf>

Martin, E., Benjamin, J., Prosser, M., & Trigwell, K. (1999). Scholarship of teaching: a study of the approaches of academic staff. In Rust, C. (Ed.), *Improving student learning: improving student learning outcomes* (pp. 326–331). Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development, Oxford Brookes University.