Chapter 1
Riding the Fourth Wave:
An Introduction to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

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ABSTRACT
The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) is an important international movement in higher education. It is a continuously developing field that is traced back to Ernest Boyer’s 1990 report, “Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate,” which outlines his argument for an understanding of scholarship that includes a scholarship of teaching. This chapter traces the history and development of SoTL as a research domain since 1990. It includes specific attention to the rationale and dimensions, the debates and critiques of the field, as well as the potential future directions.

INTRODUCTION
Societal, economic, and political influences have drawn attention to teaching and learning in higher education. In reaction, institutions of higher education are shifting from an instructional paradigm to a learning-centered approach (Barr & Tagg, 1995). No longer is the transfer of knowledge from master to acolyte sufficient. In order to function in today’s professional culture, graduates of higher education require adaptive skills to assist them as they navigate diverse international contexts and changing technology in a rapidly shifting employment market. In response, institutions of higher education are creating environments where students discover and construct knowledge for themselves through initiatives on flexible learning and the individualization of curriculum.

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) is an international movement, coming into maturity in the 21st century, which contributes to the quality of teaching and learning in higher education as well as a growing body of educational literature (Hubball, Pearson, & Clarke, 2013). Operating under “the big tent” (D’Andrea, 2006; Gilpin, 2011; Huber & Hutchings, 2005, p. 4), SoTL is accessible to
all disciplines, including inter- and intra-disciplinary inquiry. Through literature-informed, rigorous methodological inquiry, and peer-disseminated findings, SoTL provides a practical and complementary undergirding for research into learning, regardless of the theoretical positions from which inquirers come (Gilpin, 2011; Hubball, Clarke, Webb, & Johnson, 2015). This chapter traces the development of SoTL as a research domain. It includes specific attention to the history of SoTL and its dimensions, including the critiques of the field, and suggests potential directions for the next wave of SoTL.

TEACHING AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION: THE CONTEXT

Given the importance, and challenges, of the teaching–research nexus, this paper traces the history and development of the field of SoTL since 1990. The landscape of teaching and learning in higher education is complex, with increasing student diversity, the development of niche programs, the use of technology to enhance flexible learning, and highly specialized disciplinary knowledge butting up against institutional and public accountability. Into this landscape, the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning offers a way for higher education institutions to encourage faculty to engage with research, teaching, and innovation through proactive faculty development and supportive institutional governance.

The Scholarship of Teaching (SoT) arose out of the fertile ground of previous work in the educative practices of disciplines. During the first decades of the 20th century, a small number of disciplinary societies sponsored specialized journals (i.e., the American Society for Engineering Education, starting in 1910, and the Division of Chemical Education of the American Chemical Society published the Journal of Chemical Education, starting in 1924) (Huber & Hutchings, 2005, p. 9). The 1960s saw an explosive growth in the discussion and debate in the wider higher education community, coinciding with the massification of higher education in North America (Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff, 1997). The Chronicle of Higher Education and Change both began publishing in 1969, and in 1972, the United States Department of Education began providing financial support for the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education. Around the same time, the National Science Foundation introduced new initiatives to improve education practices in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

However, it is hard to underestimate the influence of the Carnegie Foundation in furthering the study of higher education. Founded in 1905, it has a long history of involvement in educational policy and research (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, n.d.); however, it was Ernest Boyer’s appointment as president that initiated the separation of the Carnegie Corporation and the Carnegie Foundation. The newly separated Foundation’s interest in higher education was broadened to include all levels of the educational experience, not just politics and policies.

In his influential work, Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate, Ernest Boyer (1990) suggested that the 1990s would become the decade of undergraduate education. But at the center of this debate, he predicted, would be the issue of faculty time, as stakeholders debated the primacy of the professoriate’s activities. For what activity do institutions of higher education engage professors? Is it possible to have fruitful discussions about the importance of teaching in higher education if professors are not recognized or compensated for the improvements in this area? This tension still exists; however, a number of institutions are recognizing this tension and addressing teaching and learning in higher education as an area worthy of scholarship. It is not “an intriguing aside, or an add-on, but an essential facet of good teaching—built into the expected repertoire of scholarly practice” (Shulman, 2000, n.p.).