

## The Attraction, Value and Future of SoTL: Perspectives from the Carnegie Affiliates

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*“These are not mean ambitions. It is already something merely to entertain them.” –  
M. Klein “Portrait of the Poet as Landscape”*

In looking around him at the state of the arts in Canada just after the end of World War II, A. M. Klein realized that what he saw as important and integral to the arts was not important to the society around him. Reading his poem, one is struck by all of the problems that people have to overcome to make their voices heard midst competing mythologies, theories and cultures. What is amazing, as this special issue on the Carnegie Affiliate Institutions SoTL efforts attests, is that people who see the need for change, a need to embrace different perspectives, different pedagogies, and different priorities, are more than willing to be both cooperative and iconoclastic at the same time. To create significant change in any institutional structure is no mean task; to create significant change in an academic institution, complete with all its assumptions, is a task that takes time, funding, faculty, support staff and administrative support.

Each of the articles in this issue sheds a slightly different light on SoTL and how it was acculturated. Indeed, it is interesting to see how size, history, current practises, emphasis and educational faculties all have an impact on the development of SoTL practises. Class size, the mix of programmes, and institutional structures are all a part of the mix. The breadth of institutional variables is immense if one were to diagram them, and the experiences in these articles attest to that complexity. Yet, there are commonalities in the experiences too that anyone interested in SoTL will find fascinating. We invite you to see for yourself, to look for these commonalities and to see how institutional profiles and their assumptions affected SoTL initiatives. It is obvious that the discussion about the balance between traditional scholarly activity and a more broadly based understanding of scholarly activity is ongoing. The fact that the argument is ongoing is important not only to the academy but also to the students who are exposed to this debate. What makes society and education vital is the dynamics of reassessment rather than retrenchment. We hope you enjoy reading these articles in this light and enjoy the breadth of experience that they offer. A good place to start might be the forward article by Carnegie Senior Scholar, Mary Huber, who was an important resources and mentor for the Carnegie Affiliate Institutions. To learn who were the Carnegie Affiliates, what attracted them to connect officially to the SoTL movement in just the last few years, and what value they found in it, turn to the opening article, “The Attraction, Value and Future of SoTL: Carnegie Affiliates’ Perspective,” by Dewar, Dailey-Hebert and Moore. From there, move about the articles and discover the richness of the experiences and the insights of the authors. The closing article by Dewar and Cohn, “A synthesis of the challenges facing SoTL at Carnegie Affiliate institutions,” analyzes the challenges that remained at the end of the 2006-2009 Carnegie Affiliates program. The Carnegie Affiliate Institutions and their experiences with SoTL have much to offer that is applicable to faculty, students and institutions in general. We encourage you learn from their experiences and dialogue.