

## The Difference CASTL has Made: Building on a Solid Foundation

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### **Abstract:**

*Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne, a comprehensive Master's I university with 750 full and part-time teachers and an enrollment of more than 13,000 students, became a CASTL Affiliate institution in November 2008. This article describes the journey of our teaching center, led by our faculty members, as together we have embarked on the road toward integrating scholarly teaching into the culture of our university. Our hope is that others will recognize themselves as "fellow travelers" and be encouraged by what can be accomplished with fairly modest resources and by becoming members of a larger scholarly community.*

### **Key Words:**

Scholarship of teaching and learning, faculty development, scholarly teaching, organization development, promotion and tenure, teaching center.

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this short article is to take you on the journey of our teaching center, led by our faculty members, as we have worked toward integrating scholarly teaching into the culture of our university [see McKinney (2007) for a distinction between "scholarly teaching" and the "scholarship of teaching and learning"]. Our hope is that others will recognize themselves as "fellow travelers" and be encouraged by what can be accomplished with fairly modest resources and by becoming members of a larger scholarly community. For those who are starting out on such a journey, our story may provide an opportunity for reflection on methods that might lead to success in accomplishing similar goals.

This article is divided into a number of sections. First we provide a brief history of our university, given its somewhat unique nature. An overview of the mission of our teaching center, then, will help with understanding how being a Carnegie Academy for

the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) Affiliate fits with the mission. The next section provides more of an historical overview of the attempts, both individual and more formal, to promote scholarly teaching on our campus. Remaining sections address our affiliate status, benefits derived from becoming a CASTL Affiliate, current goals toward which our CASTL committee members are working, and the challenges that remain.

### **Brief History of Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW)**

When people first hear the name “Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW)”, they often focus on just Indiana University (IU) or just Purdue University (PU). A brief history can help to clarify how IPFW became “one university with two great names.” Two universities, Indiana University (IU) and Purdue University (PU), each had their own regional campus located in Fort Wayne Indiana. The regional campus for Indiana University started in 1917 and the regional campus for Purdue University in 1942. In the mid-1960s, the two universities selected a site in Fort Wayne for a shared regional campus at which each university would maintain its own administration. The formal merger and name change to Indiana University Purdue University (IPFW) occurred in 1974 when a single Chancellor was responsible for the entire university (source: <http://40years.ipfw.edu/history/>). IPFW is now a comprehensive Master’s I university with 750 full and part-time faculty and an enrollment of more than 13,000 students.

### **Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT)**

The Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT) was founded at IPFW in 1999 with the following core goals.

- Transform the culture of teaching by encouraging reflective practice and reciprocal peer review.
- Provide support for the integration of technology into teaching.
- Enhance learning outcomes through support for scholarly teaching and the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL).

The next two sections “History of SoTL” on our campus and “becoming a CASTL Affiliate” will show efforts made toward accomplishing these goals, as well as compatibility of the center’s mission with the goal of CASTL Affiliates.

### **History of SoTL at Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW)**

Surveys conducted by CELT over the past 10 years consistently indicated strong faculty interest in training and support for performing research on teaching and learning, and IPFW has attempted to travel down the SoTL road a number of different times. The history of SoTL for IPFW has been formed through individual efforts, as well as programs offered by the teaching center.

Individual faculty members were already engaged in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) as shown by their entries in a locally-developed online Faculty Scholarly Works Database (iBidX) representing scholarly and creative works by Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW) faculty and administrative staff. A significant number of the entries related to teaching and learning are conference

presentations and instructional materials. Work appearing in print, either digitally or on paper, was listed in the annual report of the Office of Research and External Support under the name of the individual faculty member's discipline. Some of these works seem to have been accomplished independently and without awareness of the SoTL and scholarly teaching movement.

The Fort Wayne Teaching Conference, organized by local academic administrators, brings together faculty from six local colleges and universities, provides the annual opportunity for 20 or more individuals to share research on teaching with 200 colleagues. Again, a number of these presentations could be seen as reflective of SoTL and scholarly teaching concepts even though there was no explicit connection made by the authors.

In 2003, an associate professor and former CELT board member at IPFW was among the first teacher scholars to be awarded a Mack Fellowship. The fellowship was supported by Indiana University's Faculty Colloquium on Excellence in Teaching (FACET) and its Mack Center for Inquiry on Teaching. IPFW did not have a second Mack Fellow until 2008. The Mack fellowship program represents an underutilized opportunity to tap into the experiences and resources of one of our parent institutions.

In October 2004, the teaching center's newsletter, *CELT News*, ran a front-page article on SoTL highlighting the role of Indiana University's FACET and its Mack Center for Inquiry on Teaching in providing university-wide support for faculty development, dissemination of SoTL information, and community building. Our first Mack Fellow in 2003-04 led SoTL discussion groups in the professional schools and the College of Arts and Sciences. These events marked the transition from an "individual focus" to a "community focus" of interest in SoTL and scholarly teaching.

In 2004, the CELT Director, and the MACK fellow made presentations at the first International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISSOTL) conference in Bloomington, Indiana. Both returned to campus energized and full of ideas. But it was not until the Fall of 2005 that CELT awarded a small Research Fellowship to a faculty member to develop a course portfolio project as a first step toward scholarly teaching, and started offering a workshop entitled "Introduction to SoTL." The scholarship of teaching and learning returned to CELT workshops in Fall 2006 in a faculty presentation entitled "Evaluating the Impact of an Innovation," but the topic was not to reappear in CELT workshops until the fall of 2007, when faculty and CELT staff collaborated to offer "Getting Started with SoTL."

In 2007, CELT continued with developing workshops to support faculty in their work on SoTL and scholarly teaching by attending a CASTL institute. Additional "Getting Started with SoTL" workshops and a SoTL reading circle were offered several times throughout the 2007-08 academic year. Attendance was modest, from 2 to 8 people—many times, the same people—for each session. In the Spring of 2008 the CELT Advisory Board asked the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs for \$1500 to fund a "community developer," a faculty member who would devote time to facilitating a faculty learning community. CELT received the money and asked for volunteers and ideas. The funding was awarded to a faculty member who proposed a community whose members would provide support and encouragement for each others' SoTL work.

Again, faculty participation was modest, in spite of the stated widespread interest by faculty to engage in this type of scholarship. With demanding teaching loads and the need for research output, faculty had little or no time to spare for SoTL projects. It seemed obvious that the reward structure for faculty would have to change if progress were to be made toward increasing SoTL and scholarly teaching activity on this campus.

### **Organizing for Activity vs. Organizing for Effectiveness: CASTL's Role**

Clearly there was, and continues to be, a significant amount of activity related to scholarly teaching on the IPFW campus. But what value did such activity return to students, programs, or the larger institution? To appreciate the value of these activities, one must have a clear idea of the goals and objectives of scholarly teaching. A number of faculty who had been engaged in the activities described above, had the primary goal of preparing a more substantial case for the role of scholarly teaching in gaining tenure and promotion. But by 2008, the institutional impact of their work was still not clearly visible and had been unevenly rewarded. A clear vision accompanied by effective strategies and by resources was needed in order to turn a collection of disparate activities into an effective coordinated program.

The CELT Director had long been aware of the CASTL program, but given the lack of response to peer presentations and SoTL workshops, had not believed that the faculty were ready to make a full commitment to participate in any of the CASTL programs. Then after a two-year intensive period of reading and participating in conferences focused on faculty development in 2005 and 2006, the director had come to the conclusion that supporting faculty in research activities focused on student learning outcomes could improve teaching as much or more than the traditional faculty development program based on workshops and consultations. With a renewed sense of urgency and confidence, the CELT Director reconsidered the ways in which becoming a CASTL Affiliate campus might help build a coordinated program around the goal of improving student learning through educational research.

IPFW gained affiliate campus status in November 2008. The application process included examination of the programming of the teaching center and what parts were supporting SoTL and scholarly teaching (see previous section on the History of SoTL at IPFW). The following three main reasons contributed to applying for CASTL Affiliate status.

- Participation would support the main mission of CELT in supporting the creation and sharing of knowledge of scholarly teaching among faculty, many of whom had already expressed strong interest in becoming more reflective practitioners.
- Participation would encourage the development of a group of people to support SoTL and scholarly teaching, building upon the efforts of those who had previously tried, but with a more systematic approach. This approach would provide a larger group of people upon whom faculty interested in scholarly teaching could rely and it would include training to support individuals within this group.

- CELT was already providing programming that supported scholarly teaching, and this provided an opportunity to look at the various programs with SoTL as a conceptual framework versus individual programs.

The newly formed CASTL Committee met in December to craft a set of goals. The goals, tailored to the IPFW context and based on what already was taking place, were: build visibility, provide support, emphasize benefits to students, emphasize rewards to faculty and the institution, and redefine scholarly research. With these goals in mind, the committee decided to stage a SoTL Day conference at which faculty already engaged in research on teaching and student learning would make presentations. The conference, to which a nationally known speaker would be invited, was intended to further the goals of visibility and emphasize benefits to students.

The March 2009 day-long conference attracted 60 people and 16 faculty presenters. A lively panel of faculty from Music, Philosophy, Biology, Sociology, and Education discussed what constituted scholarship in their disciplines. The interdisciplinary nature of SoTL often makes it difficult for someone new to this type of scholarship to find appropriate resources. This type of panel discussion had been organized to partly fill this need as part of the process of introducing participants to different notions of scholarship and the potential their disciplines might hold for shaping their own projects.

Another goal of the conference was to provide a showcase of SoTL and scholarly teaching projects from the IPFW campus. This conference provided a forum for dissemination of these projects, and thereby, greater visibility for SoTL and scholarly teaching with examples for those who might be interested in starting their own projects. A group of about 10 people were identified as willing and interested in participating in a “moving forward” discussion about SoTL and scholarly teaching. This group met to brainstorm ideas on how to promote SoTL and scholarly teaching on the IPFW campus and further explained that they wanted help in implementing their ideas for researching their teaching.

In response to the brainstorming and this request for support, a bi-weekly SoTL “work group” was developed for which the CASTL committee created a curriculum to move people from having an idea to completing a SOTL project. The CASTL committee designed an 11-part curriculum based on previous introductory workshops, Kathleen McKinney’s (2007) *Enhancing Learning through the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, and resources relevant to learning theories (see Appendix for an overview of the 11 parts). Then, to further communication about SoTL and scholarly teaching, a special SoTL email listserv was created from the attendance list at these workshops.

### **Benefits of the Affiliate Program**

The first requirement in applying to become a CASTL Affiliate was to assemble a committee and enlist the support of an academic officer. This requirement in and of itself was a very useful first step. No longer would individuals shoulder the responsibility alone, nor would the work be part of another committee’s very long agenda. Making explicit to academic executives our commitment to encourage the scholarship of teaching and learning helped commit them to the “cause” and gave them ownership of it as well. With a committee of five faculty and CELT staff in place, recognized by our top

leadership, we felt more confident that our program might sustain itself and grow over time. Additionally, being a CASTL Affiliate has helped the teaching center's SoTL program and emphasis on scholarly teaching in these ways: by encouraging and sustaining reflection on what we are doing and why, and by challenging us to become intentional and systematic in our approach to what goals we set and how we accomplish them.

Two other aspects of our affiliate status had been immediately useful. The IPFW CASTL Committee decided to adapt the survey of SoTL awareness and needs that one of the CASTL Affiliates, Thompson Rivers University, had developed in order to gather pre-conference data that the speaker, Kathleen McKinney, could use in the conference's keynote address. Secondly, the CASTL Committee saw the similarity of the committee's goals to those of the other affiliates, which told us we were on the right track. Our association with other campuses also prompted us to reexamine our teaching center's activities from other perspectives. Our CASTL Committee members saw that with a few modifications and shifts in focus, many of the things that the teaching center was already doing could help to achieve the four goals the CASTL Committee had set. Committee members saw that instead of focusing directly on SoTL, scholarly teaching could easily be built into CELT's existing programs and services, which would lay a foundation for future scholarship of teaching and learning projects.

For example, five years ago, the CELT director and staff along with internal grant-funding representatives, started to ask its curriculum development grant recipients to formulate and execute a plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the funded course re-designs and technological innovations in improving student learning outcomes. For example, grant application materials suggested that the evaluation plan might lay the groundwork for a research project. Further, the grant recipient was encouraged to get IRB approval in connection with the project.

As another example, in the 2010 version of CELT's Summer Instructional Development (SID) grant program, the recipient must agree to attend a half-day "institute" to discuss the goals of the project, brainstorm evaluation strategies, and obtain IRB approval; orally present a progress report mid-way through implementation; publish online a final report, a virtual poster, or a course portfolio (using the KEEP toolkit); and present the results of the project to others on the campus in the Spring semester. These standards are now not merely encouraged, but required. Based on the response of prospective applicants, the modification is very welcome. The connections of research and evaluation to improving student learning and to "SoTL" and scholarly teaching are now transparent.

Another useful requirement of CASTL Affiliate status was membership and participation in ISSOTL. The timing of our designation as a CASTL Affiliate and the resulting communications from the ISSOTL coordinating institution, Loyola Marymount University, alerted CELT and interested IPFW faculty in enough time to prepare proposals for the 2009 ISSOTL conference taking place only three hours away at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. CELT co-authored two proposals with two tenure-track professors. Two other IPFW faculty members also presented at the conference.

## Moving Forward, Sustaining Momentum

When the CASTL Committee returned from the 2009 ISSOTL conference, its members took the ideas that came from the conference experience and mapped them to the goals the members had defined in late 2008: (1) build Visibility, (2) provide support and rewards for SoTL, (3) emphasize the benefits of SoTL and scholarly teaching to faculty and the institution; and (4) redefine scholarship. The committee then selected one or two ideas (sub-goals) from each category on which to work, choosing those that would be more likely to affect the larger university as a whole versus specific groups, could be accomplished within the current budget of the teaching center, and that seemed reasonably feasible to accomplish within the given resources and time. The next section addresses each of the main goals set forth by the CASTL Committee members, top ideas, and progress toward the sub-goals.

### **Visibility**

One goal was to highlight visibility of SoTL and scholarly teaching projects that faculty on this campus have recently completed. At the CASTL Committee member's suggestion, the CELT Director contacted department chairs in December as they were preparing their Annual Reports to request the names of faculty who had published papers or who had attended or presented at a teaching conference in their field so that their names could be posted on the CELT SoTL web page. The next step, suggested by the CASTL Committee members, would be to feature a college or school in a monthly SoTL showcase.

### **Support & Rewards**

One sub-goal selected in this category was to create a short bibliography of good SoTL articles from 8 to 10 disciplines and post them on the SoTL page for use as examples and readings in the bi-weekly SoTL work group. The purpose of this list is to reflect a variety of approaches, techniques, and methods that are used in research on SoTL and scholarly teaching. The CASTLE Committee did not have to invest substantial time in collecting these articles because others have already assembled several such bibliographies. Two examples include SoTL bibliographies from Indiana University and the University of Michigan. The first link was to Nelson's (2000) website and the other two were selected from the teaching center (CRLT 2009a & 2009c) at the University of Michigan:

- How to Find Out More about College Teaching and its Scholarship  
<http://php.indiana.edu/~nelson1/TCHNGBKS.html>
- General SoTL Resources <http://www.crlt.umich.edu/tstrategies/tsst.php>
- Disciplinary Resources  
<http://www.crlt.umich.edu/tstrategies/disciplinaryresources.php>

Another sub-goal in this category was to provide small travel grants to support faculty to present at professional conferences. The Office of Research and Extended Support (ORES) recently expressed its willingness to consider these requests and to seek CELT's recommendation in granting them. As part of this commitment, the ORES recently granted CELT a one-time stipend of \$1500 for a "SoTL Fellow" to assist faculty in developing, conducting, and publishing SoTL projects. The Division of Continuing

Studies also has expressed willingness to fund a visiting scholar who specializes in research about online learning to assist the faculty teaching online in the development of SoTL research projects.

### ***Benefits***

One of the ideas gleaned from the 2009 ISSOTL conference was to focus on one college or department with which to work. Recently, the new dean of our College of Arts and Sciences publicly acknowledged to college chairpersons and program directors the value of the annual summaries of participation in CELT programs that this teaching center provides. The new associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences recently asked CELT to participate in the planning of a Spring 2011 teaching conference. Given these positive signals from this university's administrators, the CASTL Committee members agreed that it would be a good idea to capitalize on such interest in professional development.

### ***Redefine scholarship***

The CASTL Committee members became further aware of the growing number of universities that have adopted the Boyer (1990) model of four distinct types of scholarship: the scholarships of discovery, of teaching, of integration, and of engagement. By redefining research and scholarship to include the scholarship of teaching in the campus promotion and tenure policies and criteria, faculty will have an incentive for spending the significant time, resources, intellectual investment this type of research requires. A few examples of universities that have adopted Boyer's (1990) model include Texas Woman's University, Western Carolina University, and the two below with links:

- Humboldt State: <http://www.humboldt.edu/~aps/faculty/retention.html> (Appendix J)
- New Mexico State University: <http://nmsu.edu/manual/documents/07-29-09-policy-manual-final091809.pdf>.

The CASTL Committee and CELT could make progress on this very long road by starting to use the term "scholarly teaching" in communications about events and programs. In this context, "scholarly teaching" means using research and reflection to inform and study our teaching. The CASTL Committee members also discussed the need and possible strategies for having a SoTL advocate involved in discussions about how to revise promotion and tenure policies, a revision process that the chief academic officer has suggested might be underway in the near future.

### ***Conclusion***

Though IPFW has been traveling for some time with our individuals, groups, committees, conferences, and initiatives, our journey is by no means complete. Those of us who are traveling together are encouraged by the whole-hearted support of the IPFW upper-level administrators and by the enthusiasm of the faculty at this university. One challenge is to focus and coordinate our efforts and our resources toward a well-articulated goal that will capture the imaginations of our faculty and communicate the value of investigating student learning. The other major challenge that we face is to



modify our reward structure to coincide with an inclusive conception of the nature of scholarship. CELT finds itself today in a much better position to meet these challenges due in large part to its decision to become a part of the CASTL Affiliate program.

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### Appendix

#### SoTL Work Group Plan

1. **Reading part 1 – exploration of the SoTL literature:** Participants select at least one article from the annotated bibliography by Hutchings, Bjork, & Babb (2002) for discussion. Website for the annotated bibliography:  
[http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/sites/default/files/CASTL\\_bibliography.pdf](http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/sites/default/files/CASTL_bibliography.pdf)
2. **Reading – part 2: development of knowledge related to learning and/or intellectual development.** Potential resources - Bloom's Taxonomy of cognitive learning domain, William Perry Theory of Intellectual Development, and the following two websites:  
<http://www.apa.org/ed/governance/bea/learner-centered.pdf>  
<http://tip.psychology.org/theories.html>
3. **Formulating a researchable question.** Participants read from Kathleen McKinney's book, *Enhancing Learning Through the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, and study "Narrowing the research question" at [http://cndls.georgetown.edu/sotl\\_module/](http://cndls.georgetown.edu/sotl_module/)
4. **Issues in Social Science Research:** discussion of issues relevant to research with human subjects (i.e., expectations of the IRB). Purpose is to prompt thinking about these issues early in the development of the project.
5. **Assessing your knowledge base – Part 1.** What topic or topics is your question related to? What artifacts do you already have and what artifacts might you need?
6. **Assessing your knowledge base – Part 2.** What methods from your discipline might you use to investigate your topic? Are there methods from other disciplines that you might use? How will you obtain the information that you need to address your research question?

7. **“Nuts & Bolts” session for prospective SoTL Researchers.** Attendance at this session is a requirement by our IRB for all principal investigators prior to conducting any research.
8. **Building your knowledge base 1 – Background material.** Develop an annotated bibliography related to your topic.
9. **Building your knowledge base 2 – Methods.** Develop an annotated bibliography for various methods that you might use for gathering data and assessing your project.
10. **Taking stock and getting feedback.** Write a proposal (draft) including the issue under study, methods and instruments you may use, and outlining your next step.
11. **Developing and refining your study design and your instruments.** Meet with your IRB mentor prior to submitting the proposal to the IRB.