

Foreword: Signature Pedagogies Revisited

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In 2004, Lee S. Shulman closed the first conference of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISSOTL) with a plenary called “In Search of Signature Pedagogies: Learning from Lessons of Practice.” In that speech and in his follow-up publication (2005), he encouraged us to use “elements of instruction and socialization” that require students “to think, to perform, to act with integrity” to the field (p. 52). His call to action was immediately followed by the work of historian Lendol Calder (2006), who further described signature pedagogies as those that help students “do, think, and value what practitioners in the field are doing, thinking, and valuing.” His “Uncoverage: Toward a Signature Pedagogy for the History Survey” was the first articulation of a signature pedagogy for the academic disciplines.

After hearing Shulman’s plenary in person, I worked with my colleagues Regan Gurung and Aeron Haynie to also answer Shulman’s call by editing two books, *Exploring Signature Pedagogies: Approaches to Teaching Disciplinary Habits of Mind* (Stylus, 2008) and *Exploring More Signature Pedagogies: Approaches to Teaching Disciplinary Habits of Mind* (Stylus, 2012). The first volume articulated signature pedagogies across 14 disciplines, and the second added nine more academic disciplines and three interdisciplines, and then brought the work back to its origins by including four professions.

While some of the articles don’t use the language of “signature pedagogy,” this special issue of *Transformative Dialogues* is among the first to employ SoTL projects to assess the effectiveness of signature pedagogies and practices. Additionally, its focus on the professions more fully brings the conversation full circle, back to the concept’s origins. It began in early 2011 when I spoke to the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators (FPSE), encouraging them to consider if and how they enact the signature pedagogies of their fields. This plenary became a call to action to those in attendance, and the editors of *Transformative Dialogues* developed the CFP to support that action. They described the issue as

research and scholarly commentary on “the forms of instruction that leap to mind when we first think about the preparation of members of particular professions” (Shulman, 2005, *Daedalus*, Vol 134, No. 3). *TD* invites all those involved in SoTL

scholarship with a focus on specific professions to write about their experience and share with their colleagues. (“Call”)

Two types of articles appear in this issue: straightforward investigations of what may be signature pedagogies to measure their effectiveness in real classroom settings, and explorations proposing a pedagogical expansion within the field to a more holistic signature pedagogy that embodies the full, authentic work of the profession. This latter type responds to Parker J. Parker and Arthur Zajonc’s *The Heart of Higher Education: A Call to Renewal* (2010) in which they seek an integrative model of teaching and learning. It is an article type that is far less common in SoTL but fully embraced by *Transformative Dialogues*, one of the distinctive features of this journal.

Denise McDonald’s “Building Experiential Knowledge through Hypothetical Enactments: A Meta-Pedagogical Process” documents what pre-service teachers learn from effectively structured parent-teacher conference simulations, a hallmark pedagogy of the field that engages students in a common experience of teachers. She concludes that this signature pedagogy helps future teachers “increase interpersonal skills, reflective and critical thinking, experiential comprehension of parent-teacher conferences, and gain a keener sense of the complexity of teaching” (p. 12).

Jillian Lang in “Comparative Study of Hands-on and Remote Physics Labs for First Year University Level Physics Students” similarly asks if the traditional face-to-face physics lab, a typical pedagogy for physics students, can be translated just as effectively into an online, remote web-based lab. She finds that the same educational goals can be met in this alternative mode, suggesting that the advantages of the online delivery of this specific signature pedagogy aren’t tempered by a loss in learning.

David P. Burns, C. Leung, L. Parsons, G. Singh, and B. Yeung interrogate the “popular” pedagogy of case studies in the ethical education of teachers (p. 1). They note that the use of case studies, as described in a particular text by Strike and Soltis (2009), oversimplifies and sanitizes the complexity of the real classroom situations future teachers will encounter: in the written case studies, the authors have done the ethical thinking for the students, leaving them with simple situations that don’t capture the real work of the profession. They conclude with two possible ways to meet the intended goals of case studies: repositioning the case studies to occur after the teacher-in-training has classroom experienced, and using literary case studies, which offer more complex, contextualized situations closer to what they’ll encounter as teachers (p. 7-8).

Finally, Kathleen Hanold Watland’s “Just Tell Us What You Want! Using Rubrics to Help MBA Students Become Better Performance Managers” documents a project in which future managers who’ll be measuring employee performance learn to use rubrics to improve their communication of expectations early and provide helpful feedback—both of which are essential traits of good managers.

The next set of essays challenges current pedagogies by expanding the range of teaching practices to more fully and authentically capture the work of the professional. They often fold in activities that address not just cognitive but also affective learning, reminding us that even Bloom’s Cognitive Taxonomy was complemented by an Affective Taxonomy in his discussion of domains for learning.

Pamela Terrell's "Art, Meet Science: An Evolution of Clinical Reflection in Communicative Disorders" applauds the shift from the traditional medical model of speech-language pathology teaching to a more "family-centered model" (p. 1), identifying reflective practices as a way "for developing the fledgling self-esteem and clinical competence of neophyte clinicians and enabling them to begin to view themselves as skilled professionals" (p. 3). She then reaches beyond the field with the help of an English colleague to require a comprehensive reflection on the practicum in the compressed form of a haiku, complementing the "very left-brained, analytical tasks" of the speech-language pathology curriculum to embrace "Multifaceted cues, such as visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic," an integrative approach that will "result in more efficacious learning in the clinic" in the future (p. 6).

In "Dietetics Students' Experiences and Perspectives of Storytelling to Enhance Food and Nutrition Practice," Jennifer L. Brady and Jacqui R. Gingras also note an "over-investment in science, objectivity, and empiricism" in dietetic practice, despite the "socio-cultural and emotional experience of food, eating, and the body" (p. 1). Thus, they argue for an expanded pedagogy centered on storytelling to cultivate the "relational, political and contextual aspect of their future professional work roles" and ground "their technical and theoretical knowledge in a context of care" (pp. 2, 6).

Similarly, in "Intuition and animism as bridging concepts to Indigenous knowledges in environmental decision-making," M. J. Barrett and Brad Wuetherick argue that the recognition and practice of Indigenous ways of knowing (specifically intuition and animism) in the future professional practice of resource management will lead to better decisions involving complex environmental issues.

Finally, Adrienne Viramontes's "Autoethnographic Reflections: Autoethnography as a Signature Pedagogy of Speech Communication" looks to a specialized kind of storytelling called autoethnography. She claims that student writing of autoethnographic reflections will "establish relationships between the personal and theoretical component parts" of speech communication (p. 6). Admittedly a very broad field, potential communications professions draw from "almost any position that involves the creation, dissemination, collection, marketing, and managing of information" (p. 7). However, within this range, "In order to fully understand a situation or event, the larger context must be considered and analyzed," and "What autoethnography really teaches students is that all human activity has a larger context, which makes it significant and meaningful." (7).

Extending this consideration of the whole student and learning process and less as much about signature pedagogies, Scott N. Taylor's "Looking at Stress and Learning: Peer Coaching with Compassion as a Possible Remedy" and "Disrupting Filters To Deepen Students' Political Commitment" by Brian M. Harward and Daniel M. Shea propose ways of teaching the whole student, taking a more integrative approach to teaching and learning, regardless of the discipline. Taylor offers a model of peer coaching with compassion to manage the stress of learning. In this model, students "explore their concerns with another person, receive feedback from others, and [has] someone they can account to for their learning and development" (p. 5). Harward and Shea describe a more comprehensive "filter-free" way of engaging students in political issues will engage them more fully in their future political and civil lives: "In thinking

more holistically about the experience of students beyond our classrooms, we have an opportunity to emphasize patterns of student engagement and learning that challenge and deepen students' expectations of higher education and civic engagement" (p. 5).

Ultimately, this issue of *Transformative Dialogues* collectively argues for ways of teaching that capture both the whole of the field and the whole of the student, extending earlier conversations about signature pedagogies to consider not only the ways of knowing, valuing, and doing of the discipline, but also the ways of knowing, valuing, and doing of the student—a transformative dialogue indeed.

References

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