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Winter 2014

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[Contact the Editor](#)**Educational Development Around the World**

For much of the early part of my career in educational development, my perspective on the field was very US-centric. Simply trying to get a handle on the infinite variety of programs in a wide array of institutions across the US was challenging and eye-opening enough. Learning about other schools and other ways of doing educational development has been a valuable benefit to belonging to POD.

POD also introduced me to the world of educational development outside the United States. POD has a many international members, and over the years I've enjoyed getting to know and collaborating with members from Japan, Australia, Canada, and several other countries. And when colleagues introduced me to the *International Journal of Academic Development* (IJAD), I began to learn from the scholarship of educational development around the world.

So I was very excited when, as POD President, I had the opportunity to attend the ICED Council meeting this summer in Kyoto, Japan. ICED, or the International Consortium for Educational Development, is just that: a consortium of educational development organizations around the world. In other words, ICED does not have individual members; rather, national and regional organizations like POD are members.

ICED celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. To mark the event, they have published a [history of the organization](#), which also gives you a better overview than I can here.

What does POD's membership in ICED mean for you as someone who works to support teaching and learning in higher education? One of the aims of ICED is "the sharing of good practice, problems and solutions," which can benefit all of us.

ICED has two main venues for this sharing among members of the different organizations. The first is the biennial ICED conference. In the past, it has been held in Thailand, Barcelona, and Salt Lake City. The next [conference](#) is in Stockholm in June, 2014.



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The second space for sharing—one that is both more affordable and more frequent—is [IJAD](#). This journal provides an excellent addition to your reading list.

While you're reading, you may also be interested in exploring some of the other publications produced by ICED member organizations. Just as POD has *To Improve the Academy*, several other organizations have their own journals, listed [here](#):



—Kathryn Plank, POD President

One of the main lessons I learned at the ICED Council meeting is that, while educational development is implemented in different ways in different countries, we share some core beliefs and visions about teaching and learning in higher education. Looking at the work we do through an international lens can be eye-opening, reinvigorating, and inspiring.

For more about ICED and the ICED Council meeting in Kyoto this summer, see the [President's Blog](#) on the POD website.

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It's leverage time. That's the one-word (yes, one word) theme for this year's conference: *Leverage*. Inspired by POD President Kathryn Plank's address in Pittsburgh, this year's conference will explore ways to maximize impact, resources, research, diversity, sustainability, networking, technology, and much more. The conference will be held in Dallas, TX at the Intercontinental Dallas Hotel, November 5-9. Room rates will be \$145 per night (single and double rate). Click [here](#) to view the call for proposals.

The Core Committee approved the request to translate POD's *Guide to Faculty Development* into Japanese. The translation will be conducted by Tamagawa University Press. Core also approved a format change to *To Improve the Academy*. *To Improve the Academy* will become solely electronic and will be published twice per year beginning in 2014. Members will receive the journal electronically. This will widen the publication window for potential authors and will also increase the availability and accessibility of TIA on academic search engines and databases. Click [here](#) for more information and the call for manuscripts.

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[Contact the Editor](#)**POD 2013 Conference Highlights**

The 2013 POD Conference in Pittsburgh, PA – **Freedom to Connect, Freedom to Risk, Freedom to Learn** – was another great success with over 700 attendees. The conference offered over 200 sessions, including Pre-Conference workshops, Interactive Sessions, Roundtable Discussions, Research Sessions, Posters, and an excellent Anchor Session, all of which helped to engaged and inspire participants.

A few highlights from the conference include:

- A wonderful Presidential Address from Kathryn Plank focusing on "Why do we do what we do? Why does it matter?"
- Plenaries from Dr. Adrianna Kezar and the CRLT Players
- An extremely well-attended welcome session for Newcomers to POD
- A rip-roaring karaoke dance party!



[Images from the 2013 conference are available on Flickr, with special thanks to photographer Jake Jacobson.](#)



This year's conference will take place November 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> in Dallas, Texas, focusing on the theme of "Leverage" as we explore the various roles that we play as faculty developers, administrators, teachers, and students, and the ways in which we capitalize on the assets around us to meet the many needs of the higher education community. The vast metropolis of Dallas, Texas is an appropriate setting for our conference as we investigate the enormity and variety of our work. Dallas is clearly a city that has learned how

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to leverage its strengths, and as such is the perfect place for us to explore our own power of leverage!

Click [here](#) to learn more about the amazing things that Dallas has to offer.

Click [here](#) for more information and the call for proposals.

Allison Boye & Jake Glover, 2014 Conference Co-Chairs

Bill Watson & David Sacks, 2014 Program Co-Chairs

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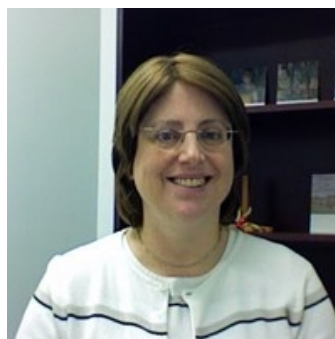
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Congratulations to these new Core Committee members.

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Donna Ellis-University of Waterloo



Francine Glazer-New York Institute of Technology



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Debie Lohe-St. Louis University



Mei-Yau Shih-University of Massachusetts Amherst



Todd Zakrajsek / University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

### Deandra Little POD's Next President Elect



Little was elected by the Core Committee at its meeting in October. She is Managing Director of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, Elon University.

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The POD Small College Committee invites you to **“think small!”** If you are a POD member from a small, or “small-ish” college or university, then the Small College Committee is a resource for you. The committee’s charge is:

“to create community around common interests among faculty developers at small colleges and universities; to promote awareness of challenges and opportunities at small colleges and universities to the POD community; and to facilitate conference sessions at POD and provide resources that would be most helpful to our colleagues.”

Membership in the committee is open to anyone who feels they can benefit from its resources, but the goal is to support faculty developers working under similar sets of conditions and constraints. For example: Are you the only person on your campus charged with faculty development responsibilities? Do you have other duties (e.g., teaching or administration) in addition to faculty development? Do you work primarily with faculty (rather than graduate students) in an environment where teaching excellence is seen as a high priority? Are you working with a meager budget? The Small College Committee is intended to be a network within POD that can share contacts, ideas, and information to support faculty developers working in these kinds of contexts.

Most of the communication among members of the Small College Committee happens over the *SC-POD E-mail List*. POD members from small colleges can use the listserv to ask questions, look for suggestions for resources or perspectives, and seek support in other ways. The committee leadership also uses the list to solicit and encourage proposals from small-college members for the annual POD conference. The list has relatively little traffic, and usually has a fast response rate, so it will not clutter your inbox with messages, and it will usually get you a pretty quick answer to your question. The list is administered by Dr. Michael Reder, Director of the Joy ShechtmanMankoff Center for Teaching and Learning at Connecticut College. To join, e-mail Michael at [reder@concoll.edu](mailto:reder@concoll.edu).

At the annual POD Network Conference, the Small College Committee offers a two-part interactive session entitled, *Starting & Sustaining Faculty Development Programs at Small Colleges: Theory & Practice*. The session addresses the challenges and opportunities unique to faculty development at smaller institutions, and offers opportunities for networking around common problems. The committee also distributes a list of sessions at the annual

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conference that are being presented by, or might be of interest to, faculty developers from smaller institutions. In November, 2013, the annual conference had almost 30 such sessions, as well as socializing opportunities like a lunch and a dinner for small college POD members organized by the committee.

In the coming year, the committee plans to explore how we can use electronic resources, including the updated POD website, to facilitate conversations among small college faculty developers outside of our annual gathering at the conference. These might include simultaneous online meetings arranged at particular times for discussions of specific topics of interest. The committee also has a page on [WikiPODia](#), where members can store and share a variety of resources. If you have ideas for resources or strategies we can use to collaborate with one another around shared interests, or questions about the committee, please contact any of the committee's officers, who are identified below.

Chair:

Dr. David Boose

Associate Professor of Biology

Director, Center for Teaching and Advising

Gonzaga University

Spokane, Washington, U.S.A.

[boose@gonzaga.edu](mailto:boose@gonzaga.edu)

Past Chair:

Dr. Sal Meyers

Professor of Psychology

Director of Faculty Development

Simpson College

Indianola, Iowa, U.S.A.

[sal.meyers@simpson.edu](mailto:sal.meyers@simpson.edu)

Chair-elect:

Dr. Jason Craig

Professor of Physical Therapy

Director of Teaching and Student Engagement

Marymount University

Arlington, Virginia, U.S.A.

[jason.craig@marymount.edu](mailto:jason.craig@marymount.edu)

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## Call for Editor

**POD Network News****Winter 2014****INSIDE THIS ISSUE:****Are you the next editor of POD Network News?**[President's Message](#)

The POD Publications Committee is seeking the next editor of *POD Network News*. The current editor, Amanda McKendree, had a blast working on the Newsletter the past few years, but it is time to pass the torch.

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The goal of the newsletter is to keep members informed about upcoming events, opportunities, and resources for professional practice. *POD Network News* is published three times annually.

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To apply for the editor position, please send a statement of interest and CV to Laura Cruz ([lcruz@wcu.edu](mailto:lcruz@wcu.edu)), chair, Publications Committee.

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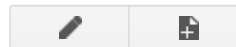
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The Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network in Higher Education invites submissions for volume 33 (2014) of *To Improve the Academy*. Now an electronic journal published two times per year, *To Improve the Academy* recognizes excellence in research and practice in educational development. All submissions are double-blind peer-reviewed by a minimum of three reviewers.

The audience for *To Improve the Academy* includes faculty development and organizational development professionals, administrators and consultants, all of whom work to improve the climate for teaching and learning in higher education. Manuscripts addressing issues of POD's core values are encouraged.

**Submission Requirements**

- Maximum length of articles is 7000 words in 12-point type, Times New Roman, standard margins (1" on all sides).
- Manuscripts should be prepared according to the guidelines in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition
- Compose a title that clearly informs the reader about the content.
- Include an abstract of 100 words or less.
- Manuscript must be submitted as a blind review copy.
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continue to prepare that system for full implementation, please send your manuscript to [toimprovetheacademy@gmail.com](mailto:toimprovetheacademy@gmail.com).

Queries about *To Improve the Academy* should be addressed to Laura Cruz, Editor ([lcruz@wcu.edu](mailto:lcruz@wcu.edu)) or Gary Hawkins, Associate Editor ([ghawkins@warren-wilson.edu](mailto:ghawkins@warren-wilson.edu)).

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### Journal on Centers for Teaching and Learning

Call for Papers for a Special Issue: Supporting Effective Teaching at Small Colleges: Theory & Practice

Deadline for Submissions: March 1, 2014

The *Journal on Centers for Teaching and Learning* (JCTL) is an annual, peer-reviewed journal providing a space for those involved with teaching and learning centers to constitute a Scholarship of Educational Development that helps them share ideas on how to create and maintain pedagogical innovations at and beyond their respective campuses.

For more information, visit the [JCTL website](#) or contact the Guest Editor, Michael Reder, at [red@conncoll.edu](mailto:red@conncoll.edu)

### New Issue of the Learning Communities Journal Now Available

Volume 5 (2013) focuses on The Importance of Learning Community Components. As the Editor-in-Chief's message describes it, "This issue of the [Learning Communities Journal](#) features two articles on student learning communities (SLCs) and four on faculty and professional learning communities (FLCs). The SLC results have important implications for FLCs. Learning communities, whether student or faculty, are made up of design and implementation components whose variations of use influence effectiveness and outcomes." Both print and electronic subscriptions are available. An institutional site license gives your entire campus access to all issues and is a phenomenal value. Back issues (Volumes 1-4) of the journal are also still available for purchase. For information about subscribing, submitting manuscripts, or other inquiries, click [here](#).

### Journal of Microbiology and Biology Education

The American Society for Microbiology (ASM) announces that starting in 2014, the [Journal of Microbiology & Biology Education \(JMBE\)](#) will expand its scope beyond the current focus on undergraduate education research, curriculum, and practices.

"In addition to publishing manuscripts under the established guidelines, *JMBE* now welcomes thoughtful manuscripts that address: student interest and motivation, recruitment

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and retention, citizen science and science outreach, K–12 education and outreach, institutional transformation, online education and MOOCs [massive open online courses], systemic transformation, and a broadening participation,” says former editor-in-chief Christopher J. Woolverton of Kent State University in an editorial in the December 2013 issue. Authors intending to submit manuscripts addressing these topics should send a 250-word abstract to the *JMBE* editorial office ([jmbe@asmusa.org](mailto:jmbe@asmusa.org)) for consideration.

Woolverton, who headed *JMBE* for the past five years, was succeeded in January 2014 as editor-in-chief by **Samantha L. Elliott** (*pictured right*), an associate professor of biology at St. Mary's College of Maryland. Her research focuses on the immune response of the nematode *C. elegans*, as well as on curricular design and interventions to help underrepresented groups succeed in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) disciplines. An active member of the biology education research community, Elliott is an alumnus of the ASM Biology Scholars Program and the Project Kaleidoscope (PKAL) Summer Leadership Institute. She completed her doctorate in immunology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and her postdoctoral fellowship at Duke University. In a statement, *JMBE* thanked Woolverton for his leadership over the past five years. During that time, the journal moved into the digital publishing age, secured international indexing, developed resources for authors, and began collecting advertising fees.



For more information, contact Leslie Robinson (media contact) at [lrobinson@asmusa.org](mailto:lrobinson@asmusa.org) or Kari Wester (journal contact) at [jmbe@asmusa.org](mailto:jmbe@asmusa.org).

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**Laura L. B. Border**, POD President 2002-04, Director of the Graduate Teacher Program at the University of Colorado Boulder, presented a workshop on international collaborations with a Chilean colleague, B  tr  z Moya-Figueroa, Learning Assistant Coordinator, Center for Teaching & Learning, Universidad Cat  lica de Temuco, at the International Improving University Teaching Conference in Santiago, Chile in July 2013. POD member Jim Wilkensen of the Derek Bok Center at Harvard University, organized the conference.



After ten years as the founding director of the Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning at Auburn University, **Jim Groccia** stepped down on August 15, 2013 to assume a full-time teaching position in the department of Educational Foundations, Leadership and Technology. Jim was promoted to full-professor and after an academic year's sabbatical, will teach courses on college teaching and higher education, coordinate Auburn's graduate certificate in college and university teaching, and pursue a number of research, publication and consulting opportunities. Prior to Auburn, Jim was director of teaching centers at the University of Missouri, Columbia and Worcester Polytechnic Institute. He has served at POD president and is finishing a four-year term on the editorial team of To Improve the Academy. He can be reached at [groccie@auburn.edu](mailto:groccie@auburn.edu).



**Mary Deane Sorcinelli** became the inaugural Distinguished Scholar in Residence at Mount Holyoke's Weissman Center for Leadership in September 2013. Mary Deane has most recently been associate provost at University of Massachusetts-Amherst, and she is the founding director of that university's Center for Teaching and Faculty Development (CTFD), as well as a professor of educational policy. As the Weissman Distinguished Scholar, she will work to advance women's education and leadership.

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D. Lynn Sorenson, former Core member and conference chair, has assumed a position as senior consultant at the Center for Enhanced Teaching & Learning

(CETL) at Ocean University of China (OUC) in Qingdao, Shandong, People's Republic of China. CETL is headed by former POD member, SONG Wenhong, who has been instrumental in introducing faculty/instructional development in higher education across China. Sorenson also teaches Oral English classes at OUC as associate professor in the English department.

Lynn served twenty-one years at Brigham Young University as teaching and learning consultant and assistant director at the Center for Teaching and Learning and the Faculty Center. She also represented POD twice on the Council of the International Consortium for Educational Development (ICED). In 2010 Lynn received the "Spirit of POD" award. She continues her affiliation with Dee Fink and Associates nationally and internationally. She can be reached at [dlynsor@gmail.com](mailto:dlynsor@gmail.com).



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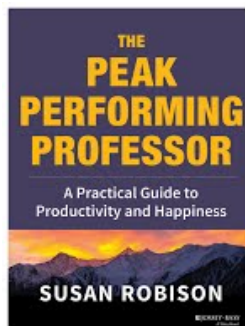
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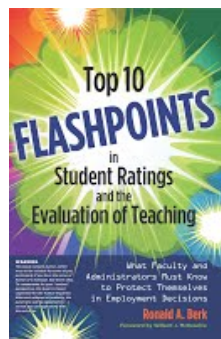
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POD member **Susan Robison**, a former professor of psychology and department chair at the Notre Dame of Maryland University, has published [The Peak Performing Professor](#) with Jossey-Bass/Wiley this past October. The book assists faculty in developing essential skills to enhance peak performance and experience more work-life balance.



**TOP 10 Flashpoints in Student Ratings and the Evaluation of Teaching**, by Ronald A. Berk, is the first book to be generated systematically from POD Listserv discussions. Berk scoured the discourse POD members posted from 2010 through 2012 to extract the most confusing, misunderstood, contentious, and thorny issues on student ratings and the evaluation of teaching. These issues continue to be debated. This book fills a void in the literature on these issues. He is grateful to the *21 POD members* who are acknowledged in the book for sustaining that discourse.

The book is designed to solve the problems, conflicts, and confusion about how to evaluate teaching. It is written expressly for administrators and faculty with Berk's signature twisted sense of humor.

*"This book pulls together the latest and best research and writing about the evaluation of teaching in colleges and universities in a very helpful and humorous guide. Each of Ron's 10 flashpoints deals with a serious issue that is much argued in faculty meetings and among administrators. I learned a great deal from this book, and recommend it to all faculty, administrators, and scholars."*—from the Foreword by Wilbert J. McKeachie

**FLASHPOINT:** a critical stage in a process, trouble spot, contentious issue, volatile hot

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**button, or lowest temperature at which a flammable liquid will give off enough vapor to ignite**

Each flashpoint is defined succinctly, options are presented, and then evidence-based recommendations for concrete action steps are proffered. The recommendations are grounded in *psychometric, professional, and legal standards*. The last-named, in particular, can protect you from costly litigation.

**Here are the flashpoints:**

Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) vs. Student Rating Scale

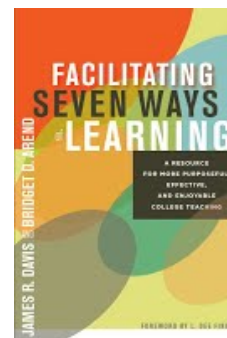
- 1: Student Ratings vs. Multiple Sources of Evidence
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- 8: Scoring "Neutral," "Not Applicable," "Not Observed," and Blank Answers
- 9: Criterion-Referenced vs. Norm-Referenced Rating Interpretations
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It also has a BONUS chapter: "A Fractured, Semi-Factual History of Student Ratings of Teaching: A Parody."

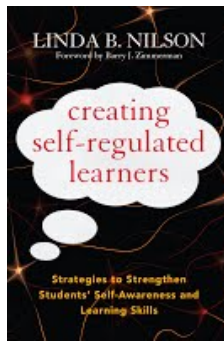
*Top 10 Flashpoints in Student Ratings and the Evaluation of Teaching* is available from [Stylus Publishing](#) or [Amazon](#) in paperback, hard cover, and e-book versions.

**[Facilitating Seven Ways of Learning: A Resource for More Purposeful, Effective, and Enjoyable College Teaching](#)**. James R. Davis and Bridget D. Arend. (2012). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Forward by L. Dee Fink. Davis is Professor Emeritus of Education and a former Dean and faculty developer from the University of Denver. Arend is the Director of University Teaching at the University of Denver's Office of Teaching and Learning. This book is a revision of Davis's earlier work, *Better Teaching More Learning*. Click [here](#) for more information.



Long-standing POD Network member **Linda Nilson** (Clemson University) has a new book, ***Creating Self-Regulated Learners: Strategies to Strengthen Students' Self-Awareness and Learning Skills*** (Stylus Publishing, 2013). It includes not only the theory and research behind self-regulated learning but also many dozens of tested activities and assignments that develop students' self-regulated learning skills. These activities and assignments



accompany typical course components like readings, problem sets, exams, papers, experiential assignments, and the like. Most are short and require little or no grading time.



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## Video Series

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Teaching Excellence](#)[Contact the Editor](#)**Breakthrough Strategies Video Series Assists Educators in Overcoming Challenges that Inhibit First-generation College Student Success**

Heritage University has produced a series of brief instructional videos each featuring a "breakthrough strategy" to enable first generation college student success. The videos highlight practices that can be used across a number of disciplines and are available to educators nationwide. The strategies are supported by the research literature on college-level classroom-based practices.

The series was created by the University's Institute for Student Identity and Success (ISIS). The institute's mission is to increase the number of four-year degree recipients among low-income, first-generation-to-college students by assisting faculty and administrators to use new research knowledge and skills that foster degree completion by these "New Majority" students.

The faculty at Heritage was integral to the development of the series, said Kathleen Ross, President Emerita & Professor of Intercultural Communications, and the ISIS director. "Faculty members identified specific challenges noted especially in first-generation students, and each has developed a strategy to help students overcome this difficulty and increase their success rates."

The series has been previewed to educators across the country, meeting with both critical acclaim and an eagerness to share them with others in the higher education community. "The videos demonstrate that faculty can creatively broaden their role to include responsibility for a deliberate focus on overcoming cultural assumptions about teaching and learning. We expect that the series will be expanded with contributions from faculty across the country", said Gloria Nemerowicz, President, Yes We Must Coalition. The Yes We Must Coalition will feature the series at their upcoming national conference in April.

Jack H. Schuster, Senior Research Fellow and Professor Emeritus, Claremont Graduate University, author of award-winning publications on college faculty, reviewed the series and applauded the academic rigor. "As for the variety of strategies that are advocated, I found them to be pedagogically sound and a nice mix of relating the students' education process to their environments as well as intra-classroom strategies."

Overcoming first generation college student challenges has been a serious need for generations according to Frank Balz, VP for Research & Policy Analysis at the National

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Association of Independent Colleges & Universities, "Although I was not the first in my family to attend college I had friends and knew many students for whom the topics that are addressed here were issues even back then. As far as I know there were no strategies to deal with those issues. Everyone simply was told to do the work. I'm not sure how many fell students by the wayside. So, to see a systematic effort to address these same issues across the entire faculty is a heartening thing."

Dr. Ross' goal for the project is that not only will educators across the country use these strategies in their classrooms but also contribute their own breakthrough strategies for incorporation into the series. Written proposals or completed amateur videos can be sent to [ISIS@heritage.edu](mailto:ISIS@heritage.edu). The ISIS Faculty Peer Review committee will choose the most beneficial, research-based strategies to consider for future professional filming.

Click [here](#) to view the videos and learn about the submission process.

For more information, contact Dr. Kathleen Ross at (509) 865-8657 or [ross\\_k@heritage.edu](mailto:ross_k@heritage.edu).

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The Center for Academic Excellence at Fairfield University will be hosting its **13th Annual Conference on Innovative Pedagogy and Course Redesign (May 29 – 30, 2014)**. The conference theme is Collaborations for Empowerment and Learning and will take place over two days. Featured presenters include: Dr. Peter Felten, who plans an interactive session on “Partnering with Students” and Dr. Katie Linder, who will engaged participants in “Helping Students Learn in an Age of Digital Distraction.”

[Conference information](#) (includes registration information):

We celebrate and showcase excellence and innovations in all areas of teaching, faculty support and development, the scholarship of teaching and learning, and community-engaged teaching and scholarship. Please consider submitting a proposal for an interactive session, roundtable, or poster.

Note: This year's conference will be preceded by a one-day technology conference on May 28, 2014. This pre-conference is in collaboration with the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC) and Academic Computing at Fairfield University.



Northern Arizona University (NAU) and the International Alliance of Teaching Scholars (IATS) are pleased to host the **15th Annual Faculty Learning Community Developers' and Facilitators' Institute, Tuesday through Friday, July 8-11, 2014** in Flagstaff, Arizona, U.S.A. FLC developers and facilitators have been identified as the most important keys to the success of faculty learning communities. This Faculty Learning Community Developers' and Facilitators' Institute is designed to provide developers or facilitators - either from faculty professional development programs or individuals who are involved in providing professional development training - with the strategies and methods needed to design, implement, and facilitate faculty learning communities (FLCs) at their respective institutions.

Community is often missing in higher education, where connections across disciplines and





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institutional units are overlooked. FLCs help establish these connections and achieve most of the outcomes of student learning communities: increased interest in learning, retention, active learning, rate of intellectual development, and civic contributions to the common good. The safety and support engendered in a community enable risk taking and the achievement of both individual and team objectives. Evidence shows that FLCs provide effective "deep learning" that encourages and supports faculty to investigate, attempt, assess, and adopt new methods of teaching.

The 15th annual Institute will be held on the campus of Northern Arizona University. NAU is located in Flagstaff, Arizona at the base of the San Francisco Peaks. Many local and national sightseeing destinations such as the Grand Canyon, Lake Powell, Sedona, the Snowbowl Resort Ski Lift, Sunset Crater, Meteor Crater, Lowell Observatory, Wupatki National Monument, and other natural wonders are nearby.

Facilitators for the Institute will be Milton D. Cox, Miami University; Laurie Richlin, WMU School of Medicine; Amy Essington, Cal State Long Beach; and Larry Gallagher, Northern Arizona University. More information and registration is available [here](#).

Click [here](#) for a comprehensive list of upcoming conferences.



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[Contact the Editor](#)*Toward the Best in the Academy Volume 19, Number 2, 2007-08*

*We continue featuring a selected POD Essay on Teaching Excellence in each issue of the POD Network News.*

### Developing the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Using Faculty Learning Communities

*Milton D. Cox, Miami University*

Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs) have proven successful in producing teaching projects, as evidenced by a survey of institutions with FLCs. It follows that these groups should provide ideal conditions for a subsequent development of those projects into peerreviewed publications and presentations, or the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). This essay offers faculty practical advice for producing such SoTL products based on what started as a teaching project in an FLC. My advice is based on work with FLCs for 28 years on my campus and others (Cox, 2003).

Let us begin by considering a definition of SoTL and FLCs. When Boyer introduced SoTL in 1990, there was confusion about its meaning. Our teaching center at Miami University defined SoTL as peer-reviewed presentations or publications on teaching and learning and relied on this illustration below to depict the multiple ways one could move toward either a publication or presentation after beginning with a teaching problem or opportunity. This cycle, adapted from Richlin (1993), describes scholarly teaching projects (as pictured in the upper half) that culminate in SoTL (as pictured in the lower part). For detailed discussion, see Cox (2008).

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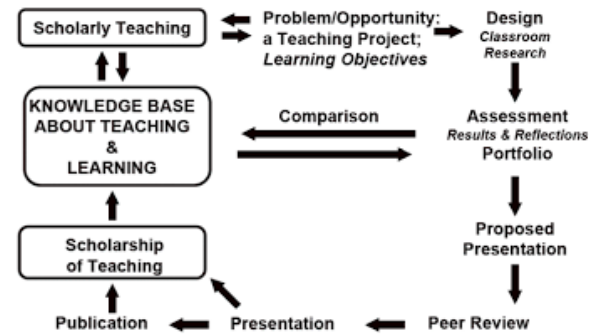
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### The Ongoing Cycle of Scholarly Teaching & the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)



Adapted from Richlin 1993

An FLC is a special type of community of practice. FLCs are multidisciplinary groups of 8-12 members consisting of faculty or a mix of faculty, graduate students, and administrative professionals. They work collaboratively on year-long, scholarly projects to enhance and assess teaching and learning. Group activities include tri-weekly seminars during which projects are developed and shared with the goal of building capacity and developing competence in SoTL. Participants select a focus course in which to try out their innovations. They also assess resulting outcomes, including student learning, and may prepare a mini-portfolio to chronicle results. They may select and work with student associates to engage student perspectives. Finally, they present individual and/or group project results to their institutions and at national conferences.

#### Teaching Projects

The starting point for developing SoTL in an FLC is a teaching project, problem or opportunity involving student learning, often called Classroom Research (Cross, 1998). This project may involve an attempt to change student behavior by adding a new pedagogical approach, content, assessment, or curriculum. It may involve an innovative approach to a course learning-objective that is currently problematic, such as moving from lectures to cooperative groups; engaging problem-based learning in a course; adding a case study approach; introducing a service-learning component; addressing a variety of learning styles; using responders; engaging web-based or online components; or having students construct electronic course learning portfolios. Another type of FLC teaching project may address institutional challenges or opportunities, for example: the first-year experience; advising; inclusion; or transforming the overall approach to learning. Such projects have been the focus of topic based FLCs at a variety of institutions. Although they may have been pursued in a scholarly fashion, they may not have culminated in SoTL (i.e., a refereed presentation or publication). So, even if it remains a teaching project known only locally, such an endeavor can be enriching for its author, her colleagues, and the institution itself.

Based on our experiences at Miami University, I have compiled the following set of recommendations both for developing teaching projects and for moving them beyond one's institutional boundaries: design before you start; keep your colleagues, department chair, and students informed about your project; obtain IRB (Human Subjects) approval in case you want to present or publish results; keep it simple, especially if you are a relatively new faculty member (since new approaches could lead temporarily to lower student evaluations); find a support group of others developing teaching/learning projects, such as an FLC.

#### Presenting and Publishing SoTL

Every discipline has a culture of conference presentations. Presentations of SoTL at a traditional disciplinary conference usually take place in a teaching section of the conference and conform to the culture established in the discipline. However, as a relatively new field, SoTL is developing its own culture. Sample venues of teaching and learning conferences include the Lilly Conferences and the International Society of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISSOTL). To locate topics of interest at recent conferences, visit conference

websites. The Miami Lilly Conference website lists over 30 theme tracks (topics of 5 or more sessions along with titles and abstracts.)

I recommend that session presenters have handouts, including Powerpoint slides and references and allow around 20% of your presentation time for questions and discussion since participants want to share what they are doing. Also, model your topic (e.g., if your session is about cooperative learning, have participants engage in an exercise during your session). Include student work and include assessment results. Session evaluations provide feedback for improving your project and scholarly approach.

There are an increasing number of print and/or online venues for publishing SoTL in disciplinary or multidisciplinary journals. For our journal, the Journal on Excellence in College Teaching, which has been publishing peer-reviewed SoTL for 18 years, we receive many manuscripts that describe interesting teaching projects. Unfortunately, we have to turn many away because the author fails to define the problem clearly or indicate why it was a problem or he fails to establish a baseline or fails to place the project in the context of what others have done or to provide evidence of change. Members of an FLC can read each other's manuscripts critically and call attention to these shortcomings early in the project design when it is not too late to revise the approach.

### Resources for Supporting SoTL Development

The development of SoTL projects in FLCs works best if participants understand the definition of SoTL and are familiar with SoTL publications themselves or with journal peer review procedures or if they are engaged with topics currently under discussion (see Lilly Conference presentation theme tracks). Consultation with the institution's offices of assessment and institutional research, and inclusion of suggestions from colleagues in psychology and educational psychology can strengthen the evidentiary base of a project. However, we have found that the most effective support comes from fellow members in an FLC, who provide insights, encouragement, and a critical perspective.

At first, some faculty doubt that they can become SoTL experts in a short time because it took them several years to become experts in their disciplines. However, Classroom Research is designed for the intelligent non-expert. There is not much jargon and progress reports and follow-up projects are still acceptable for presentations. We have found that faculty in FLCs can develop into SoTL presenters in just one year. Interestingly, pre-tenure faculty members, in their second through fifth years who are members of our teaching scholars FLC have entered SoTL development as novices and have presented the results of their teaching projects at a national conference 8 months later.

A survey conducted in 2005 with 395 respondents (a 61% response rate) produced interesting findings regarding the impact of FLCs on participants. "Understanding of and interest in SoTL" ranked third as a result of FLC participation. Also, those surveyed reported the following teaching projects: revised a course (160), incorporated approaches to reach different learning styles (150), designed and employed technology in a course (141), designed guidelines for learning processes (123), and improved grading schemes or rubrics (110). Our FIPSE-funded project fast-tracked the start of FLC programs at 5 institutions.

FLCs can provide for a very productive environment for the development of SoTL. Palmer (1998) notes, "The growth of any craft depends on shared practice and honest dialogue among the people who do it. We grow by private trial and error, to be sure—but our willingness to try, and fail, as individuals is severely limited when we are not supported by a community that encourages such risks" (p.144). To obtain more detailed information about FLCs and their role in developing SoTL, see Cox (2003a & 2003b).

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**Emily Gravett**



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Since fall 2010, **Amanda G. McKendree** has served as editor of *POD Network News*. Amanda joined the Kaneb Center for Teaching and Learning at the University of Notre Dame as Assistant Director in August 2009 where her primary responsibilities include coordinating university-wide graduate student programming and managing a staff of Graduate Student Associates in developing and facilitating teaching assistant orientations, pedagogy workshops for faculty and teaching assistants, certificate programs, and teaching apprenticeships/fellowships. She also consults with graduate students, faculty, and departments, and provides research services on teaching and learning topics. Her teaching interests include presentations and argumentation, business communication, gendered communication, and integrated marketing communication. Her areas of research activity include crisis communication, business communication pedagogy, and graduate student preparation for the professoriate. She holds a BA in Global Policy Studies, an MPA in Nonprofit/Public Management, and a Ph.D. in Rhetoric.

Please direct any questions or comments to [amckendree@nd.edu](mailto:amckendree@nd.edu). She greatly appreciates your feedback!

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