# The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Reconceptualizing Scholarship and Transforming the Academy\*

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Abstract

This article makes contributions toward the conceptualization of the scholarship of teaching and learning (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning). The scholarship of teaching is a concept with multiple ramifications. It is at the core of the current transformation of higher education. The scholarship of teaching challenges the existing stratification system within the academy. The scholarship of teaching and learning is a much larger enterprise, a movement, that can transform the nature of American society toward our ideals of equality and justice. Sociologists have a vital role to play within the academy and society. If we take advantage of the opportunity that the scholarship of teaching and learning offers, we can reach our potential as an intellectually liberating force in society.

The academy is arguably once again in the process of major change. Evidence suggests that we are in the initial stages of a new, major and long-lasting trend in higher education. This latest transformation once again elevates teaching as an activity central to the academy. Two recent developments support my contention that teaching is increasing in importance. Since 1971, the Carnegie Classifications based on research activity have been the dominant classification scheme for colleges and universities (McCormick 1999). In January 2000, (McCormick 2000) Carnegie announced a new classification system. The new classification, scheduled

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to be complete by the year 2005, will now include indicators for teaching and service activity.

The transitional classification scheme, released in August 2000 (McCormick 2000), has already made a big impact with its emphasis on teaching. The new typology emphasizes teaching by focusing on the number and types of degrees rather than research or selectivity in admissions. Federal funding as a measure of research activity is being dropped. That the classification system universities have been using for almost 30 years is now placing such an emphasis on teaching symbolizes the beginning of a transformation in higher education.

The second development that signals the beginning of a paradigmatic change in higher education is the National Science Foundation's establishment of Merit Criterion #2 for research grants. Evaluators are to take this standard into account when judging the merit of a grant proposal. The criterion asks, "What are the broader impacts of the proposed activity?" The first sentence of explanation asks, "How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training, and learning?" NSF made this change in 1997. "Notice No. 125 September, 1999" (directed to presidents of colleges and universities and heads of other NSF grantee organizations) provides a short discussion of these two questions. In the discussion of the integration of research and education, the NSF makes clear that the false dichotomy dividing research and teaching is inconsistent with their outlook. The notice asserts that education enriches research and vice versa. Given NSF's prestige, this assertion may be influential in the academy.

Additional data point to an increased interest in the multiple roles faculty play, especially teaching. In 1994, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching administered the National Survey on the Reexamination of Faculty Roles and Rewards. The survey reflected the views of 865 chief academic officers at fouryear institutions covering the full range of institutions, from Research Universities to Liberal Arts Colleges (Glassick, Huber & Maeroff 1997). An overwhelming majority of (82%) of the respondents indicated that they had instituted a review of faculty roles during the last five years, were currently in the process of review, or planned to initiate a review soon. Eighty-four percent of research universities indicated involvement in the teaching review process. When asked if new methods of evaluating faculty teaching had been developed, 77% of the research universities replied "Yes." Research universities were far more likely to report developing new methods for evaluating teaching than any other faculty role. Research universities were somewhat more likely than any other type of institution to indicate that new methods were being developed to evaluate teaching. Fifty-nine percent of all institutions and 81% of research institutions reported that teaching counted more than it did five years ago.

My own investigation indicates that the discipline of sociology is beginning to pay more attention to teaching (Atkinson, 2000b). Earlier research (Klug 1991; Pescosolido & Milkie 1995) finds that about half of U.S. postgraduate-degree-

granting sociology departments had some sort of formal teacher training for graduate students. Both Pescosolido and Milkie and Klug's data indicate that the higher the prestige of the department, the less likely the department is to have a teacher training program. My count of departments with teacher training programs suggests that both the availability of teacher training and the relationship between prestige and the availability of teacher training has changed dramatically in the past few years. Using the 2000 *U.S. News and World Report* prestige rankings and ASA's 2000 *Guide to Graduate Departments*, I find no relationship between prestige and availability of teacher training. Eighty-four percent of the top 51 departments report some sort of teacher training. It is difficult to judge the quality and extent of this training, because departments respond to the query of the availability of teacher training with answers that range from a succinct but uninformative "yes" or "no" to much more detailed descriptions of their programs. Yet the mere mention of having teacher training may indicate that a growing number of sociology departments value teacher training for their graduate students.

# Origins of Change

National leaders in higher education are calling for more emphasis on teaching. In a recent article in the American Association of Higher Education's journal, *Change*, Lazerson, Wagener, and Schumanis (2000) review the visions of six reformers. They concur that higher education should be transformed so that the "dominance of the research ethos" will not continue to "distort" higher education's mission. UCLA's Alexander Astin, Berkeley's Patricia Cross and Harvard's President Derek Bok and Professor Richard Light emphasize classroom assessment. That is, these reformers used the language of assessment, the evaluation of teaching and learning, to emphasize that colleges and universities must demonstrate "value added." Educational institutions must demonstrate how and what they add to students knowledge. These reformers see instructional reform as a logical outcome of the assessment movement. Consistent with the assessment movement is the growing national reality of post-tenure review in American higher education. This process brings with it a more complete review of what academics do, especially in the area of teaching.

Presidents (Boyer and Shulman) of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching share the concerns of the other reformers. Furthermore, they supplied the language that is most often used as a short hand for a strong commitment to teaching. In 1990, Ernest Boyer published *The Scholarship of Teaching*, and the term has become synonymous with an emphasis on teaching. Boyer urged a reconsideration of the priorities of the professoriate that would recognize the full range of faculty activity and the integration of research and teaching. The scholarship of teaching stands at the center of conversations about

educational reform. Shulman is the current president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and is continuing Boyer's work.

While the term, "scholarship of teaching," has been a rallying cry for many educational reformers, defining and operationalizing the term has been problematic. One of the problems is that scholarship has long been synonymous with research, so that upon hearing the term "scholarship," academics automatically think of traditional research. In fact, Boyer may have been trying to capitalize on the historic association between the terms "scholarship" and "research" as a way to enhance the importance of teaching. Whether or not he succeeded remains to be determined.

# Conceptualization of Multiple Scholarships

Boyer (1990) defined scholarship as having at least four domains: discovery, integration, application, and teaching. The scholarship of discovery is what we most commonly call "research" or "*investigative* efforts" (italics mine) (Boyer 1990:17) The scholarship of discovery reflects the excitement of a new idea, the exhilaration of a new insight, the search for knowledge for the joy of knowing. Outcomes of such research abound in our refereed journals. The scholarship of discovery is not the mere accumulation of publications to satisfy the "counters" of vita lines at tenure and promotion time.

The scholarship of integration is work that compiles, interprets, and generates new insights from original research (Boyer 1990:19). An example of integrative scholarship could be writing textbooks, especially if their point is to synthesize, provide conceptual frameworks and elaborate a sociological understanding of the world. Textbooks do not represent the scholarship of integration if they are simply content encyclopedias bereft of analysis and integrating concepts. Other examples of integration include integrative literature reviews and meta analyses of empirical findings.

The scholarship of application is applied research that is also "engaged." The scholarship of application is a dynamic process through which theory and practice interact. In the process of applying what we know, we also discover new knowledge and thereby contribute to our knowledge base. For example, in the process of applying theory to a social problem we not only help ameliorate the problem but refine the theory with empirical insights. For example, in trying to reduce sexual harassment in colleges and universities, we have learned that the very meaning of harassment is gendered. We thus improve our theories to go beyond structural inequalities and to address the meaning of gendered interaction. Doing the "housework" of the academy (committee work and other service) and "good citizenship" are not applied scholarship.

# The Scholarship of Teaching: Defining the Parameters

Boyer argues that a teacher/scholar must know one's discipline, know effective teaching methods for that content and be committed to continued growth as a teacher. Boyer's definition of the scholarship of teaching stresses the practice of teaching. The scholarship of teaching is the process of transmitting perspectives, skills, and knowledge to others while remaining a vital learner oneself. I believe that the scholarship of teaching sociology occurs when students learn to evaluate evidence critically, formulate arguments, apply concepts to new situations, and differentiate between a social structure and a building made of bricks and cement. Basic to understanding the scholarship of teaching is that focus is always on the student — not the professor, not even the discipline. The focus is only on the professor in that she or he is the vehicle to student understanding. The scholarship of teaching is not an erudite, narcissistic lecture that entertains the speaker, fills class time, but bores students.

After Boyer's untimely death in 1995, the Carnegie Academy was formed in part to refine the conceptualization of the scholarship of teaching. More than one hundred colleges and universities are a part of the CASTL "Campus Program" (Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning<sup>1</sup>). The Campus Program encourages institutions to "undertake a public process of stock-taking and planning for ways they can support knowledge-building about teaching and learning" (Hutchings & Shulman 1999). Campuses discuss and develop their own conceptualization and measurement of the scholarship of teaching. The general idea making teaching more highly valued and rewarded seems to have been well received, at least by university administrators. However, the process of defining and operationalizing the scholarship of teaching has often proved to be a challenging task. Hutchings and Shulman (1999) note a "kind of crankiness" among those who are frustrated by the ambiguities of the term. Bover's vision left us without a sharp distinction between excellent teaching and the scholarship of teaching. I believe that this lack of a clear definition of the scholarship of teaching has been a major barrier to restructuring the academy to make teaching a more highly valued activity. Other sociologists appear to agree.

In July 2000, sociologists met at the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Sociology<sup>2</sup> conference at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. The American Sociological Association, the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, and James Madison University supported the invited conference. Participants debated how to conceptualize the scholarship of teaching and learning, and 42 of the 46 participants responded to a questionnaire that asked them to "indicate how central each of the following elements is to *your* conceptualization of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning." Respondents used a 5-point scale to evaluate 16 items that could be related to the conceptualization of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. They were also asked to identify the two items most central to their conceptualization. There was a clear clustering of

agreement. Fifteen people ranked "peer review" and "related to student learning" as the central elements of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Another ten chose "connected to previous literature/scholarship." These sociologists collectively defined the scholarship of teaching and learning as work that is peer reviewed, related to student learning, and connected to previous literature/scholarship. This definition of the scholarship of teaching is remarkably close to the definition supplied by the Carnegie Academy for the Advancement of Teaching. On the president's page, Shulman (2000) says: "For an activity to be designated as scholarship, it should manifest at least three characteristics: it should be public, susceptible to critical review and evaluation, and accessible for exchange and use by other members of one's scholarly community."

# Scholarship of Teaching as the Juncture of Teaching and Other Scholarships

At the 2000 Scholarship of Teaching and Learning conference, Ted Wagenaar (2000) spoke against conceptualizing the scholarship of teaching and learning as a separate scholarship. Instead, he located Scholarship of Teaching and Learning as the intersection of the scholarship of application, integration, and discovery. I also stressed the overlaps between Scholarship of Teaching and Learning and the other scholarships in the version of this paper presented as the Southern Sociological Society's 2000 presidential address (April, New Orleans, Louisiana). The president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advance of Teaching, Lee Shulman (Hutchings & Shulman 1999:15) agrees: Scholarship of Teaching and Learning "is a special case of the scholarship of application, and engagement and frequently entails the discovery of new findings and principles." Hutchings and Shulman argue that Scholarship of Teaching and Learning often creates new meanings through its ability and practice of integrating across other forms of inquiry. Scholarship of Teaching and Learning provides us with a tool with which we can negotiate between theory and practice. Rather than seeing the scholarship of teaching as a separate entity, we should see Scholarship of Teaching and Learning as an *example* of the scholarships of integration, application, and discovery when applied to teaching.

To be an effective teacher, one must integrate the sociological literature with appropriate teaching techniques. For example, if we were teaching the causes of inequality, a helpful technique might be to have students do an in-class activity where they assume a society with no inequality and ask them to come up with techniques to create inequality (Joyner 1999). Through this type of exercise, which illustrates the overlap between the scholarship of integration and teaching, students would be far more likely to internalize the causes of inequality than if we simply listed the causes on the board. As an instructor, our first job would be to understand the inequality literature well enough to know how various types of inequality overlap and reinforce each other. That is, we need to integrate the sociological literature.

Our second job would be to understand the pedagogical literature well enough to know what types of teaching activities work best for controversial topics. That is, we should integrate the teaching literature with the sociological literature. We could argue that an example of the scholarship of teaching is the integration of disciplinary literature and the pedagogical literature, but until and unless it is documented and available for peer review, it is not yet scholarship. Billson (1986) applied the literature on small groups to the classroom, using our knowledge of how small groups work to understand and propose effective teaching strategies. The scholarly literature and teaching are integrated in a distinctly sociological style. Billson's work also fits the requirements of both the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning conference participants and the Carnegie Academy's definitions of the scholarship of teaching and learning: it is embedded within the literature, public, peer reviewed, and relevant to student learning.

The teaching technique called service learning well illustrates the overlap between teaching and application. Students generally work in the community to help solve a social problem and/or provide service. Through their work in the community, they both apply their knowledge and reinforce their sociological understandings. During the fall 1999 semester, students in my service learning section of the "Sociology of Families and Work" served with an immigrant relocation agency. While teaching English to a mother and her children, one of my students observed incidents of child abuse. She understood that being isolated in a small apartment for 12 hours a day with two children while her husband worked created an enormous strain for the wife/mother. She observed firsthand the intimate relationship between family and work life. She also understood the cultural context that coming from Kosova might mean that the family had been somewhat desensitized to violence. She proposed having the Kosova mother spend time interacting with a volunteer mother with her own young children, so that the Kosova mother could see more positive discipline techniques. My student applied her sociological knowledge to the social problem she witnessed. She reinforced her understanding of the sociological perspectives she was taught. As a teacher, I provided a rich learning context and helped my student analyze the interaction. She developed her own solution to problem: decrease isolation and provide positive role modeling. This is an example of intersection of teaching and application, but it is not yet an example of scholarship. For our work together to become scholarship, we must frame the experience within the child abuse literature and show how the solution came from the literature. This work would have to be presented in some form to make it public and available for review.

The scholarship of discovery applied to teaching and learning is perhaps the most familiar to us. If we research an issue of teaching, we are engaging in the scholarship of discovery just as when we research any other issue. For example, we

might hypothesize and test the hypothesis that the gender of a professor would affect student's definition of competent professors. What makes research on teaching an example of the scholarship of teaching and learning is not the activity itself but rather what is done with the activity. Using either Hutchings and Shulman (1999) or the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning conference definition, this inquiry is not yet scholarship. Scholarship of Teaching and Learning does not occur unless it is documented and available for peer scrutiny.

# The Products of Scholarship

The necessary requirement that the scholarship of teaching be made public creates an ironic dilemma. Academics often think first (and only) of making scholarship public and available for peer review through refereed journal articles. However, limiting the scholarship of teaching to refereed journal articles is reductionist and perhaps even counterproductive. If the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning is operationalized *only* as publishing in journals, we have simply begun to emphasize another research area. By narrowly defining the scholarship of teaching as *only* refereed publications, we do our students, our discipline, and ourselves an extreme disservice. We will have missed the opportunity to extract the maximum intellectual and social benefits from work that the large majority of us spend our time doing. Teaching as art, craft, and scholarship will continue to be devalued. We will not have acknowledged the intellectual value of the process of teaching and the importance of student learning. The academy will not be transformed. The status quo will prevail.

Limiting Scholarship of Teaching and Learning to refereed publication will assure that Scholarship of Teaching and Learning will have little or no impact. It might provide a few sociologists with a new specialty area, but it will have little impact on the practice of teaching. How many students will benefit from having a few more academics make teaching a research area? Many excellent teaching sociologists will never publish a refereed journal article about teaching, and there is no reason they should. At the beginning of the 2000 Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Conference discussed earlier, several participants defined Scholarship of Teaching and Learning solely in the limiting terms of refereed journal articles. By the end of the conference, even the most ardent defenders of that position had changed their minds. Of the sixteen questionnaire items, not a single person chose "made public via publication" as one of their two central elements defining Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

If we do not rely exclusively on publications to make Scholarship of Teaching and Learning public, what do we do? In a report of an ASA task force,<sup>3</sup> "Recognizing and Rewarding the Professional and Scholarly Work of Sociologists," (Howery 1998:11), our colleagues cited seven "core elements" of scholarship that we can

use as criteria to judge teaching as scholarship: "reveals an up-to-date knowledge base; shows an appropriateness and effectiveness of content and method; has demonstrable scope, importance, and impact; is innovative and creative, and pushes the scholarly base of knowledge along; can be replicated or elaborated; can be documented and can be peer reviewed." We can use these criteria to evaluate the products of teaching, broadly conceptualized. Outcomes might include curriculum development, grants, establishment of programs, web pages, evaluations of teaching practices, materials, theories; instructional techniques, student evaluation tools, media products, software, course materials, simulations, role playing exercises, etc. Edgerton, Hutchings and Quinlan (1991) suggest dozens of products of teaching that one might assemble in a portfolio for peer review. These make the products public; they must be documented in some way. They could be included in a teaching portfolio, published in a collection of teaching materials, put on the World Wide Web or presented in another public forum.

# Implications of the Scholarship of Teaching for Sociology

The conceptualization and measurement of the scholarship of teaching and learning has important implications for students, teachers, and the discipline. Teaching must be recognized as scholarship to be valued in the academy and in sociology. If it is not, we will miss the opportunity for sociology and sociologists to make the impact on society of which we are capable. Sociology has important implications for individual lives and citizenship in the larger world. The following are examples of our potential impact and the implication of valuing teaching for sociologists themselves (see Atkinson 2000a).

#### Addressing Social Problems

We live in an intensely individualistic culture that creates major barriers to solving social problems. If we could teach the millions of students in our classrooms an alternative vision by instilling a sociological imagination, we would provide the scaffolding for more *effectively addressing social ills*. Imagine the potential impact of a middle class that truly understood social structure! Perhaps a sociologically educated population would not hold poor children individually responsible for their low scores on standardized tests. Because social structural issues must be addressed rather than blaming individuals, a sociologically educated population would use a more effective approach to social problems. We are far more likely to influence the middle class of the future than the policy makers of today. Our students represent our discipline's promise for influencing social change.

#### AVENUE OF SOCIAL MOBILITY

While higher education is an imperfect avenue of social mobility, it is one of the few available avenues for people of color and members of the working class. We can be real scholars in our classrooms and discover techniques of teaching that make skills and knowledge more accessible to those who have been denied such tools. If we only teach as we have been taught, if we simply credential those who come to us with past glowing credentials, we perpetuate the status quo and systems of inequality. We can teach more effectively and contribute to social justice.

#### IOB SATISFACTION

If we truly teach as scholars, our *job satisfaction* will increase. Self worth and sense of efficacy is strongly related to what we do for a living. We are what we do, and teaching is a large part of what most of us do. We gain satisfaction from doing things well. By teaching well we reward our students and ourselves. (See Aldrich 1997) Currently we are being robbed of potential job satisfaction by the structures and strictures under which we work. Most of us were not trained to teach. Semester after semester we face groups of students without the requisite skills to teach effectively. Under the current system of valuing only traditional research, if we spend our time working on our teaching skills, we are in effect punished because we have less time to devote to traditional research. Given a system that does not reward the work we must do, we are not given the opportunity to teach well. This is a structural not an individual issue.

# Barriers to Acceptance

Regardless of the merits of these arguments, strong barriers remain to the acceptance of the scholarship of teaching as an important mission for all institutions, including research-intensive universities. One of the most formidable is the need for and objections to peer review. Chism (1999) discusses several objections to peer review, including possible threats to academic freedom and concerns about validity and reliability. The most frequently expressed concerns are the considerable amount of time that peer review of teaching requires and the extreme time pressure faculty are already facing. Few would deny the validity of the time crunch that faculty confront and the fear of losing time for traditional research. These are legitimate concerns that must be addressed.

We would have more time if we place more emphasis on quality rather than quantity in our scholarship of discovery. Former Stanford University President Donald Kennedy rightly criticizes the "overproduction of routine scholarship" (Howery 1998). Modifying our endless counting rituals of lines on vita with broader, more thoughtful and creative considerations of our work has many

advantages. We could ease the recycling of the same ideas into multiple outlets to meet production quotas. We also need to consider the cost of *not* reevaluating the reward structure of the academy by recognizing teaching. The socioeconomic and human costs of inadequate instruction of millions of students cannot be overestimated (Boyer Commission 1998). The cost of ignoring teaching may also put society and the academy at risk. While we are the most successful higher education system in the world, the gilt is wearing a bit thin. Critics charge that universities have broken our social contract with the country (Sullivan 1999). We are suspected of abandoning our central mission — to educate. With each tuition increase comes suspicion that these dollars are subsidizing research and that undergraduate education is subsidizing graduate education. Accountability for educating students is increasing (Levine 1999).

The barrier to the acceptance of the scholarship of teaching and learning that I believe will be the most difficult to overcome has little to do with the difficulties of peer review of teaching. Rather, the scholarship of teaching, and the proposals to reward it, challenge an existing hierarchical arrangement and status system that are firmly entrenched in the academy (Rice, 1996). The faculty who do traditional research are at the top of status hierarchy. No super ordinate group is willingly replaced or gladly challenged.

#### Conclusion

As demonstrated, we find ample evidence that the academy is changing in major ways. The scholarship of teaching and learning is at the center of that change. The scholarship of teaching is a concept with multiple ramifications. At the very least, it implies that teaching is a valued activity. Beyond that, however, the scholarship of teaching represents a rallying cry for major reform of the academy. The scholarship of teaching challenges the stratification system within higher education. We are engaged in "battles over institutional values, rewards and behavior" (Lazerson, Wagener & Schumanis 2000). Ultimately, the scholarship of teaching and learning is a much larger enterprise, a movement that can transform the nature of American society toward our ideals of equality and justice.

#### Notes

1. The term scholarship of teaching seems to be in transition with many beginning to use the term 'scholarship of teaching and learning." Adding "learning" to the phrase represents an emphasis on student learning as well as teaching. The scholarship of teaching stresses inputs, the scholarship of teaching and learning adds an emphasis on student learning, the outputs of teaching. In current practice, the two terms are often used interchangeably. I expect more refinement in the future as the terms become more widely understood.

- 2. Members of the planning committee include Marlynn May, Tom Gerschik, Carla Howery, Helen Moore, Greg Weiss and Maxine Atkinson.
- 3. The report was presented to ASA Council in January of 1998 but was not supported. Therefore, it is not an official report of the American Association of Sociology. Howery chaired the task force and other members include William Pooler, Jeffrey Chin, Theodore Wagenaar, Ernestine Thompson, Robert Davis, Eleanor Vander Haegen, and Paul Campbell.

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