

Module 4 - A teacher's perspective on SoTL

Scholarly teaching and the scholarship of teaching: SoTL evaluation

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So I decided to engage with a scholarly approach to teaching and learning for a few main reasons. Really the biggest is that I really value high quality teaching and learning for my students and ultimately that results in them having better outcomes as graduates, being more skilled professionals and actually really engaging in incorporating the knowledge that they're learning. I also wanted to make sure that the activities that I was doing were actually effective - not just well intentioned but achieving what I'm trying to achieve with the students learning and teaching.

So as an example as part of a national teaching team to further increase active engagement within tutorial classes rather than decreasing the expectations of the students' workload and participation we actually changed that a little bit and increased our expectations for the quality and the amount of work that the students were contributing to their class. So using an inquiry based learning pedagogy we have the students researching, learning issues throughout the week before the next week's class and actually coming and delivering a formal presentation with slides, presentation notes and receiving regular feedback on that as a way of engaging them with the weekly content, but also actually have the result of really improving their engagement. They enjoyed the classes more, they found them interesting and they actually seem to really be absorbing the content that we were discussing.

In part, related to this activity as well as some others, has resulted in the National teaching team receiving a learning and teaching award in recognition for the quality of the teaching occurring within these activities. One of the other strategies that I've used to improve my learning and teaching has been participation in peer observation and review of teaching, as well as that self-reflection in order to be able to improve the quality of activities and looking at some things and strategies to improve large group lectures and getting that more active involvement and involvement from the students and trying to target not just the auditory and the visual learners but also the kinaesthetic and tactile learners within that large group space.

The impact of incorporating this scholarship of teaching and learning within my practice ultimately has supported the engagement with colleagues from different locations, other disciplines, but also improves my sense of personal satisfaction with the quality of teaching and I'm delivering. It provides opportunities for formal recognition of that teaching and also lays a foundation for continued progress within the academic community.



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