THE ROLE OF MESO-LEVEL DIALOGUE IN FACILITATING SOTL

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Levels of Engagement

The micro level

The reflective practitioner, a potential change agent. Broadly equivalent to Gibbs' ‘individual teachers’.

The meso level

The social processes at a departmental or sub-departmental and workgroup level. Particularly essential for diffusion of innovations and cultural changes. Trowler et al state that the meso level is where ‘students and lecturers engage together in teaching and learning practices’ and where ‘changes actually take place’ (Trowler et al. 2005, p.435).

The macro level

The institution, conceived of as a learning organisation in which change 'stems from alterations in organisational routines, practices and values' (Trowler et al. 2005, p. 427).

The Meso-level
Source:
https://www.ijic.org/articles/10.5334/ijic.1596/print/
Scholarly Teaching vs Scholarship of T & L

Hutchings and Shulman (1999)

In a scholarship of teaching “faculty frame and systematically investigate questions related to student learning – the conditions under which it occurs, what it looks like, how to deepen it, and so forth – and do so with an eye not only to improving their own classroom but to advancing practice beyond it.”

Sources:
Richlin, L (2001). Scholarly teaching and the scholarship of teaching
Exemplars of Scholarly Teaching vs Scholarship of T and L

Evidence could include: papers; on-campus and off-campus presentations; on-campus and off-campus publications; mentoring colleagues; faculty development; teaching portfolios; course syllabi that reflect discipline, pedagogy, and innovations in teaching; and analyses of assignments, and exams demonstrating improved learning.

(Martin, L (2007). Defining the Scholarship of Teaching versus Scholarly Teaching, p.3)

Source:
Lynne Martin, Defining the Scholarship of Teaching versus Scholarly Teaching, Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, STLHE, Spring 2007
Exemplars of Scholarly Teaching vs Scholarship of T and L

Exemplars mentioned yesterday for SoTL:

- Publications (local, regional, national, international)
- Workshops, presentations at professional events
- Course materials, cases, problems
- Innovative curricula, MOOCs, SPOCs
- Novel pedagogic models, eg student empowerment, assessment and feedback practices
- Learning circles, CoPs, forums
- Briefings, bulletins, newsletters, reports
- Tools, resources, ideas banks, toolkits, teaching and learning commons
- Apps, applets, online resources, animations, simulations, games, virtual reality, haptics, adaptive technology
The HEA and the UKPSF: drivers for dialogue

- Meeting staff development needs
- Coaching and mentoring
- Providing support throughout one’s career
- Offering professional recognition
- UKPSF: a developmental tool
UK Professional Standards Framework
dimensions of practice

Professional Values

V1  Respect individual learners and diverse learning communities
V2  Promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for learners
V3  Use evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development
V4  Acknowledge the wider context in which higher education operates recognising the implications for professional practice
## Levels of Fellowship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>Typical Staff</th>
<th>HEA Recognition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Early career researchers GTA Staff supporting learning Prof. Services staff with limited teaching</td>
<td>Associate Fellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Early career academics Support staff with substantive T&amp;L responsibilities</td>
<td>Fellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Experienced staff demonstrating impact and influence Subject mentors</td>
<td>Senior Fellow</td>
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Associate Fellow, Fellow, Senior Fellow
Demonstrates a broad understanding of effective approaches to teaching and learning support as key contributions to high quality student learning. Individuals should be able to provide evidence of:

I. Successful engagement across all five Areas of Activity

II. Appropriate knowledge and understanding across all aspects of Core Knowledge

III. A commitment to all the Professional Values

IV. Successful engagement in appropriate teaching practices related to the Areas of Activity

V. Successful incorporation of subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship within the above activities, as part of an integrated approach to academic practice

VI. Successful engagement in continuing professional development in relation to teaching, learning, assessment and, where appropriate, related professional practices

Fellow vs Senior Fellow

Scholarly Teaching + Professional Development
Descriptive 3

Demonstrates a thorough understanding of effective approaches to teaching and learning support as a key contribution to high quality student learning. Individuals should be able to provide evidence of:

I. Successful engagement across all five Areas of Activity
II. Appropriate knowledge and understanding across all aspects of Core Knowledge
III. A commitment to all the Professional Values
IV. Successful engagement in appropriate teaching practices related to the Areas of Activity

V. Successful incorporation of subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship within the above activities, as part of an integrated approach to academic practice
VI. Successful engagement in continuing professional development in relation to teaching, learning, assessment, scholarship and, as appropriate, related academic or professional practices
VII. Successful co-ordination, support, supervision, management and/or mentoring of others (whether individuals and/or teams) in relation to teaching and learning

Scholarly Teaching + Scholarship of Teaching and Learning + Mentoring

Fellow vs Senior Fellow
The Professional Certificate in Leading Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (HKU/HEA)

- Participants are experienced academics with teaching and management responsibilities, e.g. Associate Deans (T&L), Department Heads, Programme Directors, etc.
- The Certificate provides a framework whereby participants can reflect upon and record their achievements in leading teaching and learning, not only in terms of classroom practice, but also in relation to scholarship of teaching and learning, and educational leadership through the mentoring of others.
- The Certificate prepares participants for Senior Fellowship of the HEA.
- The Certificate consists of 3, one-day modules + intensive mentoring over a six month period.
• **Module 1** introduces participants to the UKPSF and HEA Fellowship, especially at Senior Fellowship level.

• **Module 2** helps participants to reflect upon their leadership roles, particularly in relation to four key programme themes: “internationalisation”, “interdisciplinarity”, “assessment and feedback”, and “students as partners”. This reflection feeds into the first of their case studies for Senior Fellowship.

• **Module 3** helps participants to reflect upon their roles in relation to mentoring and enhancing the practices of others. This reflection feeds into their second case study for Senior Fellowship.

• The **Mentorship** period guide participants through the portfolio writing process.
What forms of coaching/mentoring did you receive when you took up duties as an associate dean, department head or programme leader (if any): 

- Trial by fire 
- Tenure requirements 
- On request 
- Minimal 
- Informal 
- None 
- Little if any 
- Sharing
An Example of Written Reflection

(Wilson Chow, Head of the Department of Professional Legal Education, HKU)

Statement of Impact

My sharing within the University has motivated colleagues (a) to think more about how best a realistic learning experience can be provided to our students and (b) to appreciate the valuable link between teaching and research. My effort in disseminating the results of the SC interviews via publication and presentations at conferences has attracted the attention of the other two law schools in Hong Kong, which are following our footsteps with my advice and assistance. Hong Kong will soon become the first jurisdiction in which all law schools have SC interviews in their professional legal education programme. A sizable database including video clips and documentation (which will continue to grow both within HKU PCLL and with additions from the other two law schools) relating to SC training workshops, students’ performances in the SC interviews,
Statement of Impact (cont’d)

and students’ evaluation enables me to conduct useful empirical analyses. Meanwhile, I have been actively collaborating with law schools on other continents with a similar SC programme to investigate to what extent gender and cultural differences may affect law students’ development and their construction of professionalism in client communication skills. Furthermore, I would like to test to what extent the assessment criteria and rubrics devised from and for the Scottish SC programme represent what clients in Hong Kong expect from a ‘communicatively competent’ lawyer. The results will help inform the direction of further enhancement of the SC programme and hence strengthen its relevance to actual practice and its sustainability, thereby maximizing realism in professional legal education offered to our students.

Followed by a list of his scholarly publications...

Sample written description

An Example of Written Reflection

(Wilson Chow, Head of the Department of Professional Legal Education, HKU)
What emerged from meso-level dialogue?

Participants were not used to talking with their opposite numbers from other disciplines.

Participants came to realise that they faced similar T&L leadership challenges.

Participants came to value third party validation of their T&L leadership activities.

Participants now engage in regular interdisciplinary dialogue through informal face to face and online means.

Participants chose to continue sharing and offering mutual support after the course came to an end.

Participants started to see links between teaching and learning in different disciplines.
Some comments from participants about the reflective process

• ‘By becoming a senior fellow, I will get more international recognition of my contribution to T&L. Most recognition we have got to date has been within the University, like teaching awards, student evaluation, etc. The second reason is, I would like to join a wider community, so that I can learn from others at the same time.’ [Respondent D]

• ‘Some of the language of the framework was not very clear to me at first sight. I wasn’t sure what exactly was being asked. But during the training course, we were guided by thinking through some examples and a lot of activities and group discussions, so I got a clearer understanding.’ [Respondent D]

• ‘This programme provided support for many new ideas. The theme of partnership with students was really thought-provoking. After the programme, I started this student partnership programme and many students have been working with me and we will continue to work together in the future.”’ [Respondent C]
Some comments from participants about the reflective process

• ‘As I am going about my day-to-day work sometimes, things come back to me. So it is a form of noticing things that maybe I haven’t noticed before that I was doing. In my day-to-day interaction with people, I might be thinking that I am doing these related to the framework, whereas previously I would just do them from my instinct.’’ [Respondent A]

• ‘I just finished the round of PRSD, a performance review on non-academic staff. I used some of the materials from this programme when I did the performance review, so I was more able to mentor them, giving comments and suggesting specific ways they can improve. So this kind of confidence and specificity partly comes from this programme.’’ [Respondent E]

• ‘It would be quite challenging to do the reflective commentary and case studies by just looking at the descriptions on paper without any guidance.’ [Respondent C]
Some comments from participants about the reflective process

• ‘Now I am being drawn into a wider department, a bigger teaching unit, the Dean has asked me to look at how I spread teaching techniques across the entire Faculty. This is going to be a big challenge. I am grateful that the programme has provided me with different perspectives to ponder over and plan my work strategically.’’ [Respondent B]

• … for example, hearing someone talking about teaching history, something I never have to teach, so hearing about his techniques, approaches and skills, I will jot down a lot of notes and try out these in my courses, where applicable.’’ [Respondent B]
Conclusion

There was unanimous agreement that writing up the Reflective Account of Practice and two case studies was challenging and yet extremely useful in helping them internalise the UKPSF and use it as a means of reflecting on what they had done in their leadership role.

During the three-day programme, the elaboration of the four HEA frameWORKs, the selective reading materials and assignments, coupled with interactive engagement among learners and between learners and programme facilitators within and outside of the classroom, were felt to have provided them with a new set of perspectives to allow them to reflect, explore and collect evidence of their scholarship and leadership of teaching and learning to support both their application for Senior Fellowship and their ongoing professional development.
Which words would you use to describe your experience on this Professional Certificate over the past three weeks?
Thank You!