

Session Resource – Excellence in Teaching: Taking and Documenting a Scholarly Approach

Workshop description

Scholarly teaching leverages research-based pedagogies in all delivery modalities (e.g. face-to-face, hybrid, online), empowering all educators to pursue excellence in their teaching within a scholarly, evidence-based framework. This workshop will introduce what it means to take and to document a scholarly approach to teaching at KSU. We will discuss several possible areas of focus for a scholarly teaching approach and how scholarly teaching is an evidence-based, iterative process; we will link to resources that support scholarly teaching; and we will use a worksheet to sketch individual plans for taking a scholarly approach to teaching in the upcoming semester. These ideas can feed into annual review, provide opportunity to revise a teaching philosophy, and generate community around scholarly teaching.

Why is it important to take a scholarly approach to your teaching?

Success increases with a scholarly approach to teaching.

Examples from Association of College and University Educators studies¹:

- Southern Mississippi - first-year student retention 3.7% higher
- Broward – achievement gaps cut in half or eliminated
- Miami Dade - stronger ratings of instruction in 14 of 15 indicators

What does taking a scholarly approach look like at KSU?

The KSU Faculty Handbook, section 3.4, states: “Scholarly refers to a cyclical process that is deliberate and intentional, systematic and planned, measured and evaluated, and revised and rethought.”²

It also provides “Examples of Scholarly Accomplishments in Teaching”, summarized as follows:

- *Use evidence-based approaches* - participate in “professional development activities such as teaching related workshops and conferences”
- *Make data driven decisions* – “plan class activities to ascertain outcome data regarding student learning”
- *Pursue continuous improvement* - “Revise courses from semester to semester” (see cycle below)
 - “Deliberate and systematic”
 - “Assesses effect of revisions on students’ learning”
 - “More revisions based on previous semester’s outcomes, if warranted”
- Applying a scholarly approach becomes *scholarship* when: “processes and outcomes are made public and subject to appropriate review.”

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What areas of emphasis might you choose to focus on for your scholarly approach?

There is a nearly infinite variety of options to choose from when selecting an area of emphasis that you might like to address with a scholarly approach to teaching. Here are some possible areas of emphasis:

1. Active learning (link: [University of Michigan summary](#))
2. Accessibility (link: [KSU accessibility resources and workshops](#))
3. Backward course design and constructive alignment (link: [KSU CETL summary](#))
4. Classroom climate and sense of belonging (Coming soon: KSU CETL Expanding the NEST)
5. Designing assignments and assessments (link: [KSU TILT resource – earn a badge](#))
6. Enhanced learning via metacognition & the learning sciences (link: [KSU CETL summary](#))
7. Feedback in the classroom (link: [KSU CETL summary](#))

Activity:

Please reflect on the areas of emphasis we just discussed. Which do you believe could have the most impact on the students you will be teaching this semester? Draft a welcome message for your students informed by our discussion of the areas of emphasis that includes the following:

- A subject line
- A salutation
- Two sentences or three sentences
- A sign-off

Pair with someone at your table. Discuss the areas of emphasis informing your messages. Offer feedback to one another on the tone or expectations the message helps establish. Does your message invite students to join a community of learners? Does it foster a sense of belonging? Does it emphasize your commitment to accessibility and effective course design? Does it prepare students for a metacognitive approach? If not, what could be revised? (Howard and Stewart, 2022).

How might your scholarly approach to teaching be assessed?

Documenting scholarly teaching translates into a cyclic pattern of refining one's teaching practice:

- Observe – how are students performing?
- Reflect – how did I go about teaching this? What is working, what is not working?
- Ask what if – what changes might I make, why, and what might the effects be?
- Learn – what does literature say about these ideas?
- Experiment – try the change and collect data on student performance
- Conclude – analyze data and decide whether to iterate or focus on something else

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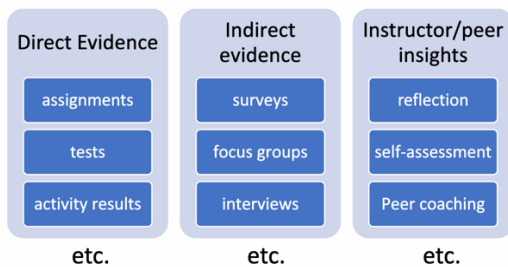
From the Faculty Handbook, Section 2.5: Assessment of Teaching Effectiveness

- Student Ratings of Teaching: Use frequency tables, not means
Also consider the qualitative data (e.g., student comments)
- Include additional measures of teaching effectiveness:

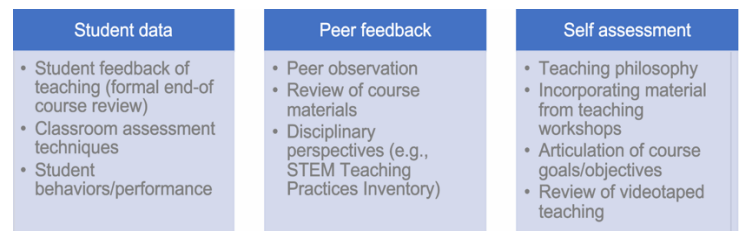
Additional Measures	Examples (<i>NOTE: more appear in the handbook</i>)
Pedagogical Skills	Sample of course materials (syllabi, activities, exams, ...) Explanations of situational context and impact on pedagogical approaches
Professionalism	Peer evaluation of classroom performance Responses to student feedback
Assessment of Student Learning	Samples of assessments (e.g., exams, rubrics) and feedback provided Samples of student work demonstrating learning
Professional Development	Seminars attended/incorporated; Presentations made;
Reflective Practice	Narrative documenting changes in teaching based on evidence; SoTL

What kinds of evidence might you collect to support your scholarly teaching approach?

Schema 1: Types of evidence³



Schema 2: Sources of evidence⁴



Schema 3: Perspectives on Evidence⁵

	One's Own Teaching	Students	Colleagues Department Institution	Discipline or Teaching in General
Commitment				
↓				
Impact				

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References

1. American Association of College and University Educators, *The ACUE Impact*, <https://acue.org/impact/efficacy-studies-report/>, accessed July 2022.
2. Howard, L. and Stewart, L. (November 16, 2022). *Rethinking how we write: Tone, rapport, and cultural responsiveness*. [Presentation]. Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network Conference, virtual.
3. Kennesaw State University, *Faculty Handbook*, <https://catalog.kennesaw.edu/content.php?catoid=63&navoid=4956>, accessed July 2022.
4. Utschig, T.T. – *Moving Faculty Forward on Their Teaching Journey: Collecting Evidence, Delivering Feedback, Setting Goals*, Invited Presentation, Symposium on Improving Undergraduate STEM Education, Savannah, GA, March 20-21, 2019.
5. Adapted from Tom Pusateri – *Documenting Teaching Effectiveness*, KSU College of Science and Math Faculty Learning Community Presentation, Kennesaw, GA, December 2017.
6. DiPietro, M., *Guidelines for Teaching Portfolios*, 2006.