

# **Between Research and Practice:**

## **Situating a scholarship of teaching and learning within the professional, intellectual and moral landscape of the Academy**

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# My personal journey to SOTL

- From philosophy and epistemology to the psychology of learning and teaching
- From the minds of teachers to the minds of doctors and the domain-specificity of their ability
- From teachers' learning-to-teach to the assessment of their competence
- From pedagogical solitude to community property
- From habits of mind to habits of the heart
- From Chicago to Michigan State to Stanford to the Carnegie Foundation to Durban
- A continuing puzzle, with great progress and new challenges

# Educational outcomes and processes to be valued, e-valuated, understood...for students and for teachers

## Habits of Mind

- Thinking analytically, reflectively, critically, creatively and also quickly, intuitively, empathically and improvisationally while participating in the “core knowledge” of community and globe.

## Habits of the Hand

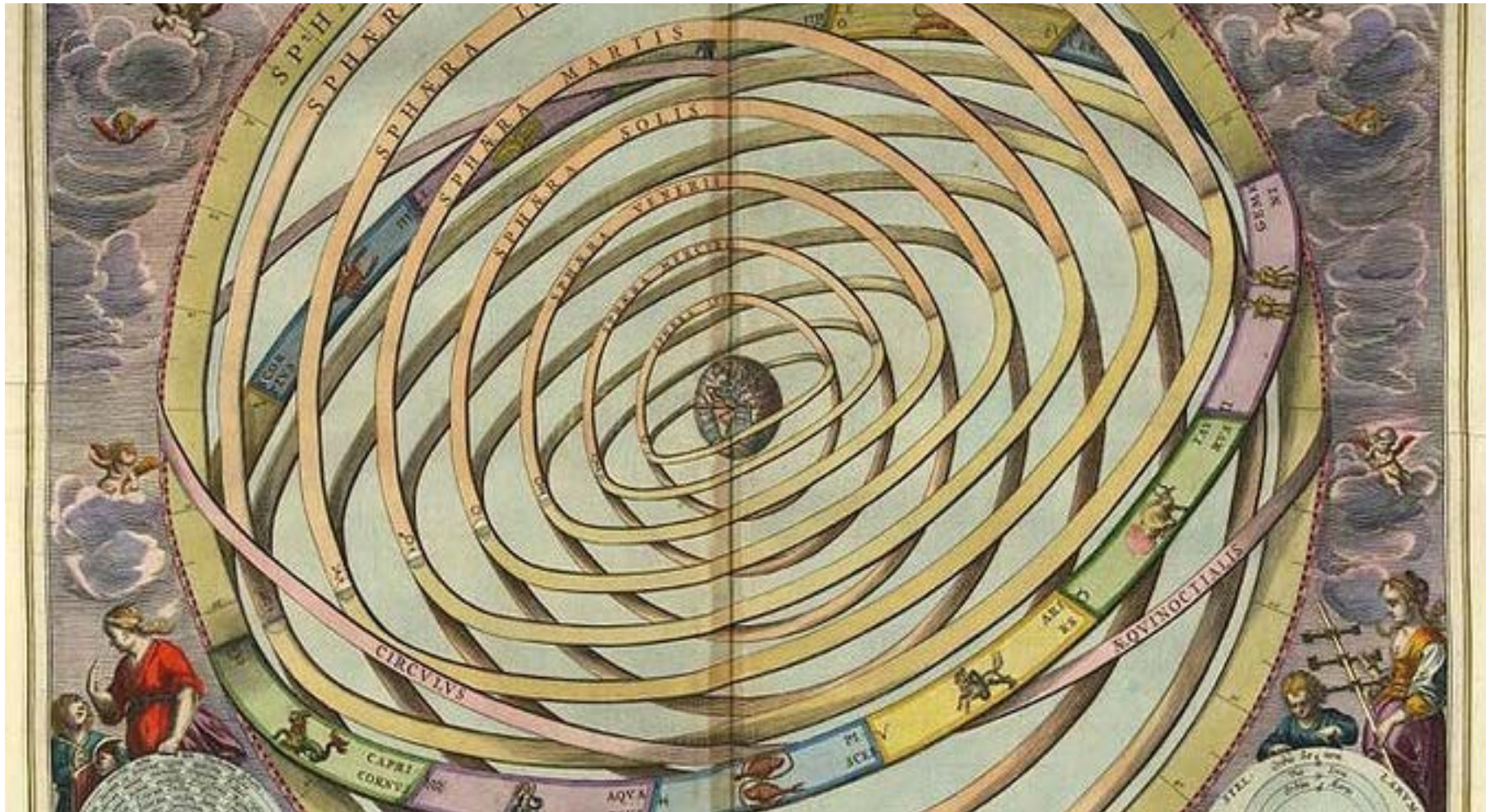
- Skilled in methods, techniques, problem-solving strategies appropriate to areas of practical application and use, as well as the creative arts, both analytically and intuitively, planfully and improvisationally, avoiding the excesses of *methodolatry*

## Habits of the Heart

- Personal and social meaning and identity formation; Develop values, commitments, dispositions, affections, passions, motivations, a sense of self, of integrity, and of community. The capacity to love and to be loved, to be moved by faith without impugning the faith (or lack thereof) of others

What does the scholarship of teaching  
and learning *sound like*?

# Cycles of Teaching and the Fugue of SOTL— one voice, many voices, new harmonies



Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ddebFi3-UO4>

What does the scholarship of teaching and learning *look like*?

What does the scholarship of teaching and learning typically look like?



What might SOTL look like?  
Like Durban at night?





## The despair of the teacher: (with apologies to Ecclesiastes)

- “Vanity of Vanities!” says the Teacher. “All is vanity! Everything is meaningless.”
- Generations come and generations go, but the education remains forever.
- The sun rises and the sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises.
- All the rivers flow into the sea, yet the sea is never full.
- There is nothing new under the sun; or have we simply failed to learn?
- No one remembers the former generations, and even those yet to come will not be remembered by those who follow them.
- What is crooked cannot be straightened; what is lacking cannot be counted.
- For with much wisdom comes much sorrow; the more knowledge, the more grief.
- What is the challenge? What ails the Academy?

# The Pedagogopathologies of Teaching and Learning

- **Amnesia** (We act, learn...and forget)
- **Fantasia** (We think we remember...but misconstrue)
- **Solitaria** (We keep it to ourselves, no community property)
- **Inertia** (Teaching “at rest” remains at rest—Ideas and practice are inert)
- **Nostalgia** (It was so much better back when I was younger.....)
- How can SOTL combat these dis—eases?

# Benefits of scholarships of teaching and learning

- For the learning, development and well-being of our students
- For the development, learning and research of teachers
- For the development, revision, and quality of programs
- For the work of the departments, schools, universities
- For re-centering the idea of research that benefits society
- For the creation of academic communities of excellence and moral responsibility and the end of isolation
  
- It takes a community of scholars

# The Sounds of SOTL

# The Course as simple pedagogical fugue: Themes, iterations, movement and harmonies

*Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pVadl4ocX0M>*

# Themes mature, grow and deepen

*Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ddbxFi3-U04>*

Each curricular theme is a design, a human construction, well documented, and profits from multiple perspectives

*Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YvHokjQ6enI>*

At times, a familiar theme profits from innovation and improvisation as we listen to the beat of our students and respond to the intuitions of our hearts

*Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9llzOzR3s>*



What is the standing of SOTL in the worlds of research? What kinds of “evidence” can grow out of practices of inquiry on teaching and learning *in situ*?

# What counts as “evidence” in our field?

- How does “evidence” provide a basis for the understanding and improvement of teaching practice?
  - Ways of seeing; wait time, PCK
  - Resisting the illusion of generalizability and deep theory as the hallmarks of “real research”; situated research
    - Clinical trials of chemotherapy; Kagan; Cronbach
- Specific studies of specific courses
  - Wineburg’s work on history teaching; method, findings, ideas; design, application, iteration
- Building landscapes of evidence
  - Points of light, lines of thought, landscapes of illumination

## Qualities and types of Evidence:

It's "evident"—public and visible; open to critical review; can be built-upon

### Evidence 1

General findings that stand as conclusions of broad studies and claim status of principles: much more rare than advertised, even in medicine and social sciences

### Evidence 2

Findings situated in well-specified settings that can be the basis for inference and application: hard to get when most published studies ignore details of research settings: aggregate into landscapes of evidence

### Evidence 3

Findings from ongoing scholarship of teaching and learning in “my context” of purposes, students, program, teachers and social/political milieu: The promise of SOTL, the component of Evidence 2 and hope of landscapes

# Evidence for Practical Pedagogical Judgment: The single study as a source of illumination



# The wisdom of the drunken fellow searching for his lost wallet



# Landscapes of Evidence

Areas of illumination to navigate toward goals



Even Cape Town can look like a  
landscape of evidence



A landscape of evidence:  
On the surface and after deeper theoretical analysis





# ***Standards for Judging our Models of Teaching and Research***

- **Truth, Honesty, Modesty and Empathy**
  - *Reason*
  - *Evidence*
  - *Openness to Being wrong*
- **Beauty and Joy**
  - *Fertility*
  - *Simplicity*
  - *Surprise*
- **Justice**
  - *Equality, Fairness, Humanity*

An *enlightened* landscape of evidence:  
always sought, never completed, the journey  
continues

