Great Ideas for Teaching and Learning Symposium  
January 2013

Integrating teaching and research... not just for superhero faculty

Researchers in Higher Education have examined the integration of teaching and learning (often referred to in the literature as the “research-teaching nexus”) for decades. Some of their work has focused on examining myths such as “teaching and research are intrinsically synergistic” or “strong researchers automatically make effective teachers”. A body of research has examined the approaches faculty bring (or would like to bring) to the integration of teaching and research.

What is the role of research? What do students do? What is the teacher role?

Within a course, one can consider two continua in the integration of teaching and research.

1. research provides content <-> research provides processes
2. students participate in research <-> students learn about research

STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN RESEARCH (take on the role of scholar)

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<tr>
<th>Research-tutored</th>
<th>Research-led</th>
<th>Research-oriented</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students engage directly with research results (e.g., by writing about or discussing it, as might happen in a seminar course)</td>
<td>Curriculum is structured around teaching content that emerges from research (current or historical)</td>
<td>Curriculum emphasises teaching students about processes of knowledge construction in the subject</td>
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STUDENTS LEARNING ABOUT RESEARCH

- EMPHASIS ON RESEARCH CONTENT (AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION & DISCOVERIES)
- EMPHASIS ON RESEARCH AS A SET OF PROCESSES AND PROBLEMS

These different possibilities allow the teacher role to vary from one of “expert” to “guide”

adapted from Healy (2005), Visser-Wigneveen (2010), Griffiths (2004)).
Pedagogy and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

- One can emphasize the role of inquiry-based learning in enabling both researchers and students to build knowledge and negotiate meaning. (Willcoxson, 2011)

- Teaching and research are integrated when they become two aspects of the same activity (i.e., learning) (Horta, 2012)
  - Inquiry-based pedagogy introduces content through a process that begins with questions or exploration. The questions and exploration are followed by guided or independent investigations that allow students to make meaning. The process does not require students to have the “basics” first, because they build knowledge of the basics as they go. The inquiry process parallels many aspects of the research process.
  - The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) is scholarly inquiry into student learning in one’s own teaching practice. Like other scholarship, it is systematic in its approach and must be shared/peer-reviewed to benefit the larger community of teaching-scholars. SoTL work can advance and enhance expertise in pedagogy so as to benefit the teaching leg of faculty workload.

Bidirectional influence

- We can consider both how research informs and enhances the teaching environment, as well as how the teaching/mentoring environment feeds positively back into research. (Willcoxson, 2011)
- New analyses suggest that faculty research activity may be associated with higher levels of teaching effectiveness as measured via student learning outcomes. (Galbraith, 2012) (This finding differs from the frequently cited Hattie and Marsh, 2002, conclusion that “teaching effectiveness and research productivity are nearly uncorrelated.”)

Integration over time

While the above ideas point to strategies that one can use at a particular moment in time, we can also think about integration over the course of a career.

- As one gains experience and insights, integration may get easier. Sometimes it takes time to find the intersections and synergies.
- One’s focus will vary over time. One might emphasize research activities to a significant extent for a period of time and then, during a different period of time one might emphasize teaching (e.g., in the development of new curricular materials, pedagogies, etc.). The trajectory may track with the tenure and promotion cycle, milestones such as completion of a book or grant project, shifts in teaching assignments, or interest in doing something new to keep life interesting.

References


