Adjunct Faculty: Backbone of the SoTL Community

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Recommended Citation
McCarron, Cathleen; Quast, Sarah; Richard, Patricia; Erickson, Robert; and Tennant, David, 'Adjunct Faculty: Backbone of the SoTL Community' (2015). SoTL Commons Conference. 23.
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Adjunct Faculty: The Backbone of the SoTL Community

SoTL Commons Conference
Savannah Georgia, March 25 – 27, 2015

Presenters:
Co-coordinators of SoTL - Cathleen McCarron & Sarah Quast
Adjunct Faculty - Robert Erickson, Patricia Richard & David Tennant

Middlesex Community College, MA
History of SoTL at Middlesex CC (MCC)

- 1998 - Carnegie Scholars established

- 2009-2012 - Formal ending of connection to Carnegie and the group continuing as SoTL

- 2012 – present – Expansion of MCC SoTL community
Structure of SoTL at Middlesex CC

- Monthly Meetings
- Winter Retreat
- *Get Inspired!* Workshop in May
- National and International presentations
Why Part-Time Faculty?
The National Scene

According to AAUP, between 1975 and 2011:
- **26% increase** in *full-time* faculty appointments
- **300% increase** in *part-time* faculty appointments

Dept of Education (2009): 75.5% of faculty have *no access* to tenure

CCSSE: As of Fall 2011, *part-time* faculty comprise 69% of instructors at two-year institutions & teach 50-66% of all course sections.
Faculty in the SoTL Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full – Time</th>
<th>Part-Time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
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**SoTL Scholars 2012-2015**
6 part-time faculty
4 full-time faculty

**Scholar Stipend:** $750 to design, develop, implement & assess SoTL project.
David Tennant – Part-Time Faculty in English
My SoTL Experience as a Part-Timer

For part-time faculty, there are limited opportunities for substantial interaction with full-time faculty or professional development. SoTL is a unique opportunity for both.

My experience as a SoTL scholar has been edifying in many ways: i.e., PD, IRB experience, inter-departmental interactions, critical feedback from both faculty and students, increase in pedagogical efficacy, institutional integration and exposure, and the stipend.
Enhancing Student Presentations

Pre- and post-presentation surveys have students identify their anxiety levels from Apprehensive (-5) to Enthusiastic (+5).

Outcomes (Fall 2014):  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Respondents</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>MEDIAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rate how you were feeling before the presentation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(35)</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How do you feel about giving a presentation now that you have done this one?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Respondents</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>MEDIAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(34)</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Explain what was most helpful to generating your presentation and/or overcoming your apprehension?

- The guidance I had through the paper outline plus the teacher[‘s] support.
- [S]ee[ing] my professor gave [an] example and his instruction is really helpful...
- Being ready made me much more confident...
Robert Erickson — Part-Time Faculty in History
What Led Me To SoTL?

- To do academic research
- To enable students to apply historical concepts to current events
- MCC involvement
SoTL has informed my professional career by:

- Giving me the tools and support to continually apply research to the classroom;
- Providing the spark for my doctoral work

**Hypothesis**: students will comprehend historical ideas better in an online format than a face-to-face format.
Patricia Richard — Part-Time Faculty in Science
The TOTaL SoTL Experience!

My experience of being a part-timer doing SoTL:
- Networking with like-minded colleagues
- Sense of community/belonging
- Sharing ideas freely and learning from others

My experience of doing a SoTL project as a part-timer:
- Closer connection with students
- Opportunity for research
- Mentorship and guidance
Perceptions of Chemistry

- Questionnaire
- Journaling
- Mini-surveys

“Yes, I love this style of teaching! If it was not for the help of my peers I would have drowned all semester. It was great to be able to have an open forum of learning. My prof made class fun and interesting which is huge in chemistry. Without that, class would have been a nightmare. Thanks for an awesome experience, the new friends I’ve made, and the fact that for the first time in life I learned chemistry!!!”
NEXT STEPS

- Formalize SoTL Scholars Mentor Program
- Develop Recruitment Plan for Part-time Faculty
- Build Conference Funding into SoTL Scholar Program
- Expand Participation in Spring *Get Inspired!* Workshop
- Develop online component to SoTL Community
Center for Community College Student Engagement (2014). *Contingent commitments: Bringing part-time faculty into focus (A special report from the Center for Community College Student Engagement)*. Austin, TX: The University of Texas at Austin, Program in Higher Education Leadership.


