

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction to Special Issue on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning **1a 1b**

Guest Editors: David D. Law and Trent W. Maurer

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Family Science **2**

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David Law

This is the introductory article for this special issue on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) in family science. First, the article presents an overview of SoTL and its intersection with family science along with definition and conceptualization of SoTL. Next, there is explanation of different models for evaluating SoTL scholarship. Third, there is description of a typology of the scholarly questions that can be asked in SoTL. After reviewing these typologies, the article focuses on reviewing SoTL specifically in family science, documenting benefits of engaging in SoTL scholarship, and describing how family scientists are in unique positions to make meaningful contributions to SoTL. The article concludes with concrete recommendations for advancing SoTL in family science.

Keywords: Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (SoTL), Family Science

The State of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Family Science **18**

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This exploratory study examines levels of support for the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) at departmental and institutional levels, the presence of SoTL within the family science field, and family science scholars' experiences with conducting SoTL research. Of the 51 family science faculty members and administrators who completed the online survey, 63% of participants indicated they had conducted SoTL research. However, departmental and institutional support varied widely. Most participants indicated uncertainty around the presence and quality of SoTL at family science-related conferences, and identified specific obstacles to conducting SoTL research. Findings underline the current state of SoTL in family science and identify new areas for future investigations. There is discussion of implications for family science faculty and administration.

Keywords: scholarship of teaching and learning, SoTL, family science

Documentation of SoTL Trends at NCFR, 2006-2015

54

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This exploratory study examines levels of support for the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) at departmental and institutional levels, the presence of SoTL within the family science field, and family science scholars' experiences with conducting SoTL research. Of the 51 family science faculty members and administrators who completed the online survey, 63% of participants indicated they had conducted SoTL research. However, departmental and institutional support varied widely. Most participants indicated uncertainty around the presence and quality of SoTL at family science-related conferences, and identified specific obstacles to conducting SoTL research. Findings underline the current state of SoTL in family science and identify new areas for future investigations. There is discussion of implications for family science faculty and administration.

Keywords: SoTL, family science

Preparing Future Child Welfare Professionals to Strengthen Couple Relations

74

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This study evaluates the potential value of integrating a family science-focused course on strengthening couple and coparenting relationships into the training of social work students and future child welfare professionals. The 15-week graduate course offered 30 MSW students an opportunity to learn and practice relationship and marriage education (RME) skills in order to teach relevant concepts to clients and to support future integration of these skills in their careers. Evaluation data showed that students demonstrated improvements in multiple domains of knowledge and self-efficacy and applied the concepts learned with clients within six months of completing the course. Implications for future trainings, research, and the scholarship of teaching and learning are shared.

Keywords: relationship education, couples, child welfare

Exploring Best Practices in Family Life Education Practicum Courses: Considering the Role of Online Learning **96**

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Research has indicated that the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning [SoTL] continues to further its integration into universities nationwide (Huber & Hutchings, 2005; O'Meara & Rice, 2005 as cited in Gurung, Ansbarg, Alexander, Lawrence, & Johnson, 2005), although some fields have been more receptive than others. Studies have explored faculty members' perceived support of SoTL at departmental and institutional levels (Gurung et al., 2008; Reinke, Muraco, & Maurer, 2016); however, inquiry pertaining to the penetration of SoTL into traditional disciplinary conferences remains scarce. The paucity of research exploring the inclusion or exclusion of SoTL sessions at professional meetings warrants further attention in an effort to advance SoTL within family science. This investigation examined historical changes in the presence of SoTL topics at The National Council on Family Relations [NCFR] annual conference from 2006-2015. Through content analyses of conference programs, researchers explored the ratio of SoTL to non-SoTL sessions, as well as the gender ratio of presenters (McKinney & Chick, 2010). Additionally, institutional Carnegie classification of presenters of SoTL sessions was recorded. Implications of findings for the growth of SoTL in family science and the broader interdisciplinary SoTL community are discussed.

Keywords: SoTL, family science

Using Family Science Concept Maps to Gain Higher Order Student Learning Outcomes **116**

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This article describes how an introductory online family science class used concept maps and the impact of the maps on higher order learning. A concept map is a graphical tool for organizing knowledge. Concept maps show relationships between concepts in a way similar to how road maps represent locations of highways and towns. Concept mapping has also been shown to increase higher order learning. This article describes the impact of concept maps on higher order learning by comparing pre- and post-student narrative summaries of internal dynamics of families. Based upon the described methodology, results showed that concept mapping did not improve higher order learning. When outliers were removed from data, results demonstrated a small but significant improvement in higher order student learning.

Keywords: Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (SoTL), Family Science, Concept Maps

Family Life Education Methodology: An Evaluation of a University Family Life Education Course

135

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There are few published evaluative studies on the educational preparation of Family Life Educators. This research used principles of good practice in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) in evaluation of an undergraduate Family Life Education (FLE) methods course that provided students applied experiences completing low-, medium-, and high-dosage FLE projects. Undergraduate students (n = 29) reported perceived educational outcomes from completing the FLE methods course. Researchers derived results from a qualitative priority analysis and included quantitative results for triangulation purposes. Students reported significant increases in their knowledge regarding FLE through course participation. They also reported learning processes related to collaboration in FLE, skills for planning and implementing FLE, and knowledge regarding low-, medium-, and high-dosage FLE. Discussion focuses on results in terms of consistency with learning objectives and instructional theory.

Keywords: Family Life Education, Qualitative Evaluation, Teaching