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Why is the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning such a hard sell?

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Abstract

Advocates have difficulty convincing colleagues Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) is a worthwhile use of time and resources. This article highlights problems impeding SoTL. First, scholarship of teaching gets used as a synonym for other activities. Second, Boyer's definition was conceptually confused. Third, SoTL is difficult to operationalize. Fourth, much discourse concerning SoTL is anti-intellectual and located in a narrow neoliberalism. Fifth, there is uncritical over-reliance on peer review as the mechanism for measuring scholarship. Each impediment makes SoTL a hard sell – particularly in research-intensive universities. Taken together, they constitute a formidable problem for SoTL advocates and contain incendiary implications for promotion candidates and committees.

Keywords:

anti-intellectualism

conceptual inadequacy

critical perspective

impediments to SoTL

marginalization

neoliberalism

vagaries of peer review

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