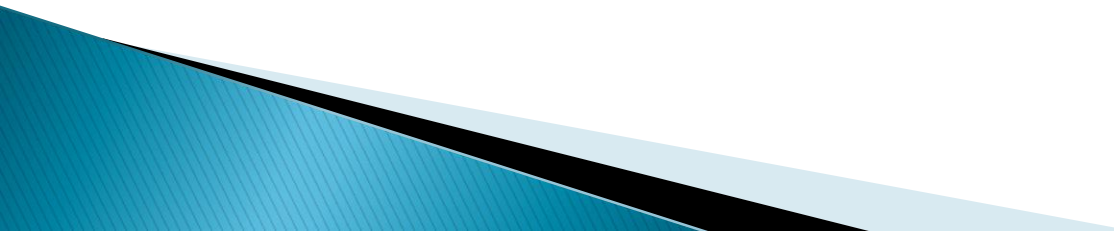


Research Ethics & The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL)

- ▶ SoTL is research involving human subjects.
 - ▶ SoTL should adhere to the principles established by the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans TCPS 2 ([click here for link](#)).
 - ▶ The following presentation, given at PCTC's Spring Teaching Day, outlines some of the key issues of conducting SoTL research.
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What is the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning?

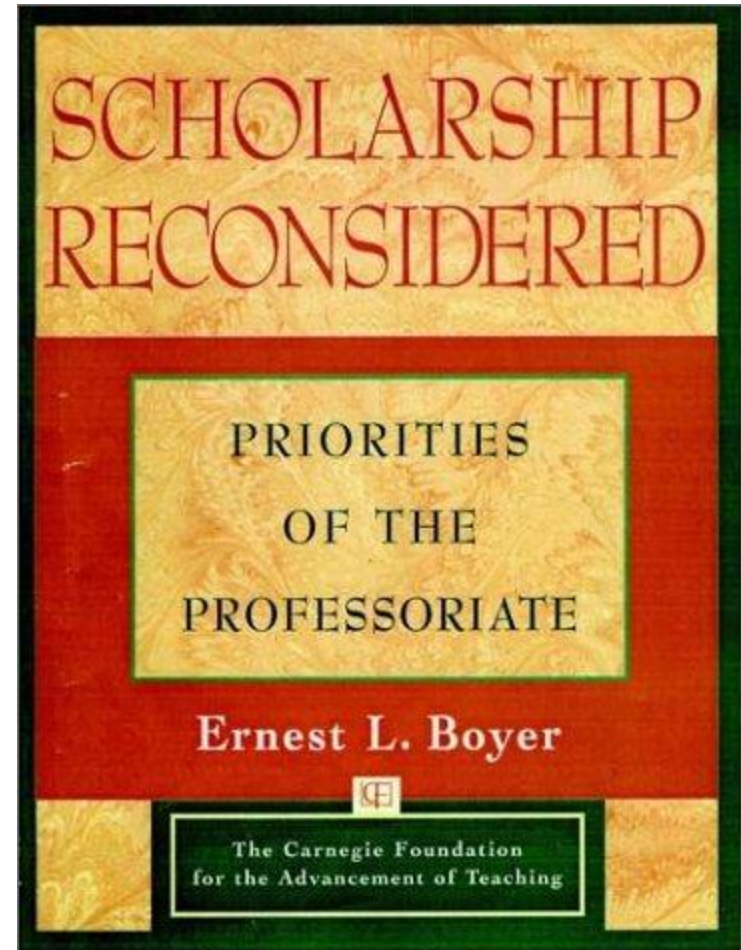
Eileen Herteis, PCTC

- 1. History and definition of SoTL
- 2. Differentiating assessment from scholarship
- 3. Major implications

The Importance of Being Ernest

Four facets of scholarship

- ▶ Discovery
- ▶ Integration
- ▶ Application/Engagement
- ▶ Teaching and Learning (SoTL)



Teaching & Learning

**Discovery/
Inquiry**

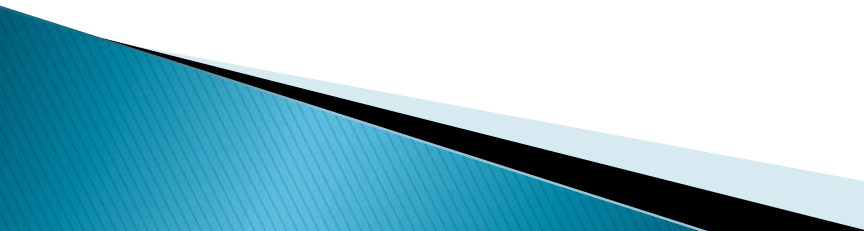
Scholarship

Engagement

Integration

The Scholarship of Teaching & Learning

According to Boyer:

- ▶ "Excellence in the classroom is all too often undervalued."
 - ▶ SoTL involves planning, assessing, and modifying one's teaching.
 - ▶ SoTL means applying to teaching the same exacting standards of evaluation that are used in research.
- 

The Impetus for SoTL

- ▶ Often starts with a particular issue in the classroom or lab:
 - teaching a large class for the first time
 - introducing a new teaching strategy
 - dealing with a problem or difficulty
- ▶ It may also start with an unexpected epiphany or realization:
 - A new assignment is surprisingly successful
 - A conference session gives you an idea

What is Scholarship

Standards for Scholarly Work

1. Clear goals
2. Adequate preparation
3. Appropriate methods
4. Significant results
5. Effective presentation
6. Reflective critique

Charles Glassick, et al.

An intelligent act is scholarly when

1. It becomes public
2. It is critically reviewed and evaluated by one's community
3. One's community begins to use, build upon, and develop it

Lee Shulman

Assessment & SoTL: Tendencies

Assessment

- ▶ For improvement or accountability
- ▶ Involves self-reflection or secondary use of institutional data (e.g., teaching evals)
- ▶ Has personal or internal applications

SoTL

- ▶ Classroom-based research
- ▶ Involves new data
- ▶ Researches students, their work or learning
- ▶ Has wide public applications:
 - Added to literature
 - Peer-reviewed

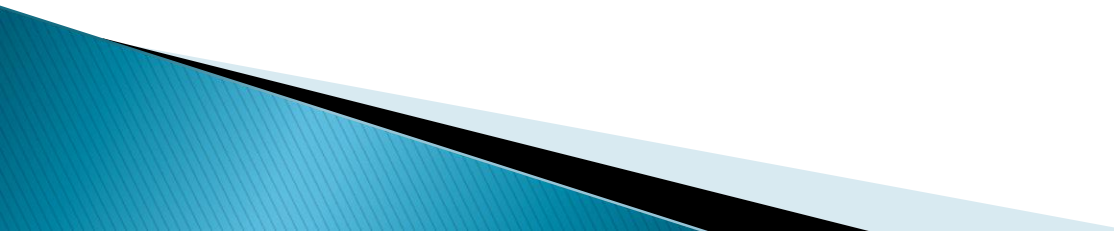
Major Implications

- ▶ SoTL requires informed consent before it can begin:
 - Students must understand the information about their participation in the study
 - They must agree explicitly to take part
 - They must understand how their privacy and anonymity are being respected
- ▶ Students should be protected from harm, e.g.:
 - Reduced learning
 - Lower grades
 - Less satisfying experience in class

Research Ethics and SoTL

» David Bruce
Office of Research
Services

Purpose and Outline

- ▶ Identify and raise awareness about key research ethics that REBs are responsible for reviewing
 - ▶ Research and Ethics – The Balance
 - ▶ Key Concepts and Issues
 - ▶ Implications for Reviewing SoTL Research
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Importance of Research and Research Ethics

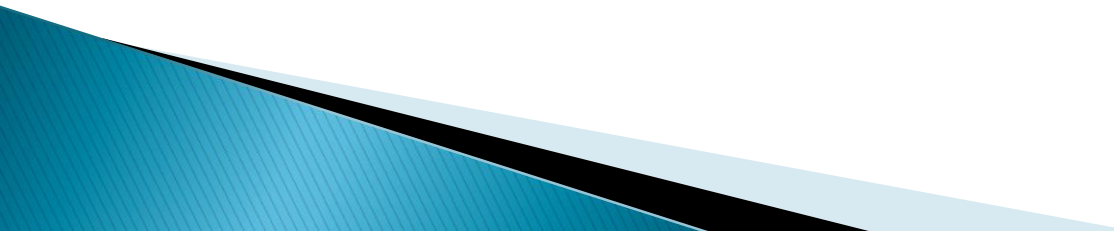
▶ Research

- Extend knowledge
- New knowledge
- Systematic inquiry
- Freedom of inquiry
- Right to disseminate

▶ Ethics

- Responsibility to meet ethical standards
- Protect research participants
- Potential risks range from the trivial to the profound

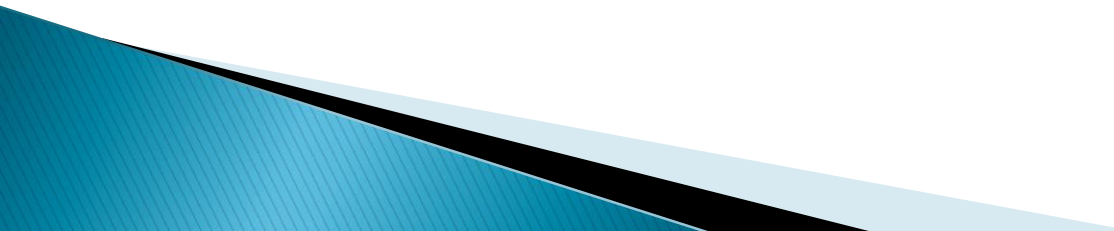
Principles

- ▶ Balance research with protection of individuals
 - Respect for persons
 - Concern for welfare
 - Justice
 - ▶ All research involving human subjects must undergo a review
 - ▶ Proportionate review
 - Degree of scrutiny based on degree of risk
- 

Exemptions

- ▶ Use of exclusively publicly available information
 - Legally accessible
 - No expectation of privacy
 - ▶ Observations of people in public place
 - Not staged by researcher
 - No photo, film, or video footage in the research results
 - No expectation of privacy
 - ▶ Secondary use of anonymous information
 - ▶ Quality assurance, quality improvement, program evaluation, performance reviews
 - ▶ Creative practice activities
- 

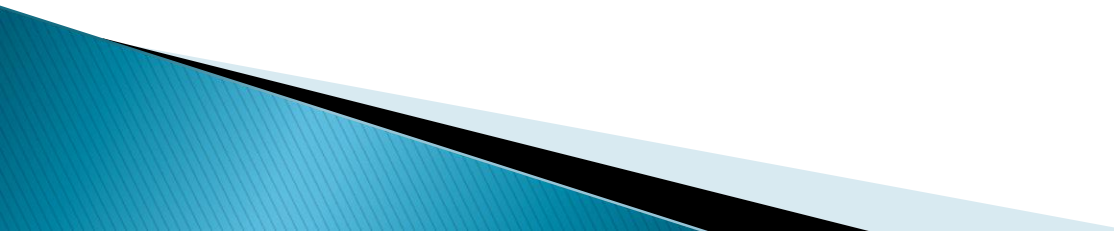
Key Concepts and Issues

- ▶ Minimal risk
 - ▶ Recruitment of participants
 - ▶ Free and informed consent
 - ▶ Anonymity
 - ▶ Privacy
 - ▶ Confidentiality
 - ▶ Protection and storage of data
 - ▶ Vulnerable populations
 - Includes students
- 

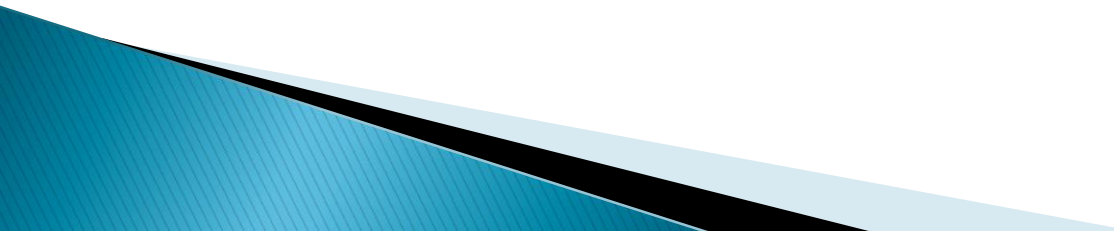
Free and informed consent

- ▶ A process that begins with the initial contact and carries through to the end of the involvement of research subjects
- ▶ Refers to the dialogue, information sharing and general process through which prospective subjects choose to participate in research involving themselves
- ▶ Usually a signed, written consent form
 - Other expressions of consent are possible and appropriate
- ▶ Voluntary, informed
- ▶ A blanket statement at the beginning of the course with an option to “opt out” is not sufficient for ethical approaches to research

Anonymity

- ▶ Ensuring that the information provided cannot be traced back to specific individuals
 - ▶ Importance of pseudonyms in some cases
 - ▶ Anonymity may not be possible, desirable, or warranted
- 

Confidentiality

- ▶ Ensuring that the information provided to the researcher is not shared with others
 - ▶ Importance of pooling data
 - ▶ How to achieve this?
 - ▶ Confidentiality may not be possible, desirable, or warranted
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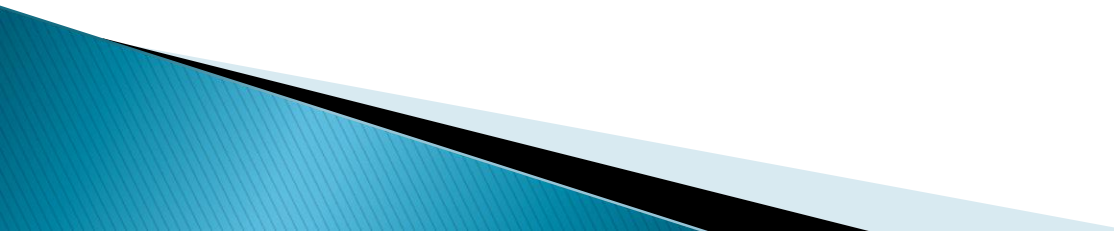
Implications for Review of SoTL

- ▶ Power differential
 - Teacher is also the researcher
- ▶ Captive population
 - Students may feel coerced or trapped
- ▶ Student burden
 - The research activity may add more work for students
- ▶ Confidentiality
 - Students need their identity protected in some way, usually
- ▶ Secondary use of academic data
 - Timing of access to course marks, evaluations
- ▶ Role of others as intermediaries in the researcher
 - Often appropriate for a research assistant or another faculty member to collect the research information in your classroom

REB Outcomes

- ▶ REB genuinely wants to support all types of research involving human subjects while adhering to its responsibilities for review
- ▶ REB should be viewed as a resource and an ally, rather than a barrier
- ▶ Be proactive in seeking guidance and assistance
 - Retroactive or post-hoc approval is usually not possible
- ▶ When in doubt, contact the REB (reb@mta.ca)

Which SoTL Activities Require REB Review?

- ▶ A definitive, black-and-white list is not possible to create or define
 - ▶ Generally speaking
 - If the students and the work they produce (assignments, tests, activities) are used as “data”, then you require REB review
 - If you are preparing critical reflections on your teaching in the classroom and using non-specific, non-identifying examples as illustrations, you do not require REB review
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Plan Ahead.....

- ▶ The REB meets twice per month from September to May, and once per month June, July, August
- ▶ Depending on the completeness of your REB application and demonstration that the activity(ies) adhere to REB principles, standards, and guidelines, it may be
 - Approved at a first meeting
 - Approved subject to minor revisions (which can then be approved by the Chair when they are completed)
 - Approved subject to major revisions (which are then reviewed and approved at the next committee meeting)
 - Not approved, with an invitation to re-submit