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Chapter 12

Fostering, Recognising and Rewarding Scholarly Teaching at University College Cork: Three Perspectives

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Introduction

This chapter describes and documents the results of efforts to establish and embed teaching and learning as a form of scholarship at University College Cork (UCC). In this section, the authors of the chapter identify their roles and the contribution each of them has made to the venture.

Áine Hyland, Vice-President of UCC from 1999 to 2006 and Professor of Education from 1993 to 2006, describes the vision that impelled her to undertake the challenge of introducing the concept and practice of the scholarship of teaching and learning to her colleagues. She describes the context in which the vision originated; the political challenges she faced in introducing the various projects and initiatives to support teaching and learning; the need to ensure coherence between the various projects and initiatives; the practical issues involved in translating vision into reality; and the ongoing vigilance required to ensure that hard-won victories were not eroded over time. She points to the bottom-up nature of the undertaking and the significance of involving recognised and respected University researcher/teachers from the start. At issue was a culture change in UCC, such that teaching and learning as a form of scholarship could become a way of life in the academic community across all disciplines, from newly recruited lecturers and researchers to experienced and long-serving professors. Although the establishment of a Teaching and Learning Centre was an element in the plan, its role would be a supportive one in the context of an already established commitment to the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Marian McCarthy has been recently seconded from her post as lecturer in the Education Department to become Academic Coordinator of the certificated courses in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education in the Centre for Teaching and Learning, Ionad Bairre (established 2006). She describes her experiences in the late 1990s when she was asked by Áine Hyland to introduce staff to and mentor them in new theories and pedagogies of teaching and learning. She asks: What do faculty need to become engaged in investigating new pedagogies? Does that change over time? Is there a process of development evident? What supports or sustains faculty in this work? What stands in their way?

Bettie Higgs describes her day-to-day work as ongoing Academic Coordinator of the overall programme to support teaching and learning, located in Ionad Bairre. She

discusses the issues involved in initiating and developing various projects to support the scholarship of teaching and learning since 2002. Because not all faculty are in a position to commit themselves to the demands of a certificated course (for example, the Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education), she describes how she must continue to meet the requirements for support from such faculty at a time of rapid change within the University. The ongoing seminars and support sessions coordinated by Bettie Higgs run in parallel with the certificated courses, requiring close collaboration and cooperation between all involved in supporting teaching and learning at UCC. Among the questions she addresses are: What does it take to sustain such an undertaking on a day-to-day basis in a university setting? What facilitates its evolution into a more permanent component of university life, especially during a period of rapid change? What are the expectations for its future?

In Chapter 5 of this book, Nona Lyons describes her part in introducing a critical element of UCC's achievements—that is, the reflective portfolio inquiry process. She also discusses some results, especially what staff say they have learned from their systematic inquiries into teaching and learning. She asks: What scaffolds the task of creating a reflective teaching portfolio? What is a reflective inquiry practice? What do faculty say they learn from the process? Does it actually change their practice? How do we know? How do they know? What is necessary to sustain these efforts?

The Vision: Áine Hyland

UCC has long been recognised as an institution where teaching is held in high regard. This is evident from the inscription on the University's coat of arms: 'Where Finbar taught let Munster learn'. It is also evident in UCC's five-year strategic development plan for 2000 to 2005, *Agenda for Excellence* (2000), which outlined the University's commitment to scholarship and to excellence in its core activities of teaching and research. The Plan emphasised the key role of teaching and learning, and stated that teaching and learning development would form an important part of UCC's overall new strategy in the development of staff. The Plan also added that:

There should be parity of esteem between teaching and discipline-based research, which should be formalised and validated by recognising effective and innovative teaching and learning practices by giving them the same status as research. Research into the teaching and learning process should itself be recognised and rewarded in the same way as all other forms of scholarship. There is a necessity to encourage and support academic staff in the scholarship and practice of effective teaching (University College Cork 2000, p. 13).

This commitment to encouraging and supporting teaching as a valid form of scholarship has gained momentum in many universities throughout the world in recent years. Such universities are concerned that the increased focus and emphasis on research in universities and institutions of higher education may have led to a devaluing of their teaching mission. As Ernest Boyer (1997) notes:

Education is a seamless web, and if we hope to have centres of excellence in research, we must have excellence in the classroom. It is the scholarship of teaching that keeps the flame of scholarship alive (p.ii).

The same sentiment was echoed by Frank Rhodes, Emeritus President of Cornell University, in his introduction to a collection of essays published in 1998 to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Princeton University. Rhodes (1998) writes:

We need our best scholars to be our teachers, and we need them to give the same creative energy to teaching as they give to scholarship. We need to identify, support, and reward those who teach superbly. There is no antithesis between teaching and research. Great teaching can, in fact, be a form of synthesis and scholarship (p.8)

In Ireland, the centrality of teaching in the university's mission was also adverted to by Malcolm Skilbeck in his 2001 report, *The University Challenged*, where he remarks:

New and improved ways of teaching students is one of the challenges facing higher education staff. The status and prestige of research notwithstanding, according to the Carnegie Commission's international survey of the academic profession, teaching students emerged very strongly as the principal defining characteristic of the academy (p.72).

Yet, as Burton Clark (1987) noted in *The Academic Life* published by the Carnegie Foundation in 1987, universities seldom recognise and reward excellence in teaching. He pointed out that the greatest paradox of academic life in modern America is that, although most professors teach most of the time, and large proportions of them teach all the time, teaching is neither the activity most rewarded by the academic profession nor the one most valued by the system at large.

The same contradictions apply in many European universities. Appointments and promotions have traditionally been made on the basis of research standing and output. Although lip service is paid to teaching and community service—the other two pillars of an academic's life—these elements are not always seen to be of equal value in the appointments and promotions stakes. For example, academics in Ireland are not required to have any teaching qualification prior to appointment as university lecturers, and until the late 1990s, there had been only limited provision of training courses in teaching in higher education. In theory, teaching is one aspect of the promotions equation, but academics believe that those involved in assessing promotion applications have traditionally focused almost predominantly on the research record of applicants. This view was articulated in several submissions to the Review Group on the Academic Promotions Scheme in UCC in 2001. The submission of UCC's Academic Staff Association (2001) stated this view as follows:

There is a widespread perception that the application of the (promotions) criteria is skewed heavily towards research publications and the generation of research income. This perception, whether well-founded or not, sends out a very confusing signal to ambitious young academics. On the one hand

they are being encouraged by the President to inspire and nurture the students, particularly undergraduate students, who are the prime source of income of the University, while on the other hand, they are being advised by wiser, and perhaps more cynical older colleagues that they should concentrate their energy on those matters which are seen to relate most strongly to career enhancement (Academic Staff Association 2001, (n.p.).

The tension between teaching and research that developed in the university sector in the 20th century became more marked as more and more funding became available for research from private and public sources. Since the Second World War, there appeared to be a growing belief that a university could excel either in research or in teaching but not in both. And since research was elevated to a position of superiority in the hierarchy of values within the university sector, the more prestigious universities were increasingly described as research universities, suggesting that in a university, teaching was less important than research.

The publication of Boyer's seminal book *Scholarship Reconsidered* in 1990 might well be considered a watershed in the history of higher education. This book offered a new paradigm for recognising the full range of scholarly activity within universities. Boyer posited a more inclusive vision of scholarship than had previously been recognised. He suggested that there are four forms of scholarships within universities: the scholarship of discovery, the scholarship of integration, the scholarship of application and the scholarship of teaching. The scholarship of discovery comes closest to what academics mean when they talk about research, although in its broader meaning as suggested by Boyer, it also includes creative work in literary, visual and performing arts. The scholarship of integration makes connections within and between the disciplines. It seeks to interpret, draw together and bring new insight to bear on original work. The scholarship of application seeks to engage the academic with the issues of the day, whether these are in the areas of arts, social sciences, law, commerce, science, medicine or engineering. Lessons learned in the application of knowledge can enrich teaching, and new intellectual understandings can arise from the very act of application. In the scholarship of application, theory and practice interact.

The scholarship of teaching provides the main link between academics and their students, especially undergraduate students, and initiates students into the best values of the university. Good teachers enthuse and engage their students. They imbue them with the excitement of learning and can instil that passion for discovery that will continue the cycle of research and teaching into the next generation. Many academics entered academic life as a result of the enthusiasm and example of a university teacher. Teaching can be one of the most rewarding aspects of the academic's life. In the classroom and in the lecture hall, an academic's research can be subjected to ongoing review and critique by students—often as fundamental and challenging as review by one's peers. For an academic, teaching can provide an ongoing forum to engage in debate and discussion about research.

This complementarity of research and teaching in higher education was referred to as follows by John Slaughter, President of Occidental College, in a speech delivered at Engineering Deans Institute in Salt Lake City, Utah, 29 March 1982: 'Research is

to teaching as sin is to confession. If you don't participate in the former, you have very little to say in the latter (quoted in Rhodes 1998, p.12). And if, as Frank Rhodes suggests, we need our best scholars to be our teachers and those who teach superbly need to be identified, supported, and rewarded, how should this be done?

At UCC, in the context of the commitment to teaching in the University's strategic plan (2000), it was clear that a scheme for recognising and rewarding teaching needed to be introduced and that a structured and coordinated approach to supporting teaching and learning needed to be put in place. UCC had prided itself on being the first university in the Republic of Ireland to set up a Teaching Development Unit in 1984; throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, this Unit pioneered innovative approaches to supporting university teaching. In the early 1990s, the impact of the Unit had begun to wane and it was not until 1999, with a new emphasis on training and development, that the issue of support for teaching was again taken seriously within the University.

In my role as academic Vice-President and a member of the Executive Management Team of the University, I decided that developing opportunities for recognising, valuing and rewarding excellence in teaching and learning would be a significant part of my role. My appointment as Chair of the Staff Enhancement and Development Committee (SEDC) of the Academic Council of the University in January 2000 provided me with an opportunity to ensure that there would be an explicit recognition of and support for teaching within UCC. As Professor of Education and Head of the Education Department since 1993, I had been interested in university teaching for many years. In 1994 I had submitted a course proposal to the Faculty of Arts in UCC for a Higher Diploma in Teaching in Higher Education. Unfortunately, this course outline was not acceptable to the Faculty at that time. I had also argued at a national level that university lecturers should be required to undertake some preparation for the teaching aspect of their work, as was increasingly the case in other countries.

The renewed interest in teaching in UCC coincided with several other relevant developments both within the University and in the broader educational community. The requirement for systematic quality review of university departments and units, in the Irish Universities Act of 1997, had led to the establishment of the Quality Promotions Unit in UCC. The Director of the Unit added her dynamism and enthusiasm to the venture to promote excellence in teaching. The timing also coincided with enhanced funding opportunities through the Higher Education Authority (the statutory body responsible for allocating state funding to higher education in Ireland) for initiatives within universities that would support teaching and learning.

Under my leadership, UCC submitted grant applications under both the HEA's Targeted Initiatives Scheme and the Training of Trainers Scheme in 2000 and in subsequent years. Among the projects for which funding was granted were a President's Awards Scheme for Excellence in Teaching and an Awards Scheme for Research on Innovative Forms of Teaching and Learning. Funding was also provided to support Teaching Portfolio Seminars in the context of a more explicit recognition of teaching in the University's promotion scheme. Grants totalling more

than €1 million were secured under both schemes for a wide variety of initiatives over the five-year period 2000/1–2005/6. These included projects on the Scholarship of Teaching, Multiple Approaches to Teaching and Learning, Peer Review of Teaching and Peer Mentoring.

In 2004, approval was given by Academic Council for the provision of certificated courses for staff at Certificate, Diploma and Masters levels in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. In their first two years, these courses were attended by over 60 staff from all faculties—Medicine and Health, Science, Law, Engineering, Commerce, Arts and Social Sciences. These included junior staff, in the early years of their university careers, and senior staff at professorial level with over 25 years of teaching experience. There are currently a further 45 staff registered for the Certificate course and 17 staff registered for the Masters course, a course that will provide a rich opportunity for research into teaching and learning across the disciplines. Working with colleagues who have already achieved at doctoral level in their own disciplines has proved a rewarding challenge, with participants and leaders learning from each other.

The approach to supporting teaching within UCC was influenced by the work of the US Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the publications of the American Association for Higher Education and the work of Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Project Zero's work on Teaching for Understanding (Stone-Wiske 1998) was particularly influential, as was Howard Gardner's (1983) research on multiple intelligences, David Perkins' (1992) work on thinking and the work of Seidel et al. (1997) on portfolio assessment.

Coincidentally, in the academic year 2000–01, Nona Lyons was a visiting scholar at UCC, where she had advised on portfolio development for the Higher Diploma in Education course. Nona had been involved in portfolio development and assessment as a faculty member in Dartmouth College in the United States, and had edited and published an important collection of articles entitled *With Portfolio in Hand: Validating the New Teacher Professionalism* (1998). UCC was fortunate that Nona was available for several years to spend time in UCC providing support and leadership for sessions on portfolio development. Between 400 and 500 staff members attended Nona's portfolio seminars between 2001 and 2006. The seminars were an opportunity for staff to share their teaching approaches and experiences. They also gave staff members the opportunity to present entries from their portfolios, which provided a catalyst for powerful conversations among staff. Staff from across all disciplines and faculties—Arts and Social Science, Commerce, Law, Science, Food Science, Engineering and Medicine—attended.

From 2000 to 2006, the following developments within the University heightened staff awareness of the significance of university teaching:

- The President's Awards for Excellence in Teaching were won every year by highly respected faculty members, most of whom were also known within the University for their research excellence.
- The awards for research on innovative forms of teaching helped to develop a scholarship of teaching approach to teaching and learning. Seminars led by

successful recipients of these awards were well attended by other staff, thus providing a mechanism to disseminate innovative teaching strategies and approaches.

- Two collections of articles written by staff members were published and widely disseminated. (Lyons et al. 2002; Hyland 2004).
- The wide-scale introduction of Quality Review (QR) of departments, with its associated self-assessment component¹, highlighted the role of teaching in the work of the University's departments.
- Student evaluation of courses, which had not been a general practice in Irish universities, was introduced as a required component of the QR exercise and undergraduate students were not slow to point out what was good and bad in the teaching they had experienced.
- The revised promotions scheme from 2002 onwards required applicants to submit a Teaching Portfolio. Many of those promoted at both the Senior Lecturer and the Associate Professor levels had won a President's Award for Excellence in Teaching or an award for research on innovative forms of teaching and this provided tangible evidence that teaching was valued in the promotions race.

By summer 2006, it was clear that the various strategies for supporting teaching and learning in UCC were showing success.

UCC's reputation as a university that valued and recognised research-led teaching began to grow nationally and internationally. UCC was asked to lead the Irish Universities' Quality Board project on Teaching and Learning in 2004. UCC was one of a network of European universities involved in 2005–06 in the European University Association (EUA) Quality Culture Network on Teaching and Learning. During the same period, Dr Bettie Higgs, Academic Coordinator of UCC's Teaching and Learning Support team and a member of the staff of the Geology Department, was chosen as a Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) scholar by the Carnegie Foundation. In summer 2006, UCC was successful in its application to join the Carnegie Foundation's CASTL Institutional Leadership programme and agreed to lead the network on Graduate Education for the next two years. This network includes Rutgers University, Michigan State University, the University of Wisconsin in Madison and Howard University. In October 2006, UCC has been successful in a bid for funding to lead an (Irish) National Academy for the Integration of Research and Teaching and Learning. A sum of €3 million (almost \$US4 million) has been provided from the Strategic Innovation Fund of the (Irish) Higher Education Authority for this National Academy.

As I reflect on my role in initiating and implementing change in the teaching and learning agenda of UCC during my period as Vice-President, I realise that the role required a combination of political acumen, academic knowledge and pragmatism. The complexities of university politics have been well documented, but it is difficult to appreciate the Machiavellianism that exists in universities unless one has experienced it.

University ‘change agents’ must be eternally vigilant—vigilant to ensure that university strategic plans continue to forefront teaching and learning; vigilant to ensure that teaching and learning remains a university priority when funding is being allocated within the university; vigilant to apply for new funding opportunities for teaching and learning at national and international levels; vigilant to ensure that any new structures that have been built within the university to support and enhance teaching and learning are not eroded or destroyed by colleagues who would prefer the old status quo to be undisturbed. Political awareness also means that when new senior managers are appointed (whether academic—for example, Deans—or non-academic—for example, Human Resources Directors or Finance Officers), they are appropriately briefed on the significance of teaching and learning and encouraged to become advocates or at least passive supporters.

At an academic level, effective and successful change agents must have academic credibility with their academic colleagues; to maintain and develop this credibility, they need to be visibly supportive of teaching. In UCC, President G.T. Wrixon continued to teach at least one undergraduate course during his term, to emphasise his commitment to teaching; as Vice-President, I taught one undergraduate and one graduate course every year as well as supervising several PhD students. One should also maintain contact with national and international research on teaching and learning, so that one is able to answer questions such as the following: What constitutes ‘best practice’? What is the evidence for this? What actions are other internationally recognised universities taking to support and reward teaching and learning?

At a pragmatic level, change agents must take every opportunity to keep teaching and learning at the forefront of the university’s mission and agenda. This might mean asking a high-profile figure to make a speech at a teaching awards ceremony; ensuring that the university President and other senior management figures visibly support teaching and learning; ensuring that excellence in teaching is given public recognition—for example, in the university’s newsletter and website and in local and national newspapers. It means ensuring that seminars and talks on teaching are prominently advertised and held in prestigious locations (for example, the university’s council boardroom); that high-quality refreshments are provided at teaching and learning events; and that celebratory events are appropriately marked.

Ultimately, it is important that we remember that our primary purpose is to improve the learning experiences of university students, undergraduate and postgraduate. In that regard, I cannot improve on words of Mary Huber and S.P. Morreale:

What matters is not just what the disciplines can do for the scholarship of teaching and learning, nor even what the scholarship of teaching and learning can give back to the disciplines in return. What matters in the end is whether, through our participation in this new trading zone, students’ understanding is deepened, their minds and characters strengthened, and their lives and communities enriched (Huber & Morreale 2002, (p. 85).

Mentoring New Pedagogies for Teaching and Learning:

Marian McCarthy

Here I discuss and reflect on my role as a mentor to staff interested in teaching and learning, first as part of an informal learning and teaching discussion group, then as facilitator of a series of short courses that focused on aspects of pedagogy, and finally as mentor of an HEA-funded course entitled 'Mentoring in a University Context'. The interactions that occur within a mentoring programme often reveal the key concerns and issues of academic staff grappling with change. Such a programme can only grow out of the needs and concerns of mentees; it cannot be imposed. Therefore, it provides a gauge of changes taking place in a university from the 'bottom up' and, in this case, illustrates one aspect of the growth of UCC towards a learning organisation. For all these reasons, it is important to document and reflect on any mentoring programme's successes and failures.

Looking Back

I have been involved in the Staff Training and Development Programme at UCC since 1995, providing induction and in-service sessions for academic staff, under the direction of Professor Áine Hyland. In the first two years, these took the form of orientation sessions for new staff and addressed their immediate needs and concerns in the area of teaching and learning. For example, I gave sessions on how to teach large groups; how to conduct a tutorial or seminar; how to take and give feedback; and how to move beyond the transmission model in the lecture theatre. My focus was primarily practical.

In the autumn of 1996, in response to requests from lecturers who wanted more focus on the strategies and theory behind the classroom techniques presented in the orientation sessions, I set up a teaching support group. This was a small, self-selecting group of interested teachers who represented a cross-section of disciplines. They came primarily from the Arts Faculty, although we did have one scientist. We met regularly over three and a half years, about three times a term on a Friday afternoon, in a seminar room in the Education Department. These sessions were informal and needs based, and focused primarily on the pedagogic and the pastoral—that is, the participants' need to talk about and share learning and teaching experiences. The sessions were enhanced by plenty of tea and sympathy. During the three years of our meetings, we built up an atmosphere of trust and security, and I am eternally grateful to that band of colleagues who taught me so much about university life and about teaching and learning. Looking back on it now, it was an extraordinary time, for our meetings were fuelled only by our interest in teaching and in collegial discussion. This was before the days of teaching as a benchmark for promotion and before the President's Awards for Excellence in Teaching (although I welcome these wholeheartedly, and it was a great source of pride to me that in the first year of the awards, three of them went to members of the group).

During our time together, I documented each session, keeping an anonymous account of the issues and concerns emerging. The main pedagogical needs that emerged were for different models of and approaches to teaching and learning. In particular, participants wanted guidance on how to:

- introduce discussion and facilitate feedback
- teach large groups interactively
- maintain student interest
- cater for student diversity in terms of disciplinary focus and cultural difference
- find out what the students know and understand
- evaluate a course.

These sessions contrasted with the orientation sessions for new staff, because there was time to build a conceptual framework and to ground hints and strategies in contemporary theories of teaching and learning. Because I was also involved with the Multiple Intelligences Curriculum and Assessment Project at this time, I drew much from the theories of Multiple Intelligences and Teaching for Understanding (TFU) and from the work of Project Zero at Harvard. Most significant at this time, and important in directing my future practice in staff development, was my focus on performances of understanding rather than on tips and activities. Thinking about teaching and learning is a habitual and gradual process, which begins with survival strategies, so I make no apology for dealing with the practical, immediate needs of staff by providing them with tips. Nevertheless, tips need appropriate educational goals if they are to be more than a first aid kit. Moreover, there is a distinction between a model of teaching and learning support based on training and one based on development; a focus on research into teaching clearly means we are dealing with the latter. Thus we now have a programme of workshops and a network of colleagues and meetings in place, so that we can move beyond the immediate survival strategies and towards the theoretical and cultural underpinnings of and assumptions about our teaching practice.

Other issues that were important to the group give a picture of the University in the late-1990s (as seen by the group, at least):

- information technology and its effect on and relationship with teaching
- the use and abuse of the Internet
- the problematic nature of some teaching spaces, particularly those allocated to large classes, and the lack of facilities and resources in certain spaces and certain subject areas
- modularisation and its effect on teaching
- the alignment of learning and assessment
- gender issues and multicultural perspectives
- the demoralising effect of an emerging bureaucracy on teaching.

We did not solve these problems, but we did give ourselves the space and time to name, discuss and share them and locate them within a broader context where possible. There was insight and we did make changes to our practice. In these respects, at least, we initiated a community of practice focused on learning and teaching. With the introduction of the Teaching Portfolio seminars, our teaching support group found a niche, a broader context and support structure.

Looking Inward

In 2001–02, as part of the Staff Training and Development programme, I provided a course of 10 sessions on Multiple Approaches to Teaching and Learning. By definition, its focus was pedagogical and drew on the theories of Multiple Intelligences and Teaching for Understanding (TFU). Given the growing interest in teaching and reflective practice emerging from the portfolio sessions, it was now possible to build on the foundations of the community of practice already established.

I encouraged participants to focus on a programme they were teaching and to develop this in a student-centred way that used the TFU model as a framework. Lecturers focused on making learning more generative; on identifying intended understanding goals (in the current climate, these foreground learning outcomes); on devising key learning performances/activities that would develop and scaffold student knowledge and understanding; and on developing ongoing assessment that would optimise feedback to students. For example, one participant was concerned with the way modularisation had caused her course to become disjointed. She took a TFU approach to it, ensuring that her goals were visible, her tasks focused on understanding and her assessment primarily formative. This gave her course a sense of cohesion and direction and integrated assessment into the module. Using this approach, other members of the group planned upcoming courses or critiqued courses they had just taught. Together we were making progress, for now the focus was more on student learning and on the pedagogical framework that would facilitate this, rather than on the lecturer's subject expertise and how it could be best transmitted.

In the academic year 2002–03, again as part of the Staff Training and Development programme, a HEA-funded course entitled 'Mentoring in a University Context' was developed. We proposed a broad brief to incorporate the various forms of mentoring in order to encourage flexibility in uptake. The course defined a mentor as 'an experienced person with whom the inductee can feel at ease and to whom he/she can speak freely about aspects of their work, including personal feelings, and who can act as an appropriate role-model' (Human Resources 2002, p. 63).

This mentoring course was conducted over seven lunchtime sessions in the Council Room, on a series of Thursdays, from November 2002 to May 2003. The first session began with an overview of the concerns of staff to date, based on the support groups I had already worked with, as described above. There were fourteen staff members present, representing a cross-section of disciplines and departments including Accountancy and Finance, Geology, Nursing, Sociology, Education, Paediatrics and Admissions. Much of the session was spent identifying the needs of the current group. Although there was a general interest in the broader pastoral and 'critical friend' aspects of mentoring, the group as a whole wished to focus on their own pedagogical needs and on supporting each other in this context. Thus, session 2 was devoted to models for conducting and observing a tutorial. The third session focused on TFU and on some excellent examples from the group on participative approaches to learning. The regular group of six to eight members then asked for input on the theoretical underpinnings of assessment, which thus defined session 4.

The next session focused on assessment as feedback and on examples that group members had found successful. Here there was a focus on peer support as colleagues planned future interventions together.

Although the sessions themselves focused on pedagogical concerns, they nevertheless provided opportunities for the development of participants' mentoring skills. Indeed, the course provided an excellent opportunity for practice-based learning, and participants were able to practice almost all aspects of mentoring. Also, a focus on reflection and self-assessment emerged, as participants began to fine-tune their individual practice.

Looking Forward

Some important themes emerge from our experience with both a community of practice in learning and teaching and with mentoring at UCC. First, it is best to work from the 'bottom up', addressing the needs of staff as defined by them: no successful mentoring programme can ignore this point.

Second, mentoring is a complex activity. It can be acted out in many ways in the various aspects of the lecturing role—that is, at different times, lecturers are called on to be teachers, learners, mentors, assessors, administrators, counsellors, tutors, demonstrators and so on. This complexity is compounded by the various traditions and practices of different departments. The course described above focused on the professional needs of lecturers/tutors, but also considered student needs because teachers were concerned to foster student learning.

Third, the definition of mentoring must be flexible. A holistic approach to mentoring is required, one that begins where the participants are and works from there. We have seen that staff members are beginning to mentor each other as they continue to meet and present and listen to each other.

The following suggestions were made for developing an advanced mentoring course by those who took the first course:

- *In the future we could study images of teaching, beginning with film representations and then progress to micro-teaching.* (This has developed into the current Peer Review Series, where faculty record their teaching and share it and review it with a group of colleagues.)
- *Work on the aspect of mentoring Teaching Assistants.* (This has now become part of a five-credit module for postgraduate students on teaching and learning.)
- *Develop our emotional intelligence with learners.* (We continue to work on the personal intelligences in the context of a focus on Multiple Intelligences theory and its implications for practice.)
- *Focus more on reflective practice and on developing a portfolio.* (Faculty taking certificated courses are now required to keep a Course Portfolio of practice.)

Looking Beyond

In Homer's *Odyssey*, Mentor is the trusted and experienced advisor to the young Telemachus, hence the derivation of the word 'mentor'. In Latin, the word comes from the past participle of the verb *monere*: to advise, or literally 'to make to think'. The idea of being a trusted and experienced advisor is a tall order, but I am the one who has learnt most from this encounter. In the context of developing a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, the idea of being 'made to think' is significant. We need to think about our teaching so that we can make it visible, share and build on practice, be accountable, have it peer reviewed, critique and advance it.

Going to Scale with Teaching and Learning at UCC: Bettie Higgs

David Perkins, researcher and co-director with Howard Gardner of Harvard's Project Zero, argues convincingly that three visionaries are needed to make a project work: a political visionary, a theoretical visionary, and someone who will make it work on the ground (Perkins 1992). At UCC, as at most universities, any potential visionaries were already juggling the demands of teaching, research, administration and service. Therefore, we gathered together a team of visionaries to carry out the three roles collaboratively.

The main political visionary was Áine Hyland. As Professor of Education, she was not only familiar with the latest research and thinking about teaching and learning; she was also deeply committed to enhancing teaching and learning at third level. She encouraged staff in her department to research current theories and to collaborate with leading institutions in the field—for example, the Harvard Graduate School of Education and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. In relation to the education of university academics, the shift from a training model to a continuous professional development model informed her vision. Her attempts to persuade some senior colleagues that development in teaching and learning was necessary in third-level institutions met with resistance, but gained enough supporters to make eventual inroads towards her goal. Dr Norma Ryan, Director of the Quality Promotion Unit, immediately saw the benefits to student learning of the proposed approach and came on board. Marian McCarthy, influenced by the Harvard Teaching for Understanding model of Howard Gardner, began investigating the applicability of this model for third-level education, in part through small-group discussion and study sessions with the new staff. In 2000 I began my own portfolio development, while studying an accredited course in teaching and learning in higher education with the Open University, UK, and was exposed to current thinking particularly in Europe and Australia.

Then in 2001 President Gerald Wrixon announced a new award for Excellence in Teaching at UCC, to be documented by a teaching portfolio. Nona Lyons, who had been working with reflective portfolios for teacher education programmes in the United States, was invited to develop a set of seminars to introduce the teaching portfolio idea to UCC. Participants were encouraged to analyse and reflect on their own teaching and their students' learning in a systematic way and to document the process and what they learned from engaging in it. Lyons cast this new programme within the conceptual framework advanced by Ernest Boyer (1990)—that is, as a

scholarly activity that would foster a new and badly needed scholarship of teaching. Lyons also consulted with staff from several Irish institutions who were similarly interested in beginning a portfolio process in support of contributing to a scholarship of teaching.

Surprisingly, this activity uncovered much research already going on across the faculties, by staff who were looking at issues of teaching and learning in their own disciplines. For my own part, I was teaching and researching in the Department of Geology, and developing a reflective teaching portfolio as part of an accredited course with the Open University in the UK. For me, the new wave of activity in UCC came at just the right time to capture my enthusiasm for this type of personal and professional development. I began to construct a vision of similar accreditation being offered 'in-house' for all UCC staff who wished to be involved.

In 2002 I was asked to coordinate the Support for Teaching and Learning Programme at UCC. Under this banner, I encouraged not only existing activities but also new courses in teaching and learning, with new in-house presenters and facilitators. This work was enthusiastically received by academic staff. I also wanted to see new forms of recognition for staff who showed outstanding dedication to the development of their own teaching. The prestigious 'rewarding excellence' schemes, although welcome, were limited to a relatively small number of award-winners. I believed we needed models of accreditation that would encourage, and facilitate, staff who wanted to engage seriously with theories and practice of teaching and learning in higher education. I pledged to raise the question 'what about accreditation?' at every possible meeting. Although all members of the team shared my sentiment, it would have been easier for all concerned to keep the status quo and simply support a programme of 'open to all' lunchtime seminars. Nevertheless our discussions gradually moved in the direction of the provision of accredited courses.

The 2002–2003 academic year finished with an international conference on the Scholarship of Teaching at UCC with over 70 representatives from Irish institutions attending. Eighteen UCC staff presented their portfolio research. A publication, *Advancing the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning through a Reflective Portfolio Process* (Lyons, Hyland & Ryan 2002) captured this work. Meanwhile, Professor Aine Hyland, with wide consultation, took on the job of writing module descriptions for a proposed Higher Diploma in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. I was concerned that this would be perceived by staff as similar to an existing Higher Diploma in Education provided for graduates who are preparing to teach in primary and secondary school. Consequently, a modular approach that could build to a Postgraduate Certificate, Diploma and Masters in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education was agreed, and submitted and accepted by UCC's Academic Board in 2003. Assessment was to be largely by portfolio. The first two modules, leading to the Postgraduate Certificate, were presented in 2004–2005 with 70 staff registered. Of these, 58 staff successfully completed the course and were awarded this first PGCTLHE; 40 continued and completed the Diploma the following year; and 18 are currently engaged in the Masters programme. The portfolio work carried out by these staff members, documenting their own teaching and student learning, has been presented in the form of papers and posters at conferences and in publications.

In September 2006, Ionad Bairre, UCC's Teaching and Learning Centre, was established to formalise the activities supporting professional development of staff in their desire to improve student learning. In 2006–07, a new cohort of 45 staff participated in the second cycle of the Certificate course, and Marian McCarthy was seconded to coordinate the accredited courses. In addition, the traditional open-for-all lunchtime seminars are continuing to attract staff, some coming for the first time. These seminars, such as 'Researching your own Teaching and Student Learning', 'Building a Reflective Teaching Portfolio', 'Peer-Review of Teaching' and 'Assessing Learning Outcomes' all support portfolio-building. I have found that the success of these sessions depends largely upon the participants themselves and their willingness to share their practice. As they seek ways to improve student learning, staff report renewed enthusiasm and excitement in their own teaching.

The participants completing accredited courses and the staff attending lunchtime sessions become our ambassadors in the departments and schools around the University. New directives from the EU and from government, such as those related to a learning outcomes approach, are implemented with the help of all of these people. In summary, five crucial developments have underpinned progress in this institution:

- UCC's mission statement concerning 'parity of esteem between teaching and discipline-based research' sent out a clear message that good teaching was to be valued.
- The establishment of the President's awards for Excellence in Teaching reinforced that message.
- The awards for Research into Innovative Forms of Teaching also reinforced the UCC mission statement, and encouraged an emerging scholarship of teaching.
- The requirement for a portfolio of teaching practice, both for awards and for promotion to senior lecturer, provided incentives.
- A Teaching and Learning 'team' from across the disciplines has been established, the members of which collaboratively carry out the roles of Perkin's three visionaries.

Conclusion

Here three perspectives illustrate one story—the complex undertaking of creating and maintaining a scholarship of teaching and learning, and the integration of teaching and learning with disciplinary research in full parity at UCC. We welcome and encourage others' stories.

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References

¹ In this context, 'self assessment' refers not to self-assessment by an individual but to self-assessment by an academic department or other unit within the university: 'A co-ordinating committee of the department/unit/academic programme course team will prepare a Self-Assessment Report. The purpose of this report is to provide a succinct, but comprehensive statement of the department's/unit's activities and, in the case of an academic department, will include an analysis of its teaching, learning and research. It will help the department/unit to identify its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOTs) and will allow it to suggest appropriate remedies where necessary' (Quality Promotion Unit 2005).