What is the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning?

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) is a reflective, intentional, and scholarly approach to understanding student learning. SoTL disrupts the solitary act of teaching by making public the challenges of effective teaching and learning. SoTL communities have emerged throughout the United States, United Kingdom, Scandinavia, Australia, and Asia.

What is the Wisconsin Teaching Fellows & Scholars (WTFS) Program?

The Wisconsin Teaching Fellows & Scholars Program is a learning community comprised of SoTL practitioners from the UW System’s 13 universities, including 11 comprehensive and two research institutions. Fellows and scholars represent diverse institutions and disciplines, and contribute to a dynamic learning community that is vibrant, challenging, and career-enhancing. WTFS participants engage in a year-long SoTL project, making public their scholarly work at UW System’s annual Spring Conference on Teaching and Learning.

UW System’s signature professional development program has its roots in the early 1980s. By 2000, the program adopted the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) as a framework for advancing teaching and learning, informed by Carnegie Scholars (such as Randy Bass) of the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL). Initially the UW System’s program focused on Fellows then subsequently expanded to include Scholars.

What is the difference between a Fellow and Scholar?

Both Fellows and Scholars engage in SoTL work. What distinguishes between the two is the professional academic experience they bring to the process. Teaching Fellows are outstanding early-career, untenured faculty with at least one year (preferably two) of teaching experience or academic instructional staff teaching in an academic program with at least two years of teaching experience. Teaching Scholars are outstanding tenured faculty and/or experienced academic instructional staff teaching in an academic program with at least five years of experience. The range of experiences informs the depth of discussions in the WTFS Program.

What is the program schedule?

WTFS 2019-20 is a year-long program with five events:

- Faculty College – May 28-May 31, 2019 – UW-Platteville Richland
- Summer Institute – June 10-14, 2019 – Madison Concourse Hotel
- Winter Institute – January 13-14, 2020 - Madison Concourse Hotel
- Final WTFS Meeting – April 15, 2020 – Memorial Union, Madison
- Spring Conference on Teaching & Learning – April 16-17, 2020 – Memorial Union, Madison
What happens in between the Summer and Winter Institutes?

You will carry out your SoTL project during the academic year of your participation. This may involve seeking IRB approval, conducting a literature review, launching your project, collecting, evaluating, and interpreting evidence of student learning, writing, preparing your poster for the Spring Conference on Teaching & Learning, and other pertinent SoTL-related activities.

Why is attendance mandatory?

The WTFS Program is designed with the assumption that meaning emerges through social interaction. Much of your learning and understanding of SoTL will emerge through your personal interaction with WTFS participants, co-directors, and guest speakers. These experiences cannot be replicated if you are absent. For these reasons, please ensure that you are available to attend the above events. The WTFS Program should have priority over other academic conferences, meetings, and family holidays.

What happens if something comes up and I cannot make a meeting?

You have institutional financial support and permission to be away from campus to engage and participate fully in the program. With that level of support, we expect you to arrange your schedule to be a full participant. That being said, unexpected life situations happen for all of us. We are willing to work with you regarding urgent absences due to a death in the family, illness, and other unforeseen emergencies.

Who will be in the program with me?

The 2019-20 WTFS cohort is comprised of faculty and instructors from among UW System's 13 institutions, including the Arts & Humanities, Social Sciences, STEM fields and Professional Studies. Recent application essays opened with intriguing statements: “My scholarly career started because I didn't get a joke.” “I never expected to teach at the college level.” “This is my dream job.” Overall – there is a positive energy and a joy of teaching flowing through WTFS applications.

Who is co-directing the WTFS Program in 2019-20?

Heather Pelzel (UW-Whitewater) joins Alison Staudinger (UW-Green Bay) as co-director of the WTFS Program. Co-directors typically serve a term of five or less years.

What is the role of Co-Directors?

Co-Directors are hired by UW System to oversee the WTFS Program. Their responsibilities are developing and facilitating the year-long SoTL learning community, including selecting readings, leading discussions, and fostering a community of practice among Fellows and Scholars. Contact Co-Directors regarding all WTFS matters, including your SoTL project, deadlines, attendance, etc. WTFS Co-Directors report to Fay Akindes, Director of Systemwide Professional and Instructional Development at UW System.
Stipend and S&E

Your institution is sponsoring your participation in the WTFS Program by providing a stipend of $4,000 by the start of the academic year, reimbursement for mileage, lodging, and per diem, and the understanding that you may be away from campus to attend WTFS events. **Your stipend payment and reimbursements are handled at your institution.** Contact your Provost’s Office, Business Office, or Department Chair for more information.

UW System provides $500 for supplies and expenses to support your WTFS SoTL work. You may use these funds to cover undergraduate research student assistance, books, software, poster printing, etc. The funds may not be used for technology, hardware, or travel for conference and meetings. The $500 is transferred to your institution by the start of the academic year. **Your institution is responsible for making your S&E funds available to you. All expenditures of these funds must be made by June 30, 2020.** Unused funds must be returned to UW System’s Office of Academic Programs & Educational Innovation no later than July 31, 2020.

Travel Logistics

Aside from Faculty College, you are responsible for making your own lodging arrangements. UW System will reserve a block of rooms at the Madison Concourse for the Summer and Winter Institutes. OPID Program Associate **Diane Waters, dwaters@uwsa.edu** will email you to let you know when and how to make your travel arrangements for WTFS events. You are responsible for reserving your room and seeking travel reimbursement from your university. You will need to file for reimbursement just as you would for conference travel. **Your institution is responsible for your reimbursements as outlined on your WTFS Budget Sheet.**

If you miss the room reservation deadline, you are not guaranteed the University rate, and your institution may not reimburse you for the difference on lodging booked at a higher rate. Similarly, if you do not honor your room reservation without cancelling, you may be charged, depending on the hotel’s policy. Refer to [UW TravelWise](#) for policies and resources.

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