Then said a teacher, speak to us of Teaching.
And he said . . .
If [the teacher] is indeed wise
he does not bid you enter the house
of his wisdom, but rather leads you
to the threshold of your own mind.

Gibran (1923, p. 56) implies that a good teacher is wise and possesses wisdom. I believe his word choice of wisdom, not knowledge, was deliberate. For a teacher can possess much knowledge but little wisdom. Such a teacher, I think, would not grasp the concept of "the scholarship of teaching." For underlying these few words is an implicit philosophy about teaching and about learning. In keeping with Gibran, I first put forth my own philosophy about these matters so that you can better understand my views about them. I then move on to discuss scholars, scholarship, and examples of pedagogy as they relate to the scholarship of teaching in nursing and health science. Finally, I offer my own definition of the scholarship of teaching.

Personal Philosophy
Good teaching is both good science and fine art. Its beginning is not with the learner but with a philosophical encounter with the self. Who am I? Who ought I to be? Who ought I to be as a teacher? The ongoing reflections that I weave regarding these questions create the tapestry and landscape of my teaching science and art. Thus, who I am greatly affects and reflects the quality and outcomes of my teaching. Who I am forces me to differentiate my teaching "what" from my teaching "how." I view my teaching "what" as that part of my expert disciplinary knowledge that I choose to share with students. I consider it neither possible nor prudent to share all I know about a subject. To do so is to aggrandize myself and to belittle and rob the student of the joy and wonder of learning. I am but a sharer of knowledge and, when necessary, a slayer of inaccurate and outdated knowledge, but never a hoarder or a prisoner of it. To know what to teach, then, is not a matter of knowledge but of wisdom. Teaching less is often far wiser than teaching more.

My teaching "how" is about transformation; that is, how I transform the knowledge I wish to share and the knowledge students wish to learn into an empowering learning environment. This transformation is critical to the scholarship of teaching and learning and includes, among other traits, creativity, critical thinking, caring, critiquing, clarity, collaboration, commitment, communication, confidence, cultivation, curiosity, community, curriculum reform, cumulative knowledge building/revisioning, and continuous life-long learning.

Within the scholarship of teaching, one cannot separate the teaching "what" from the teaching "how." The proper proportion of each is needed and is ever-changing. Each individual student is different. Each class of students is different. Each course is different. Each teacher is different. Each teacher–student encounter is different. The good teacher acknowledges and accepts these differences while, at the same time, sees commonalities—a respect for students and for self, an openness to "teachable" moments, an "intuneness" to students' learning and discovery, an "intuneness" to students' joys and anxieties, and a commitment to students' excellence. Yes, I believe
that good teaching—that which exemplifies the scholarship of teaching—is both good science and fine art.

The “Scholar” in the Scholarship of Teaching

I cannot talk about the scholarship of teaching without first talking about the “scholar” within the scholar’ship. The scholar’ship (or, metaphorically, the ship of scholars) is composed of individuals who, according to Emden (1995), possess the following traits: “intense intellectual curiosity” (p. 22); “disenchantment with prevailing systems” (p. 23); “tenacity for progress within one’s scholarly life” (p. 24); “ability to move between disciplines and their respective schools of thought” (p. 28); “holding a viewpoint” (p. 29); and “an openness to scrutiny from peers” (p. 31). Meleis, Hall, and Stevens (1998) identify some traits similar to and others different from Emden (1995). To them a scholar has the attributes of “critical thinking, a connection to practice, a commitment to the discipline’s mission, substantive mastery areas, philosophical analyses, rigorous investigations, and a social awareness of the relationship between knowledge development and impact on society” (p. 41). Glassick, Huber, and Maeroff (1997) include three qualities of a scholar that merit special consideration: “integrity, perseverance, and courage” (p. 63).

Finally, to Boyer (1990) a scholar is a person who recognizes that knowledge is acquired through “the scholarship of discovery, of integration, of application, and of teaching” (p. 25).

Based on these four viewpoints, the questions for you to ponder are these: Are all teachers scholars? Are all scholars teachers? Can persons called “not-scholars” engage in the scholarship of teaching? Can such persons engage in teaching without scholarship? Or is scholarship essential to the scholarship of teaching?

But, first, what is meant by the scholarship of teaching? For this inaugural issue of Inventario, all authors were asked to react to the Carnegie Foundation’s (1998) working definition:

The scholarship of teaching is problem posing about an issue of teaching or learning, study of the problem through methods appropriate to disciplinary epistemologies, application of results to practice, communication of results, self-reflection, and peer review. (p. 6)

Both my immediate reaction (first reading) and long-term reaction (several readings over several weeks) is that the definition “misses the boat” about the scholarship of teaching. It is a definition about research on teaching or on learning. This is not to say that such research is not crucial to pedagogy; it is. But to me the scholarship of teaching encompasses so much more. That is why I cannot separate the scholar from the scholarship. Who the teacher is reflects scholarliness or lack thereof. When a student says, “My teacher is a true scholar” [notice the differentiation from just a scholar], what is that student saying? The student is saying that the teacher’s behavior in the classroom or laboratory (apart from that teacher’s written scholarship which the student may or may not know about) reflects scholarliness. The teacher has high educational standards. The teacher questions the status quo. The teacher not only challenges students to think for themselves but also encourages them to think “out-of-the-box.” The teacher is creative. The teacher has expert command of the subject matter and is not threatened by students’ questions. The teacher is responsible for observable scholarly growth of the students. The teacher is professional, has a passion for her/his areas of expertise, and is ethical. To me, behaviors such as these are at the heart of the scholarship of teaching. In my opinion, the Carnegie Foundation’s definition primarily speaks to Boyer’s (1990) scholarship of discovery but not to his (or my) primary definition of the scholarship of teaching, although the two complement each other beautifully.

Revisioning of the Definition of the Scholarship of Teaching

Earlier in this article, I said that I believed the Carnegie Foundation had “missed the boat” in its working definition of the scholarship of teaching because of the narrowness of the definition. Having put forth both my philosophical thoughts about teaching—as applied to Nursing— I now offer my working definition of the scholarship of teaching:

The scholarship of teaching is both science and art and serves as the pathway to genuine excellence whereby those teachers who are scholars offer their knowledge, wisdom, and humanity to students through an investing and caring partnership that inspires students to be futuristic and critical thinkers, to be passionate about development and dissemination of disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge that makes a difference, to be creative and reflective and visionary, to be active and kind citizens of the professional and world communities, and to be secure in self and courageous in ethical conviction.

To many, my definition of the scholarship of teaching would be labeled “soft.” But after 30 years of teaching, I believe that, given a teacher possesses considerable knowledge in subjects taught, the rest is embodied in the teacher’s character. A teacher who is brilliant of mind but unkind in spirit does not a scholar make. Nor does he or she contribute much to my vision of the scholarship of teaching. The true scholar—the one who is privileged to be engaged in the scholarship of teaching—possesses both an excellent mind and an open heart. Such a teacher, as Gibran said, “does not bid you enter the house of his wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind” (p. 56).

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