Submitted by:
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Members:
Dominican University, Hampshire College, Holyoke Community College, Indian River State College, Indiana University—Purdue University Fort Wayne, Loyola Marymount University, Maryville University, National Center for Science and Civic Engagement (NCSCE), Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, Park University, Purdue University, Southern Connecticut State University, Thompson Rivers University, University of Central Missouri, University of Manitoba, University of Rochester, Viterbo University.

Unlike the other 12 groups, the Carnegie Affiliates are not a themed group. They are a collection of 17 very diverse institutions that have chosen to make a connection to the CASTL program within the last 3 years, a few of them as recently as one year ago. They represent a broad spectrum of higher education institutions in the United States and Canada, including community colleges, liberal arts colleges, comprehensive and research intensive universities, and one professional organization. Some campuses had well-established centers for faculty development and others were in the initial phase of establishing centers. Initially several institutions proposed some umbrella themes for the Affiliates thinking that with common theme(s) the group might function like one of the leadership theme groups. But as the institutions began to meet by email, phone, at the POD Network Conference in October 2007, and then by videoconference on 2/6/08 and 5/21/08 and 6/9/09, at ISSOTL in October 2008, and again by videoconference on 6/9/09, it became clear that networking and sharing resources, experiences, and expertise of all sorts without regards to a common theme would be the most useful approach for the Affiliates.

Shared resources included documents, surveys, websites, and advice on topics such as developing student ratings of teaching (SRT) forms; guidelines for interpreting SRT data; a link to an on-line course evaluation form for formative assessment that includes a large question bank organized by pedagogy type; creating websites with resources, information
and links to SoTL work; models for bipartite and tripartite faculty contracts where faculty are committed to two types of work (teaching and service) or three types of work (teaching, scholarship, and service); a faculty survey instrument regarding teaching and SoTL; methods for evaluating the impact of faculty development centers and workshops; how to organize a “manageable” regional symposium on SoTL; human subjects considerations for SoTL work; helping faculty get their SoTL work published; and the strategic importance of linking SoTL to other campus initiatives and to institutional mission.

The conversations and shared resources described above clearly touch all 10 areas listed in the Areas of Impact document. These conversations provide an important window into the concerns of higher education institutions and organizations as they explore the place of SoTL work in their settings.

With the CASTL program drawing to a close in 2009, the Affiliates decided that they were uniquely situated to contribute to the conversation about what attracts institutions to SoTL now and what is needed to sustain this movement that CASTL has so ably promoted for the last decade. Through a self-study survey completed in Spring 2009, the 17 Affiliates examined a number of pivotal questions: What brought these institutions to “officially” connect their work to the SoTL movement, how useful this connection has been and in what ways, what experiences or documents have been particularly influential in initiating or carrying out this work on their campuses, and what critical advice they would offer to colleagues or institutional leaders at other institutions who are beginning to engage in SoTL. Findings revealed the impact that a few faculty leaders can have in activating SoTL communities, the importance of the alignment between SoTL and institutional mission, and how well SoTL is perceived as broadening the definition of scholarship versus helping with the assessment of student learning. Although the Carnegie Affiliate institutions are relatively few in number, their survey results and other insights can inform the shared vision for the future of SoTL.

At their culminating activity on October 21, 2009, the 11 Affiliates present agreed to submit a proposal to the Transformative Dialogues journal (http://www.kwantlen.ca/TD.html) for an issue that would be dedicated to disseminating their work and presenting their perspectives on the attraction, value and future of SoTL. The proposal was submitted, and has been accepted by the editors of Transformative Dialogues for their July 2010 issue. The opening article will describe who the Affiliates
are, discuss why the question of SoTL’s future is timely, explain why the Affiliates’ voices have something to offer to the conversation about the future of SoTL institutionally, what resources they shared collaboratively, and report findings from a self-study on what inspired these institutions to “officially” connect to the SoTL movement, in what ways they found this connection useful, what has been particularly influential in initiating or carrying out SoTL work on their campuses. Based the Affiliates’ collective experience, they will offer suggestions and share lessons learned aimed at colleagues or institutional leaders who are seeking perspectives and information about institutionally engaging in SoTL, in addition to individual institutional stories. We anticipate approximately 11 articles describing the work of the individual institutions during their time as 2006-9 Carnegie Affiliates, what led to their institutional involvement, and what the results were. Each of these essays will close with a discussion of challenges each institution faces in continuing to support and advance this work. Finally, there will be a closing synthesis piece to serve as a forward looking analysis of themes and concerns described in the closing portions of each individual institution’s story that cut across institutions or differ by institutional type. This will serve as a final dissemination piece for the work and insights of the Carnegie Affiliates.