Abstract
As coordinating institution for the 2006-9 Carnegie Affiliates program, Loyola Marymount University has found that “SoTL” and “Community” each contribute to develop the other and both work together to influence campus culture regarding teaching and learning. This poster will describe the groups, events and initiatives that have emerged and supported SoTL at LMU, the outcomes that have been observed as the university explores the role of SoTL on campus and the challenges and opportunities for SoTL work at LMU in the future.

The Backdrop for SoTL at LMU
LMU, one of the 28 Jesuit colleges and university in the US, will celebrate its centennial in 2011. It transformed from all male to coed in 1973 by merging with Marymount College, bringing strong programs in the arts to the campus and enriching the institution with the faith and educational traditions of the Marymount sisters. LMU, a comprehensive institution with a single doctorate program in educational leadership, focuses on educating men and women for others. This emphasis is reflected in its faculty handbook (most recently revised in 1996), which, in describing the faculty duties and responsibilities given the most weight in tenure, promotion or merit reviews, states that “teaching and scholarship are the most important” and “service is also required.” However, while the handbook contains language that clearly acknowledges the scholarship of discovery, application and integration, there is no reference to anything remotely like the scholarship of teaching and learning.

SoTL Emerges at LMU
Although the university hosted a visit by Ernest Boyer in 1992 after the publication of his book Scholarship Reassessed to discuss the various forms of scholarship, little changed institutionally in regards to understanding or acceptance of SoTL as an emerging form of scholarship as a result of his visit. The founding of the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) in 1998, with a budget supported by endowment funding, signaled the university’s deep commitment to excellence in teaching. CTE initiated a competitive program of grants to faculty for undertaking and assessing innovations in teaching in 2000. In Spring 2005, the innovation in teaching grants were re-named Scholarship of Teaching and Learning grants to emphasize the importance of using gathering evidence from students to evaluate the effectiveness of the innovation and to more accurately reflect the intended focus of these grants.

SoTL Creating Community
Two LMU math faculty members end their year as 2003-4 Carnegie scholars by initiating a SoTL Brown Bag Group that meets twice a month in the CTE. The initial email list of members, perhaps a dozen or so, has grown to more than 75 by 2009. In Spring 2005 the SoTL Brown Bag group members organized a presentation at CTE “Fostering a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning” and arranged a two-day visit by a senior scholar from Carnegie Foundation.

The SoTL Brown Bag community provides a venue for discussing project ideas, seeking advice, and sharing news about SoTL opportunities. Participants and faculty at large were encouraged to apply to the CASTL Summer Institutes. To date there have been 8 LMU applicants and all were accepted: 2 in 2005 (Math and Physics), 1 in 2006 (Computer Science), 2 in 2007 (Math and Natural Science), 1 in 2008 (Economics) and 2 in 2009 (Communication studies and Theological studies). In 2007-8 two additional faculty (Communication Studies and Modern Languages) were named Faculty Fellows in the Service Learning for Political Engagement Program by California Campus Compact and The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. As the data indicates, SoTL scholars were initially concentrated in math and the sciences, and only recently is SoTL attracting scholars in the arts and humanities. While relatively few business faculty members have participated in the SoTL brown bag group, significantly more have been publishing pedagogical research and successfully applying for CTE’s SoTL grants.
Community Creating Impact
Since 2007, LMU’s annual SoTL Showcase Week has featured SoTL work by LMU faculty (grant recipients, SoTL brown bag group members, and others), highlighted SoTL connections to LMU’s mission and offered opportunities to explore synergies with course design and student outcomes assessment.

The LMU SoTL community has influenced and contributed to major initiatives on campus, including Life Sciences Early Awareness Program, Psychology Early Awareness Program, Core Curriculum Development, Community Based Learning, Assessment and Accreditation, and the university’s Academic Planning and Review process.

Faculty and administrators see SoTL as being a significant influence on faculty to change their teaming methods, on the culture of teaching on campus (e.g. toward increasing its visibility and importance), on approaches to and understanding of the assessment of learning outcomes. SoTL has also promoted faculty communication and cross-disciplinary work and encouraged faculty to think more deeply about student learning. SoTL is seen to have had direct and indirect effects on student learning and success.

LMU’s leadership role in the Carnegie Affiliates has given it international exposure and recognition, as it has been included in the planning group for the Carnegie Institutional Leadership Program comprised of 12 themed groups made up of over 100 institutions.

Institutional Commitment to SoTL
In Fall of 2004, LMU joins the Carnegie Affiliate program, having just missed the deadline to join Carnegie’s Campus Cluster Program, even though it was invited to join the cluster led by Georgetown: Advancing the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning as a Networked Community Practice. As an Affiliate, LMU agreed to explore the place of such work in their settings, and undertake activities that provide support and recognition for ongoing inquiry into evidence-based improvement of student learning. In Summer 2007, LMU agreed to the Carnegie Foundation request to become the coordinating institution for a new group of Affiliates who joined the 2006-9 CASTL Institutional Leadership program.

In January 2007, LMU’s Chief Academic Officer (CAO) commits institutional funding to pay page charges or subvention fees for SoTL publications. In Fall 2007, travel grants are initiated by CTE for travel directly related to improving pedagogy or to present SoTL work.

In Fall 2009, the CAO authorizes LMU’s application for registration to use the Carnegie name for an additional two years. It establishes two goals: (1) To solidify and make more visible connections between SoTL and the university’s mission: the encouragement of learning, the education of the whole person, the service of faith and the promotion of justice; and (2) To expand and clarify the understanding of what mission-related scholarship and creative works are valued and counted for tenure and promotion at LMU.

Next Steps
For the next two years the following work is planned as an extension of that begun under the Carnegie Affiliates program:
- Encourage SoTL as a way to investigate and document learning in community based learning (CBL) courses and to identify and promote approaches to CBL that are most effective in producing significant learning.
- Encourage faculty participating in course development projects (for example, PCCI) to move beyond assessment of learning outcomes to undertake a SoTL project grounded in their course.
- Make available the results of SoTL work on the seminar previously done elsewhere to any future effort to develop a freshman seminar program at LMU.
- Continue to highlight SoTL work by LMU faculty and the impact it has on teaching and learning through a 4th annual SoTL Showcase week to be held in Fall 2010.
- Work to amplify the outcomes of a roundtable discussion on the role of SoTL in the professional lives of faculty to be held October 2, 2009.
- Work to broaden the base of SoTL scholars in the arts and humanities.