Is Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered* Still Relevant: A Case Study of a College-Wide Professional Learning Community

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Abstract: As universities attempt to integrate academic research into meaningful real-world application, faculty are encouraged to improve, understand, and collaborate on instruction and scholarship. Boyer's writings on the topic in Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate attempted to engage faculty in this pursuit. One College of Education explored Boyer's model through faculty participation in a Professional Learning Community (PLC). Using a qualitative case study including a review of documents and faculty focus groups, the researchers studied how faculty were able to infuse components of Boyer's Scholarship Reconsidered in their work. Findings pointed to enhanced understanding of Boyer's writings by faculty, but did not result in increased incorporation of his ideas into practice during the PLC. The researchers concluded that improvements in the leadership, design, and application of the PLC could facilitate faculty participation in a PLC and could result in increased engagement and application of Boyer's writings in their work.
Keywords: Boyer's Scholarship Reconsidered, professional learning communities, higher education

In this article, we discuss findings from data collected in a qualitative case study on the implementation of a college-wide professional learning community (PLC) focused on: (a) uniting the faculty's philosophical commitment to the scholarships of teaching, of discovery, of integration, and of application based on Ernest Boyer's (1990) book, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* and (b) engaging faculty in professional growth activities to improve instruction, collaboration, and scholarship based on Boyer's model. Boyer's model and research on PLCs were the conceptual lenses for examining the outcomes and faculty experiences in and perceptions of the PLC.

Utilizing semi-structured interviews of faculty who participated in the PLC over a period of two academic years, as well as content analysis of faculty vitas, annual professional development plans, and annual evaluations, as well as PLC agendas and presentation materials, no clear evidence was found of increased faculty research or publications related to the Boyer model. Recommendations for improved utilization of PLCs are provided.

Context

The site of the study, a relatively young regional state university in southwest Florida, was founded on guiding principles that include an emphasis on high quality education, for which "quality teaching is demanded, recognized, and rewarded" and on service to the region by making available "its knowledge resources, services, and educational offerings at times, places, in forms and by methods that will meet the needs of all its constituents." It is common knowledge among veteran faculty that the importance of high-quality teaching at the university and of scholarship in service to the community was the result of discussions of the Boyer (1990) model early in development of the university. While teaching remains foremost in importance for all faculty, scholarship has been expected of ranked faculty and professional development has been expected of instructors. Annual professional development plans (PDPs) are agreed upon by each faculty member and their direct supervisor, which include details on teaching, scholarship/professional development, and service activities. These form the basis on which

supervisors write the Annual Professional Developments Report (APDP) for each faculty member at the end of the year.

With the addition of faculty as well as changes in university and college leadership, there was less familiarity and diminished emphasis given to Boyer's model university wide. Recent Provosts have placed more emphasis on scholarship, although quality teaching is still prioritized. Further, a new Dean who had been a founding member of the College of Education, wanted to reestablish Boyer as the philosophical underpinning for faculty teaching, scholarship, and service in the COE.

The Dean assembled a college-wide PLC to reestablish Boyer's model as the governing philosophy of the college in the minds of veteran faculty as well as to introduce Boyer's model to new faculty. Monthly sessions were scheduled, and individual faculty of the Dean's choosing were assigned responsibility for facilitating discussions around Boyer's book with a goal of increasing faculty integration of Boyer's perspective into their individual and collective work. These sessions continued for over two years, after which we were interested in learning if the Dean had been successful in her endeavor and if faculty wanted to continue with this line of professional learning.

To determine if the Dean's dual purposes of the college-wide PLC were accomplished, we integrated Boyer's four pillared model of the professoriate and the empirical literature on PLCs into our investigation. The PLC was the faculty development modality, while assimilating Boyer's Model into faculty members' pedagogical and scholarly perspectives was the objective.

Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered*

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the construct of academic scholarship in higher education was under increased scrutiny (Bok, 1990; Boyer, 1990; Delve et al., 1990; Newman, 1985; Rice, 2002). This was partly fueled by the public's view of higher education as unresponsive and unconcerned with the needs of local, national, and global communities (Hyman et al., 2001; Morrison & Wagner, 2016). Faculty, in particular, were seen as "out-of-touch and out-of-date" with issues affecting society despite having intellectual and technological resources at their disposal (Hyman et al., 2001, p. 2). Stemming from this criticism, scholars began to question how teaching and scholarship in higher education could become more responsive to the needs of their constituent communities (Fitzgerald et al., 2016). Scholars like Ernest Boyer (1990) began to argue for a new kind of engagement between faculty scholarship and teaching and societal needs.

Boyer's (1990) call for changing faculty perceptions of the relationship between scholarship and teaching and how they could be used to engage faculty with external communities and contribute to society led to his book, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. His work focused on re-defining faculty scholarship to include four elements: discovery, integration, application, and teaching (See Figure 1; Boyer, 1990; Fitzgerald et al., 2016). Boyer's intent was to change faculty roles so that "teaching and application were viewed as equal to research" (Boyer, 1990, p. 227). He also challenged the higher education community, insisting it "become a more vigorous partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic, and moral problems, and must reaffirm its historic commitment to . . . the scholarship of engagement" (Boyer, 2016, p. 15).
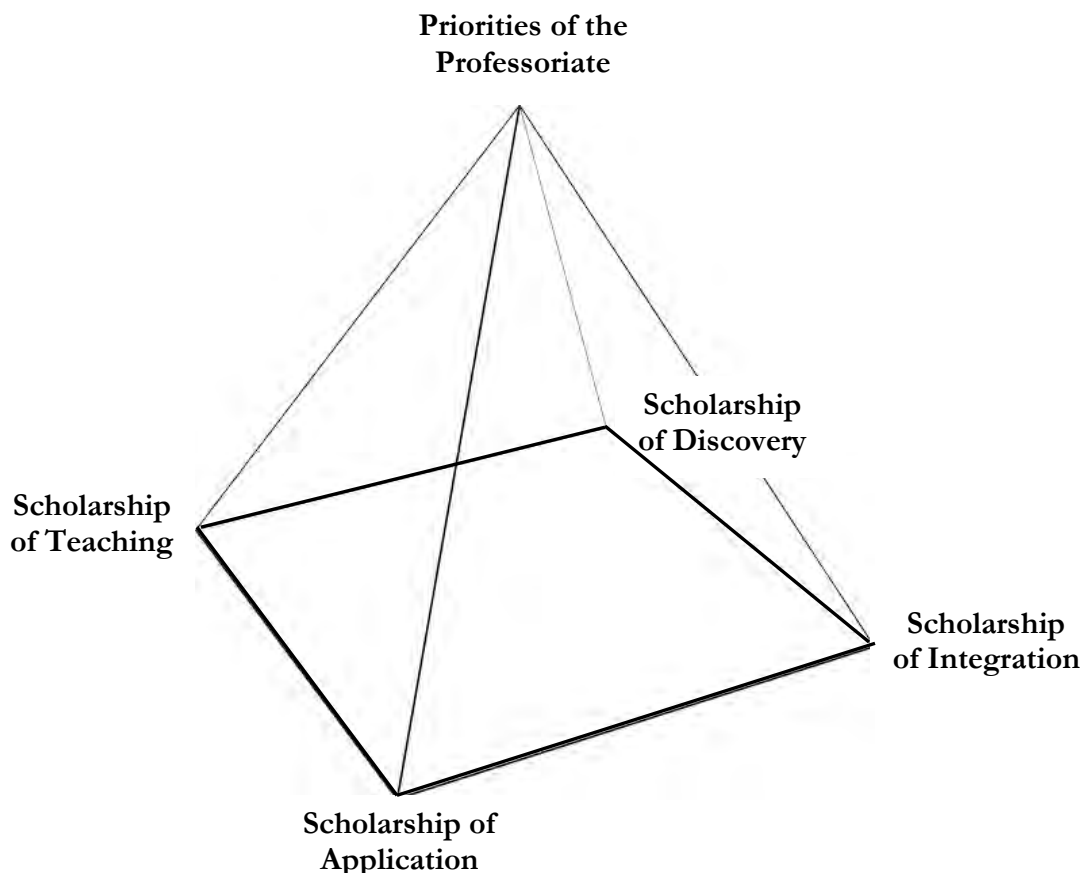
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**Priorities of the
Professoriate**

**Scholarship
of Discovery**

**Scholarship
of Teaching**

**Scholarship
of Integration**

**Scholarship of
Application**

Figure 1. Conceptualization of *Boyer's Scholarship Reconsidered* Model and Its Components in Prioritizing the Functions the Professoriate

The work of Boyer and other scholars on this topic resulted in the idea of studying how faculty members could change their scholarship to be more aligned with Boyer's model; this effort became known as the Scholarship of Engagement (SOE) (Sandmann, 2008). The SOE and research stemming from Boyer's original work have led to consistent and regular re-examinations of his four elements since its original publication in 1990. Bowden (2007) suggested that despite improvements made in the 15 years after Boyer's initial work, more work was needed. This implies that linking teaching and scholarship, and together having support and purpose in higher education, remains a work in progress. With the vast increase in the number of publications on the subject, and an inability to define the scholarship of teaching across disciplines and institutions, Bowden posited that the "waters have become more turbulent" (2007, p. 2).

Boyer's scholarship of application began to evolve among researchers who studied how to document and promote recognition for faculty work in the application of knowledge, that is, the scholarship of engagement (Lynton, 1995; Driscoll & Lynton, 1999; Driscoll & Sandmann, 2001; Rice, 2002). The idea of engagement went beyond traditional notions of service and outreach, and instead emphasized collaboration among faculty members and their involvement in community-based learning (Magrath, 1999; Ramaley, 1997; Rice, 2002). Rice (2002) described work on the scholarship of engagement as moving beyond the "three traditional elements in faculty work: teaching, research, and service. They [faculty] are engaged in pedagogy, community-based research, and collaborative

practice" (p. 14). Scholarship of engagement has changed how higher education administrators and faculty view scholarly excellence. In the view of one scholar, "our conception of scholarly excellence has become multidimensional" (Rice, 2002, p. 16). As the ideas of scholarship of engagement have evolved within the literature, so too have the conceptualizations, terminology, and definitions of what it actually means for faculty.

Since Boyer's original work in 1990, scholars have become more dedicated to understanding and applying Boyer's work. His original ideas of discovery, integration, application, and teaching have been expanded to include a broader understanding of the value of teaching and how faculty members engage communities with their research (see Table 1). With a multitude of models, definitions, and meanings surrounding what and how the scholarship of teaching, discovery, and engagement should look, the elements of Boyer's work still resonate with faculty in higher education. While meanings and models may vary from faculty to faculty and institution to institution, the practice of engaged teaching and scholarship does not. It creates scholarly learning communities in which participants hone their craft, and are more connected to and better able to serve the needs of a larger society.

Table 1. An Overview of *Boyer's Scholarship Reconsidered* Model.

Component	Description
Teaching	Effective communication of knowledge to learners
Discovery	Building new knowledge; discovery is manifested through teaching, research, and/or service
Integration	Make connections across disciplines; place specialized knowledge into a larger context
Application	Bridge theory and practice; aid community/society and professions in addressing problems

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Professionals enhance their expertise and disseminate knowledge through professional development, whether provided within the institution or through participation in specialized conferences. Higher education faculty members are encouraged to engage in professional development to advance their scholarly endeavors, improve their instruction, and increase their professionalism (Cherrington et al., 2018; Conje & Birzer, 2019; Herman, 2015; Vogel & Rogers, 2017). Professional learning communities (PLCs) have emerged as a means of facilitating professional development and programmatic improvement within the institution. Ideally, PLCs allow faculty members to direct professional development and programmatic reforms by identifying goals and areas of shared interest and by collaborating in a collegial learning environment.

Although research about PLCs as a mechanism for professional growth and programmatic improvement in higher education institutions is sparse, the effectiveness of PLCs as a means for improving teaching and learning is well documented in the K-12 literature (Bezzina, 2006; Saunders et al., 2009; Stoll et al., 2006). PLCs, sometimes referred to as communities of practice (CoPs), are characterized as a team approach to improving student learning outcomes through reflective interrogation of pedagogy, collaborative planning, effective data analysis, and improved learning-oriented instruction (Dufour & Eaker, 1998; Hord et al., 2010; Stoll & Seashore, 2007; Tenuto, 2014). Likewise, they are vehicles for distributed leadership, a crucial element in strengthening instruction

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and improving student achievement by empowering teachers to take ownership in making meaningful changes, as well as in reinforcing teachers' commitment to the organization (Hulpia et al., 2010; Scribner et al., 2007; Wieczorek & Lear, 2018). With adequate administrative support and a healthy climate for change, PLCs can be effective agents for sustained professional capacity building (Dufore & Eaker, 1998; Hord et al., 2010; Stoll et al., 2006; Stoll & Seashore, 2007; Thompson et al., 2004; Vogel & Rogers, 2017).

When situated in a higher education context, PLCs may be assembled to meet strategic goals such as identifying and addressing organizational and programmatic areas in need of improvement, advancing scholarly identities, encouraging communities of inquiry, and enhancing instructional competence (Bedford & Rossow, 2017; Cherrington et al., 2018; Conje & Birzer, 2019; Herman, 2015; Vogel & Rogers, 2017). They are also a means through which to empower faculty to assume responsibility for continuous professional learning activities (Conje & Birzer, 2019; Hulpia et al., 2010; Scribner et al., 2007; Tenuto, 2014; Wieczorek & Lear, 2018). Further, they are an attractive option for providing low-cost continuous professional development when demand for fiscal resources outstrips availability (Conje & Birzer, 2019; Herman, 2015).

Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations

Successful PLCs are grounded primarily in adult learning theory and distributed leadership theory (Herman, 2015; Mulford, 2007; Sheely et al., 2015; White et al., 2017). Inasmuch as PLCs are adult learning communities, adult learning theory, also known as andragogy, partially explains why participants choose whether to engage in professional learning (Herman, 2015; Knowles et al., 2005). As illustrated in Figure 2, the six core adult learning principles are: (a) learner's need to know (why, what, and how); (b) self-concept of the learning (autonomous, self-directed); (c) prior experience of the learner (resource, mental models); (d) readiness to learn (life related, developmental task); (e) orientation to learning (problem centered, contextual); and (f) motivation to learn (intrinsic value; personal payoff) (Knowles et al., 2005, p. 4).

The andragogy model differs from the traditional pedagogical model in what drives the teaching and learning process (Knowles et al., 2005). The pedagogical model assigns the instructor with the responsibility for making decisions about what will be taught. Andragogy, however, is a transactional model that explains the conditions that must exist for adults to engage in learning:

> Adults need to know why they need to learn something; adults maintain the concept of responsibility for their own decisions, their own lives; adults enter the education activity with a greater volume and more varied experiences than do children; adults have a readiness to learn those things that they need to know in order to cope effectively with real-life situations, adults are life-centered in their orientation to learning; and adults are more responsive to internal motivators than external motivators. (Knowles et al., 2005, p. 72)

However, these core principles are not the whole story. As articulated by Knowles et al. (2005), "care must be taken to avoid confusing core principles of the adult learning transaction with the goals and purposes for which the learning event is being conducted" (p. 2). Professional development, as a learning event, may have a set of goals and purposes that focus on organizational improvement (e.g., how to collect and analyze data; program evaluation) as opposed to individual growth (i.e., adult education). Therefore, the goals and purposes of PLCs influence the degree to which the six principles apply and the extent to which professional learning will take place for individual members of the learning community. Faculty members, as adult learners, must be intrinsically motivated to participate

in and follow through with the professional learning opportunity (Herman, 2015; Knowles et al., 2005).

Distributed leadership is a second key element to successful PLCs. Distributed leadership involves multiple individuals contributing to the success and sustainability of the PLC through shared visions, objectives, and activities (Schreiber et al., 2007; Spillane et al., 2004; White et al., 2017). Essential elements of successful distributed leadership are faculty empowerment, interaction, and leadership development. However, organizational leadership creates conditions for distribution of leadership activity by (a) constructing and communicating an institutional mission and vision; (b) creating a culture in which improved instruction, high quality programs, on-going scholarship, and professional growth are shared norms; (c) procuring and distributing resources (e.g., compensation, time, support); and (d) structuring accountability measures (Herman, 2015; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2007; Schreiber et al., 2007; Spillane et al., 2004; White et al., 2017):

> Distributed leadership can thrive only as long as the school structures support it, as long as the formal leaders offer guidance and wise counsel and as long as the teachers and others involved remain committed and supportive to the principles established within their own school communities. (White et al., 2017, p. 688)
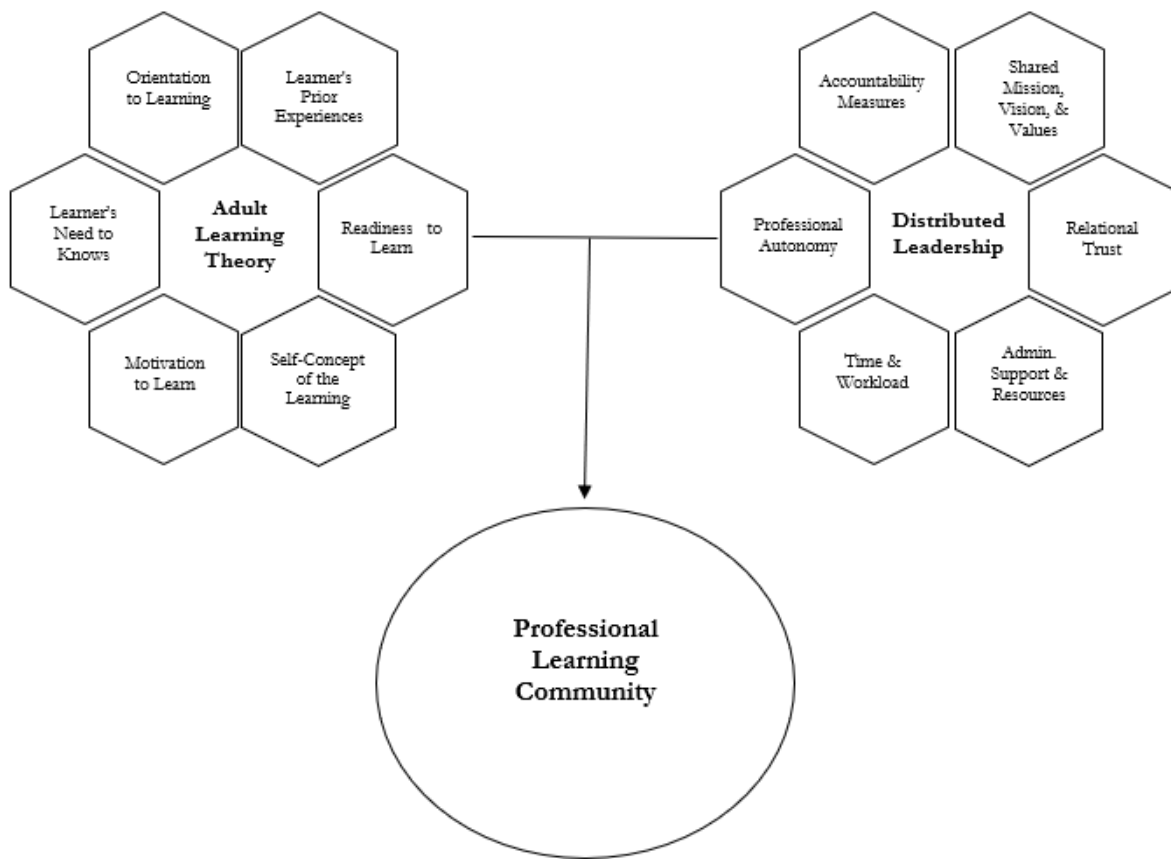

Figure 2. Conceptualization of the Theoretical Components of a Successful Professional Learning Community

Without effective unit level leadership, distributed leadership in PLCs runs the risk of becoming distributed by default, existing without collective faculty support, or not happening at all.

Among the research studies on PLCs, both in public school and higher education settings, are those in which researchers have investigated the failings of PLCS whose purposeful activity should have produced positive change.

Failed PLCs

PLCs may not always produce the intended outcomes (Mulford, 2007; Simms & Penny, 2014; Stoll & Seashore, 2017) or faculty participation may lag over time when PLCs are not viewed as time well spent (Herman, 2015; Johnson, 2003; Sheehy et al., 2015). Generally, researchers studying PLC failures have categorized underlying causes into three broad categories: structural complexities, leadership failures, and cultural incompatibilities.

Structural complexities that mitigate efforts to build organization-wide learning communities are the size of the organization, siloed departments and programs, faculty workload and work schedule, and faculty location (e.g., onsite and offsite faculty, online faculty communities) (Herman, 2015; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2007; Simms & Penny, 2014; Vogel & Rogers, 2017). For instance, faculty members struggle to meet all the demands placed on them and, as a result, have difficulty setting priorities. As Herman (2015) learned, "involvement in 'too many activities with more immediate priority' to the sum total of all the different responsibilities of the academic, namely research; undergraduate and postgraduate teaching; assessment of student learning; community involvement; . . . academic administration, management and committee work" constrained regular or meaningful participation in professional learning communities (p. 51). Unless university, college, or department leaders loosen time restraints and lessen faculty work burdens, motivation and participation will diminish over time.

Leadership failures include ineffectual or self-interested leadership or inadequate administrative support (Cherrington et al., 2018; Cronje & Birzer, 2019; Hargreaves, 1994; Herman, 2015; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2007). For instance, some leaders orchestrate PLCs to manipulate faculty into doing what they want them to do by conveying a false narrative; that is, they advise faculty members to use the PLC to collaborate and problem solve, but the administrator defines the problem, provides the data, and sets the priorities and expectations (Cronje & Birzer, 2019; Hargreaves, 1994; O'Neill, 2000; Simms & Penny, 2014). Hargreaves (1994) refers to this phenomenon as "contrived collegiality" (pp. 191-192).

Furthermore, teacher collaborations are often restricted to specific and relatively short-term tasks and are "rarely extended to critical, collective, and reflective reviews about ethics, principles, and purposes of current practice" (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 189). Finally, scarce fiscal and human resources create competition among PLCs and result in a breakdown in cohesiveness across the organization (Johnson, 2003; Sheely et al., 2015).

Cultural incompatibilities occur when members of the professional learning community lack common organizational values, such as striving for quality instruction; setting high standards for students; sharing a collective responsibility for student, colleague, and organizational success; and producing rigorous scholarship (Hargreaves, 1994; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2007; Simms & Penny, 2014). On a micro level, PLCs dissolve when individual members do not feel valued or do not trust their colleagues or the process, when status or power is exercised, when some members feel their autonomy is diminished, or when democratic processes are ignored (Johnson, 2003; Mulford, 2007; Simms & Penny, 2014). Johnson (2003) found that even when the groups' goals and reforms are viewed positively, "it is likely that some groups and individuals will be silenced and marginalized, and that their professional standing will be compromised" (p. 349).

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The remedy to these impediments is the institutional leader as the change agent. Higher education leaders must adjust infrastructure, workload, and time constraints that interfere with faculty motivation to engage in professional growth activities proffered by PLCs. Formal leaders must develop people and be people-centered. They must value professional relationships with faculty members by creating collaborative ways of working toward program improvement. They must cultivate and communicate organizational norms that put a premium on individual professional growth, as well as on positive organizational and programmatic change. Finally, they must demonstrate trust by relinquishing some control over goals and objectives to allow for faculty professional autonomy, which is necessary for a successful and sustainable PLC.

Conceptual Model for the Study

Our conceptual model is based on an aggregation of empirical research on PLCs as an effective conduit for professional learning as well the integration of Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered* into faculty work as the intended outcome (see Figure 3). We were interested in discovering if Boyer's model was reflected in faculty members' teaching, research, and service experiences and if its integration was influenced by faculty involvement in the PLC. The following the research questions were posed:

> What changes occurred in COE activity with the implementation of a faculty Professional Learning Community of Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered* in relation to:
> 1) Scholarship of Teaching?
> 2) Scholarship of Discovery?
> 3) Scholarship of Integration?
> 4) Scholarship of Application?

In addition to conducting a review of relevant documents, we developed in-depth, semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions to learn if the COE faculty took what they learned in the PLC and applied it to their practice.

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Scholarship Reconsidered Model

Adult Learning
Theory

Distributed
Leadership

HE Faculty
Professional
Development

Professional
Learning
Community

Boyer's
*Scholarship
Reconsidered*
Model

Through a professional learning community emerges a renewed commitment to collaboration and the relationship between teaching and scholarship and their contributions to the larger community served by the higher education institution as evinced by faculty teaching, scholarship, and engagement with the community at large.
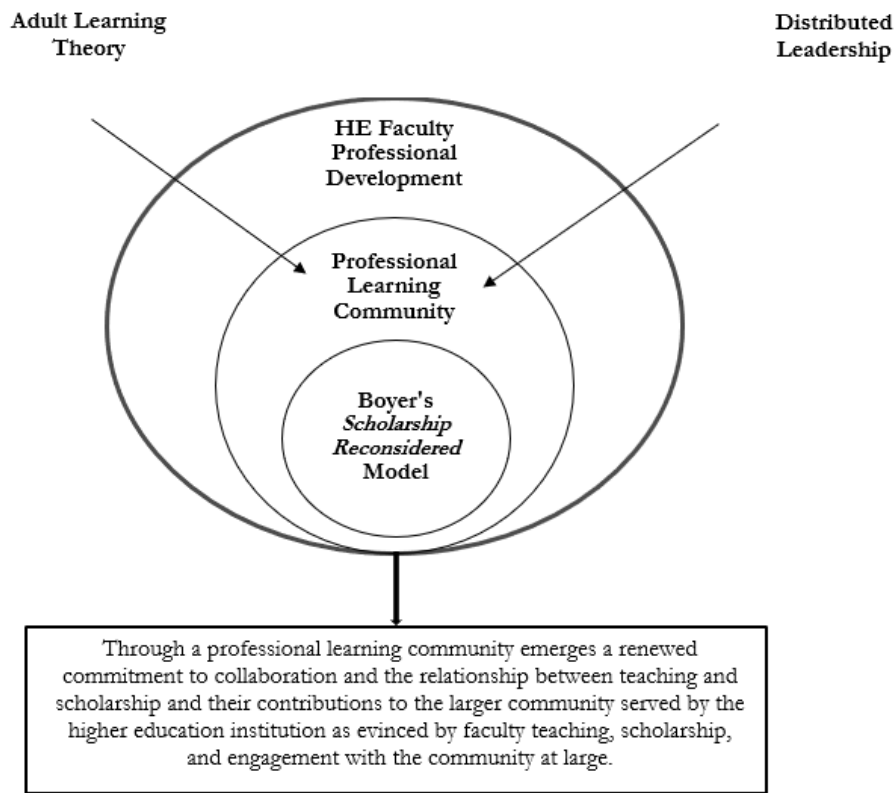
Figure 3. Conceptual Overview of Process to Reengage HE Faculty with *Boyer's Scholarship Reconsidered* **Model**

Method and Data Sources

Research Design

This qualitative case study (Yin, 2014) was conducted to gain a deeper understanding of and to determine changes in faculty work performance and products, and their perceptions of teaching and scholarship following participation in a college-wide Professional Learning Community (PLC) that examined Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered*. The study site was the College of Education at a mid-sized public higher education institution in southwest Florida. The COE houses seven bachelor degree programs, five master's degree programs, two certificate programs, one alternative teacher certification program, and an Ed.D. degree program with five areas of concentration. While most programs serve PreK-12 education, one of the master's degrees and the Ed.D. also serve students who are working or seeking to work in higher education.

The findings may inform higher educational leaders and policymakers on how to engage faculty in professional development through PLCs to increase faculty collaboration for the purposes of improving instruction, research, community engagement, and organizational reform. The findings may also inform college instructors and scholars about how to incorporate Boyer's model into their research and teaching and especially how to disseminate and apply their discoveries to problems within their constituent communities.

According to Merriam (2009), qualitative research methods such as case studies focus on interpreting a phenomenon of interest from the participant's lived experiences. Qualitative research is commonly rooted in constructivist epistemological assumptions in which the researcher and participants work together to give meaning to the participants' experiences (Mertens, 2015). This approach permits an in-depth exploration of phenomena that were rooted in the perspectives and the experiences of the participants (Neuman, 2000; Patton, 2002), which was the primary goal of this study.

Participants and Sampling

Purposeful sampling was used to identify and select participants who had attended PLC meetings in which Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered* was discussed and who were willing to share their experiences. Twenty-nine faculty members participated in the PLC sessions, of which 14 agreed to participate, including the authors of this study.

Vitas and other paper documentation were provided by the 14 participants. The names and any identifying characteristics of participants were removed from documents that were provided for content analysis, and each participant was assigned a code name to ensure anonymity. All 14 faculty members participated in the focus groups; the researchers took turns as members of the focus groups. The sample consisted of 1 instructor, 2 assistant professors, 7 associate professors, and 4 professors (seven males, seven females). The mean length of higher education experience among the participants was 21 years.

Data Collection and Analysis

Case studies record the viewpoints of participants using multiple sources of data to establish data triangulation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Tellis, 1997). To increase the construct validity of data collection methods in case studies (Yin, 2014), we collected data from multiple sources that covered the period under investigation, including faculty members' updated curriculum vitas, Professional Development Plan (PDPs), Annual Professional Developments Reports (APDPs), Supervisor's Annual Reviews, *Scholarship Reconsidered* meeting handouts and presentation slides, agendas, and minutes, and materials from the COE annual research symposium. We conducted a content analysis of these documents by searching for explicit Boyer model language—"teaching, engagement, application, and discovery." Vitas and faculty reports were analyzed to determine evidence of faculty collaborations before and after August 2017, with collaborations recorded by type (colleague, student, and community).

Second, we conducted two focus groups for face-to-face interviews to collect data pertaining to the faculty members' perspectives on what transpired in the PLC sessions and work performance related to the Boyer model. During the interviews, we audio-taped responses to semi-structured interviews using 10-15 open-ended inductive questions (see Appendix A) and took field notes to gain pertinent information regarding Boyer's influence on faculty work and collaborations. We were also interested in determining the effectiveness and the possible future of the college-wide PLC as a vehicle for professional learning by probing the participants' contextualized responses to the interview questions. The focus group interviews lasted no longer than one hour each.

For the data analysis, all audio-recordings were transcribed verbatim. The researchers employed member-checking to support the validity and reliability of the research study (Berg, 2004; Creswell, 2009). This ensured that descriptions of and conclusions drawn from their contributing data were accurate. Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommended this step to increase the credibility of findings and to empower participants to be co-collaborators in the research process.

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After the member-checking, the researchers created a data analysis sheet based on each focus-group interview as it related to the research questions. Each of the research questions addressed the experiences of the participants within the phenomenon, and information gathered from each participant was examined collectively and comparatively by the four researchers. This process assisted the researchers in creating coding categories until coding saturation was achieved and in identifying the interconnectedness in the information that was gathered (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Throughout the coding process, identified patterns and themes from the interviews and document analysis emerged from the whole; that is, no single piece of data was viewed in isolation (Born & Preston, 2016). Key pieces of data that supported each code in all our notes were highlighted to generate a chain of evidence. Peer debriefing and triangulation were used to enhance the validity of this study (Patton, 2002). After these processes, we employed a "peer-review" strategy, during which two external experts and one doctoral student as peer debriefers read and analyzed the same interview transcripts independently, checked field notes for evidence, and compared emergent themes and assertions, verifying them from the original data.

To safeguard trustworthiness, we took measures to ensure credibility and transferability. Credibility deals with the accuracy of the findings as they relate to the interpretation of the experiences of participants and their meaning (Creswell, 2007). Hence, the more data collection techniques and sources that researchers use, the better people can understand the phenomenon under study (Sagor, 2000). Thus, utilizing multiple sources of data (face-to-face interviews, multiple documents, field notes) and coding and content analysis techniques were vital to accurately capture the participants' experiences about their work performance, perceptions of work, and participation in a PLC. These were essential in understanding whether participants integrated Boyer's model into their work and if their experiences in the PLC reflected a transfer of knowledge about the model and its application. To address transferability and reliability, we provided rich, thick descriptions of the participants and their experiences. Member-checking and triangulation of data helped ensure the trustworthiness of the findings.

Results

Record Review

We conducted a content analysis of all documents submitted by faculty for the purpose of highlighting regular production of teaching and scholarship. For the purpose of the study, we categorized and quantified any scholarly performance changes evident in the documents related to Boyer's four areas of scholarship: teaching, integration, application, and discovery during the period under investigation. The review of these documents produced little valuable empirical data regarding how faculty involved in the PLC increased or changed collaboration or emphasis on Boyer's forms of scholarship.

Review of Meeting Agendas and Presentation Materials

We also analyzed documents related to the PLC, which included meeting agendas, presentation materials provided by session facilitators, and to a lesser extent, meeting minutes (official minutes were not available after each meeting). These documents helped us recall the structure, sequence, and purposes of the PLC meetings, all of which are described below.

The Dean conducted the initial meeting in the first year, where she introduced the primary purpose of the meetings as being to focus the COE faculty on Boyer's premise that teaching and research are interconnected and should be valued equally, and together they should contribute to the resolution of community problems. Specifically, the Dean was clear that faculty members should be

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preparing highly effective teachers and educational leaders and should be conducting research on educational problems that reside in the local public schools and in the university. She believed that her charge to the faculty was consistent with Boyer's writings on the scholarships of teaching, discovery, integration, and application.

The Dean then appointed facilitators from among the faculty for the next three sessions and announced her selections and the session topics to the COE faculty via email. Faculty members attending the PLC sessions were assigned readings from Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered* in preparation for each meeting, and each facilitator guided their session using three questions: (a) describe an interesting phrase from the readings; (b) describe an interesting axiom from the readings; and (c) describe any emerging, old, or challenging questions posed by the readings. In a final session, Boyer's four types of scholarship were summarized, and the first meeting of the second year started with a review of the previous year's discussions.

Faculty members continued to serve as session facilitators during the second year and while these individuals were primarily recruited and selected by the Dean, a few self-nominated to serve in this role. Because there was no governing framework for the second year's sessions, the topics did not follow a cohesive sequence, unlike the first year. Session topics varied broadly during the second year and typically reflected the scholarly or programmatic interests of the facilitator. Topics included: (a) the scholarship of discovery; (b) is action research real research?; (c) media ecology; (d) scholarship of engagement in light of a professional development school; (e) scholarship of integration in child and youth studies; and (f) scholarship of integration in educational leadership.

Specific reference to Boyer's work was rare during the second year. In the final session of the second year, the facilitator asked participants to identify what was learned and what should come next. The discussion eventually focused on how to convert the time and energy expended in sessions into production of tangible products (e.g. published article, conference presentations) to disseminate what was learned from the PLC, as well as into increasing collaborative research with students and community members. This manuscript is the result of the desire to craft a tangible product from the Professional Learning Community and the lessons from Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered.*

The intent was to discuss ways to generate more collaboration during the third year. Support was expressed for continuation of the sessions with a different structure that allowed groups of colleagues to work together. In addition, the Dean was asked to provide funding to support collaborative research (e.g., for GAs, for travel to conferences, for software, or for other direct costs related to the collaborations), which she agreed to do. However, an upcoming visit from a national accrediting body usurped the intended purposes of the PLC; the Dean repurposed the meetings to focus on self-study reports and other preparations for the visit. Subsequent intervening factors, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and changes in the college administration, have derailed continuation of the PLC for the foreseeable future.

Focus Group Interviews

Results from the focus groups produced the richest information of the three data sets. Direct reference to Boyer's four pillars (teaching, discovery, integration, and application) centered primarily on the value of collaborative research, with some reference to the scholarship of teaching. Most data were related to the PLC, its functionality, and how it could be more useful if structured differently.

Boyer's Model

Study participants frequently mentioned collaboration in research and bringing together their various areas of expertise, which, in Boyer's terms, are the scholarships of discovery and integration. They

were enthusiastic about familiarizing themselves with their peers' expertise and scholarship and how they could work together. Renee reflected on how the discussions would influence the way she could design and conduct research:

> [I began] looking at different avenues with the Literacy Festival. [For instance, I thought,] bring in another colleague through the sessions. And [I] brought in a Master's student into the research and we have published. [I] brought in another set of eyes with other specialties [that I] wouldn't have thought of before, not my own area.

Another interviewee, Ansley, indicated that while talking about Boyer had not really influenced with whom she chooses to conduct research, talking about the scholarship of teaching made her realize she could collect data in her classroom to improve her teaching:

> I do now look for ways to use scholarship with [the] students [I] am already teaching and already doing [the work]. [I] have completed one study and starting another, both [using] students in [my] classes. [The] students are the participants.

With regard to the scholarships of application and of integration, the focus group participants did not refer to them explicitly but rather indirectly. As exemplified by Ansley's comment, participants understood the value of the scholarship of application by using what they learned and applying it to their practice. Likewise, indirect reference was made to the scholarship of integration when participants talked about inter-disciplinary collaboration and research. This emerged as participants reflected on their experiences in the PLC and possibilities the PLC holds for integration of discovery, which is described below.

Professional Learning Community

While study participants indicated the value of collaboration and further integrating teaching and discovery for serving their community, and had no argument with Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered*, they believed much could be done in structuring how they could work together through the PLC.

Some participants described the PLC sessions as constructive and useful, stating they enjoyed the professional interactions with their colleagues. This led to occasional discussions within the PLC about opportunities for cross-disciplinary scholarly collaboration among COE faculty. Faculty members appreciated learning about what their colleagues in other programs in the college were doing and exploring possible areas for collaboration:

> [There would be more interest from faculty] if we can have series of small successful collaborations with scholarship . . . . [It would generate] behavioral momentum. The PLC at least is the beginning of an avenue to discuss scholarship with colleagues, to get a better idea of where we might be able to collaborate. (Ken)

Other faculty members, however, opined that while the sessions were constructive and useful, they reduced the time available for more urgent or important activities:

> [The meetings were] counterproductive; we tried to write a grant, had RFP. Example of scholarship of engagement. We did not have time to work on it while sitting in meetings talking

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about it. Spending time talking, not doing. [I] love the idea for setting aside time for scholarship [with colleagues, but] we turned it into a meeting. (Roger)

A similar sentiment was expressed by faculty members who were reminded to complete research they already had begun by the discussions on the scholarship of discovery. Margarita shared that she had an on-going collaboration with three other colleagues, one of whom was from another college, but all they had accomplished was spending years gathering data from Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) assignments. The PLC sessions "were a good push to analyze [the data] and not just collect it. We got it published." (Margarita)

In a departure from the more traditional view of collaboration, another faculty member viewed the PLC sessions as an opportunity to receive mentoring:

For me, I still want or need mentorship, for me having the *Scholarship Reconsidered* times gives me a forum to talk with people and ask questions; perfect time for me to ask these questions; as a college to talk about key terms [the common terms we use and take for granted but really may hold different meanings for each], as well (Ansley).

Finally, while seeing value in professional interactions, possible collaboration, and mentoring, faculty were still curious about how they could integrate Boyer's concepts and the structure of the PLC into current work. Furthermore, faculty members would have liked more information about opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration with colleagues in other colleges:

When we had the last meeting and talked about [designation] of grants, either in [the] PLC or College, we should have more conversations about interdisciplinary collaborations. [It is] not easy to reach out to other colleges; not really for publication but [for] writing grants. [A grant application is] stronger if it is interdisciplinary. [We need to] invite people into the conversation. I have a gap in that area. [Let's choose] our topic and [approach it] with an interdisciplinary lens. (Margarita)

Others indicated that the PLC could be utilized more effectively and indirectly referenced the scholarship of integration. As John noted, "We should create PLCs to focus on improvement of teaching, learning, -combine specialties, then they can show their advantages. [The PLC could lead to] more deep collaboration." And while it did inspire more self-reflection on scholarship, the end result of participating in the PLC was not clear to faculty. The interviewees expressed a desire to have some accountability for the time spent participating in the PLC:

[I would like to see] measurable results of these meetings; even ones here have been involved in research probably made some change, but what about faculty who are [starting] on research or finding a mentor? . . . What kind of results [do] we have after [two] years? (Margarita)

A common thread in the responses was the lack of faculty input into the structure and purpose of the PLC. Faculty stated the PLC might have been more fruitful and received more buy-in if the sessions had been "more organically conceived, more faculty driven" (Renee). The sessions had been organized and expectations had been set by the Dean. Even session facilitators had little autonomy. As Renee noted, "I had to get [approval for] what I was doing."

While it appears from the interviewees' experiences that there were few measurable returns on the two years invested in the PLC and its focus on Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered*, the study participants indicated an interest in continuing in a PLC, as long as it was differently structured and more reflective

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of their interests. These findings align well with the literature and aid us in learning how to improve the college-wide PLC to the benefit of faculty.

Discussion and Conclusions

Analysis of the data produced a small number of findings associated with the Boyer model and more with the PLC. However, there were not always clear distinctions among findings associated with Boyer and with the PLC constructs. The two have some features in common, such as collaboration and improving teaching and scholarship through reflection, which make it difficult sometimes to differentiate between them. For that reason, some overlap in the discussion is inevitable.

The application of the Boyer model was not apparent in the interview responses, even when the interview questions included a direct reference to the four elements of Boyer's model, and was not in evidence in faculty work products immediately following the two years of focus on the topic. Faculty had much more to say about the structure and function of the PLC, particularly with regard to its potential. It could be that the lack of direct reference to the Boyer model and the abundant data on the PLC were a function of how the interview questions were worded; we were attempting to elicit information about the integration of the Boyer model through participation in PLC, but the study interviewees focused on the PLC itself more than how it was a vehicle to adopt Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered* as a governing philosophy for the COE. The findings below are organized in the two categories, Boyer's model and PLCs.

Boyer's Scholarship Reconsidered

The findings indicated an awareness of Boyer's model and its value among faculty participants, but reference to it was mostly indirect. The findings were primarily related to the scholarships of teaching and discovery, with implicit reference to the scholarships of integration and application. The emergent themes were (a) faculty collaboration and (b) the relationship between teaching and scholarship.

Collaboration. Faculty collaboration was the most prominent theme to emerge. Participants indicated their willingness to engage in discussion with their colleagues to learn more about their teaching and research, and in collaborative scholarship that crosses disciplines and research specialties. Subsequently referred to as the scholarship of engagement by other researchers, Boyer's scholarships of integration and application were designed to increase the linkages across teaching, scholarship, and service and to encourage faculty to work together to apply research to community-based or practitioner-based problems as a form of service (Boyer, 1990, 2016; Lynton, 1995; Driscoll & Lynton, 1999; Driscoll & Sandmann, 2001; Rice, 2002).

Being employed at a regional state university, the faculty participants understood the value of and need for research that benefits the community and were interested in cultivating or strengthening research collaborations that extend the COE's reach across disciplines in the university and into the surrounding community. They also recognized the need to engage non-academics to join in the process for the benefit of the community. They believed these endeavors would garner sustainable bilateral trust and commitment between the university and community.

This is consistent with Boyer's message that institutions of higher learning must renew their commitment to engagement and "become a more vigorous partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic, and moral problems" (p. 15). Sandmann (2008) also averred the necessity of creating relationships with community partners that emphasized "bidirectional interactions, reciprocity, and mutual respect" (p. 94). The common message is to expand the opportunities for collaborative research that not only engages faculty colleagues but also stakeholders

in the broader community (Boyer, 2009, 2016; Fitzgerald et al., 2016; Morrison & Wagner, 2016; Sandmann, 2008).

It is also important to know whether the university values collaborative regional scholarship over basic research (Boyer, 1990, 2016; Hyman et al., 2001; Rice, 2002; Sandmann, 2008). When this university was founded, it was with the mission of serving the needs of the community that supported it. Initially, teaching and the scholarship of teaching were strongly emphasized. However, through a succession of administrative changes, both at the university and at the state university system governance levels, changes in strategic planning and reduced state funding, accompanied by population and diversified business growth in the region, the prioritization of good teaching was somewhat overshadowed by an emphasis on the need for scholarship in competition for grants.

This evolution in what is valued was probably also in response to a prevalent traditional university culture, particularly among research-intensive universities, in which individual endeavor and achievement are valued over community and collaboration (Boyer, 1990, 2016; Morrison & Wagner, 2016; Sandmann, 2008). Criteria for faculty rank advancement in higher education pressure faculty members to be siloes of self-sufficiency and instruments of self-promotion. In-house, scholarly collaboration among colleagues is infrequent and programmatic review is usually reduced to a few department or college meetings that are grudgingly attended. Quality teaching is secondary to a strong publications record. The work of faculty in a college that was founded on the principles of Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered* became a victim of external influences that have shifted emphasis from teaching and learning to competition for recognition and funding.

The scholarship of integration, another feature of Boyer's model, was referenced indirectly by participants several times when they spoke about collaborating with faculty from outside the COE. Participants lamented that insufficient support and time were given to faculty members who wanted to collaborate not only with colleagues in the COE, but with faculty members in other colleges whose areas of expertise would enhance opportunities for scholarship. In other words, the scholarship of integration would be an input as well as an output. However, while the Dean provided modest funding to support *Scholarship Reconsidered*-related endeavors, she restricted funding solely to teams of COE faculty, students, and staff. Some study participants remarked that they hoped this restriction would be lifted in the future.

The synergy generated by inter-disciplinary teams of scholars is a means by which to identify and analyze problems through multifarious conceptualizations and research approaches (Carr et al., 2017; Nguyen et al., 2020). Likewise, social practices of debate, encouragement, and camaraderie fuel the intellectual development of a study (Spiller et al., 2015). As stated in the title of an article on multi-disciplinary research, "you travel faster alone, but further together" (Reddy et al., 2018).

With this said, most literature focused on the scholarships of integration and application stress the importance of involving practitioners—the knowledge users—in research (Jull et al., 2017; Morrison & Wagner, 2016; Ngyuen et al., 2020; Sandmann, 2008). Having practitioners engaged in research helps overcome the "know-do gap" and accelerates the understanding and application of knowledge. This aligns well with Boyer's (1990) scholarship of integration as well as his scholarship of application. He advocated "making connections across disciplines, placing the specialties in larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating nonspecialists, too" (p. 18). Practitioners as research partners shed light on the practicalities and intricacies of the context in which the research is being conducted and in which the findings will be applied. They bring understanding of the terminology, infrastructure, and politics. While COE faculty are aware of, if not intimately involved with service-learning, outreach, and other forms of community engagement, they may benefit from exploring opportunities for working with practitioners other than their own students.

Relationship Between Teaching and Scholarship The second theme, the relationship between teaching and scholarship, emerged from the interviews with the study participants. One participant recalled the Dean often reminding faculty that teaching should inform scholarship and scholarship should inform teaching. That teaching should inform scholarship and vice versa is well established in Boyer's model (Boyer, 1990). One of the four pillars of *Scholarship Reconsidered* was the Scholarship of Discovery, which was defined as building knowledge through teaching, research, and/or service.

Boyer emphasized the instructive interaction between teaching and learning for both the instructor and the student (Bowden, 2007; Boyer, 1990). Traditionally, faculty members become knowledgeable through their research and then transmit that knowledge to their students. Boyer's Model encourages them also to employ their skills as a researcher to learn from the problems they encounter in teaching, adapting their pedagogy to aid student comprehension through a systematic inquiry about student learning.

Faculty comments indicated that members understood the value and function of researching one's own teaching to improve instruction (Bowden, 2007; Boyer, 1990; Hyman et al., 2001; Kreber, 2005). Ansley, an instructor not bound by research as a measure of productivity, was enthusiastic about the prospect of conducting research that would improve her teaching; she recognized that research and teaching did not have to be independent of each other. She viewed it as an opportunity to be a scholarly instructor.

 This view of scholarship has helped negotiate the tension between teaching and research that exists at many universities (Bowden, 2007; Rice, 2002). Boyer (1990) did not reject research as a valid function in higher education; he simply did not want it to drive the mission of higher education. The Scholarship of Discovery serves to strengthen the relationship between teaching and scholarship. Subject matter theory and learning theory are able to occupy the same space in the classroom, simultaneously validating both teaching and research as mechanisms for learning.

The PLC

The second part of our study was to investigate PLCs as the mechanism for engaging in dialogue about Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered.* What was revealed in the findings revealed a general appreciation for the opportunity to interact with colleagues in the PLC, but less enthusiasm for how the PLC were governed by the Dean's agenda and oversight. The findings were consistent with the existing literature on PLCs, specifically in relation to two contributing theories, adult learning theory and distributed leadership (Herman, 2015; Mulford, 2007; Sheely et al., 2015; White et al., 2017).

Adult Learning Theory The Dean made clear her objective for calling together the COE faculty: to reestablish Boyer as the philosophical underpinning for faculty teaching, scholarship, and service. However, her strategies for accomplishing that objective were contrary to the scholarship on adult learning. Adult learners want to know why, what, and how when asked to engage in professional learning (Knowles et al., 2005). While the study participants understood what, not all were convinced of why, and none were supportive of how. Faculty hired shortly after the establishment of the COE were aware of the influence Boyer's *Scholarship Considered* had in the college and its mission and were receptive to revisiting Boyer. However, some of the faculty hired later did not understand why they needed to adapt to a governing philosophy in which they had no voice and of which they were unaware when hired. Nonetheless, the study participants understood the value of Boyer's model, but their incorporation of the model into their professional work as instructors and researchers was less evident.

As for the "how," the Dean chose who would facilitate the sessions and what they would cover. This does not appeal to the autonomous, self-directed adult learner, another essential principle of adult learning theory (Herman, 2015; Knowles et al., 2005). As mentioned frequently in the interviews, several participants viewed the PLCs as a distraction, diverting time from what they needed

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to do. The sessions did not compete well with other responsibilities the participants considered more important.

Prior experience, too, is a principle of adult learning theory and, if ignored, can result in resistance (Knowles et al., 2005). Faculty members had prior experiences in higher education that shaped their priorities as faculty members. These were not discussed or taken into consideration when they were pressed to participate in the PLC sessions on Boyer. Ignoring participants' prior experiences diminished the intended influence of the PLC to encourage faculty to reframe their work as professors and researchers in alignment with Boyer's model.

Likewise, readiness to learn, orientation to learning, and motivation to learn, the three remaining principles of adult learning theory, were not adequately addressed in the conceptualization and preparation of the PLC. Not all participants perceived the professional development as something that would enhance their knowledge, skills, or professionalism and as a result, they were not motivated to engage in it.

Finally, while facilitators tried to structure sessions to include discussion through engaging activities, they were limited to delivering the Dean's agenda and unable to seek input from colleagues about what would further their professional work as it related to the topic at hand.

Distributed Leadership Genuine interest in using the PLC to benefit faculty was a common theme in the interviews. Based upon previous research (Cronje & Birzer, 2019; Hargreaves, 1994; O'Neill, 2000; Simms & Penny, 2014), more might have been accomplished and participation might have been revived if the Dean had relinquished control of the PLC after the first year. This might have reduced the sense of the "contrived collegiality" to which Hargreaves (1994) refers, when an organizational leader employs a PLC to their ends and not to the ends of the faculty participants.

PLCs are most successful when principles of distributed leadership are integrated into their structure and function (Schreiber et al., 2007; Spillane et al., 2004; White et al., 2017). This requires leadership to support and trust faculty to find common professional development goals and objectives in a format that engages them as adult learners (Cherrington et al., 2018; Cronje & Birzer, 2019; Herman, 2015). Often, study participants opined that PLCs could be a conduit through which both scholarship and improved instruction could be nurtured, which serve as examples of shared goals (Cherrington et al., 2018; Cronje & Birzer, 2019; Saunders et al., 2009; Scribner et al., 2007).

Time is a scare commodity among higher education faculty. To foster successful professional development employing a PLC, organizational leaders must find ways to reduce the demands that instructional workloads and service have on faculty members' time (Herman, 2015: White et al., 2017). They also must make funding and other resources available. In the instance of this study, workloads were not reduced, which is one reason many participants may not have viewed the PLC sessions as time well spent even though modest funding was offered to support research activities among PLC participants. Further, the funding was offered through a grant process, and although efforts were made to eliminate competition for the funds, awards were based on meeting certain criteria.

Time and money are two of the scarcest resources in a regional university and will always be barriers to robust use of PLCs. However, study participants thought proactively about how to address those concerns. They suggested that the format be altered so various PLCs could be established, each meeting the needs of a small group of faculty members committed to its stated goals and objectives.

Implications

This study examined the effects of a PLC on the scholarly behavior of faculty members in relation to the scholarships of teaching, discovery, integration, and application. While no evidence was found of increasing publications or conference presentations on these topics, clear lessons were provided regarding the conduct of PLCs in a university setting.

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First, PLCs are most likely to influence faculty behavior if they are initiated and led by faculty. Most faculty members have a broad array of activities that compete for their time, including teaching, supervising interns or dissertations, designing and conducting studies, and providing service to the institution, profession, and community. As such, they are most likely to become genuinely involved in projects of high personal value and significance. Faculty are most likely to become emotionally invested and willingly participate in PLCs that reflect their own needs, and consider themselves best suited to identify these needs.

Second, care must be taken when scheduling PLC meetings. Faculty work on a university campus takes diverse forms, but nearly all of these forms requires intense concentration and the ability to think clearly. Professional learning communities are no exception to this, and faculty members needed to be mentally rested yet alert when participating in them. As such, the date and time at which PLCs are scheduled are important considerations.

Third, participation is likely to be increased in the presence of clearly defined objectives that result in the creation of scholarly products that produce benefits for the faculty involved. These benefits could include the production of scholarly works that can be cited as evidence of productivity in promotion or annual performance reviews, increased networks for purposes of collaboration, or enhanced knowledge that facilitates more effective and efficient teaching and/or service. For individuals to acquire positions as university faculty, they must have earned advanced degrees requiring long-term and single-minded commitment. As such, they are goal-oriented and are most likely to participate and provide their best efforts when they perceive an outcome that benefits either themselves or the world around them. This benefit would be further enhanced if funding were provided to support the dissemination of scholarly products resulting from the PLCs.

Finally, as suggested by a faculty member, creation of smaller PLCs that allow concentration of effort on topics of importance to fewer faculty members may be more productive than hosting a single college-wide PLC. Such smaller, more narrowly focused PLCs could mitigate some of the obstacles that undermine PLCs, such as scheduling, workloads, cultural incompatibilities (e.g., focused interests in undergraduate vs. graduate studies/programs), and divergent norms (Cherrington et al., 2018; Cronje & Birzer, 2019; Hargreaves, 1994). In the future, a more flexible PLC structure and faculty-initiated agendas may lead to a stronger focus on the application of Boyer's model across the COE through collaboration and protected time for improved teaching and for increased collaborative discovery, integration, and application.

Faculty PLCs on university campuses provide opportunities for rich collaboration, professional growth, and beneficial interactions with colleagues whose differing schedules make frequent interaction impossible. Still, careful thought and planning is required if these PLCs are to successfully achieve their objectives. The activities that they entail must be holistic, reflect the needs and interests of the participants, and provide participants with a feeling of ownership. Only when these criteria are met is a PLC likely to be effective.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations that require the use of caution when interpreting the results of this study. First, pseudonyms were used to protect the identities of focus group participants for the purpose of this study, yet the participants were clearly known to the researchers. As such, the participants may have engaged in some level of socially desirable responding to avoid the possibility of offending colleagues or their Dean. It would seem possible that any comments that could be interpreted as critical of this process reflect candid responses; while complimentary comments may also have been offered candidly, the reader should be less confident in assuming similar comments would have been offered in an environment in which the responses were provided anonymously.

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We, the researchers, also provided input as participants in the focus groups and with our vitas and other documentation. We discussed the possible advantages and disadvantages of direct participation, concluding that we had no investment in an outcome that would sway our responses. We did not code our own inputs so that a degree of objectivity could be maintained. Nonetheless, transparency requires that we acknowledge our participation.

An additional limitation relates to the document review. The researchers examined Professional Development Plans, Annual Performance evaluations, and faculty members' curriculum vitas for both evidence of scholarly focus on any of Boyer's four types of scholarship or whether this focus shifted while the PLC was in session. However, information of such activity may be underreported due to lack of use of the exact terminology being sought. For example, several faculty members may have collaborated on the effects on teacher behavior of workshops conducted in a local school. However, it is unlikely that this would have been described as scholarship of engagement prior to the PLC, and it would not have been counted unless the review was able to identify it as such by the title of the article.

Finally, the results of this study may not be generalizable due to the scheduling of the PLC. PLC sessions were held on Friday afternoons, typically after another college-wide meeting, and were always accompanied by lunch. Session participants may have been tired by week's end or distracted by other work that awaited them. Both participation in the PLC sessions as well as reflections on its structure, organization, and value may have been different had sessions been scheduled early on a Monday before other events had taken their toll.

Appendix

Appendix A: Qualitative Interview Protocol and Questions for Faculty.

Study: *Is Boyer's Scholarship Reconsidered still relevant: A case study of a college-wide professional learning community (PLC)*

Demographics

- Interview Date:
- Interviewer:
- Interviewee (Pseudonym)
- Gender:
- Age:
- Ethnicities:
- Marital status
- Rank:
- Years of teaching (higher ed/overall?)
- Discipline
- Length of participation in the PLC

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to determine changes in faculty work performance and perception of work and scholarship following participation in a college-wide PLC examining Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered* at Florida Gulf Coast University, in the COE. Your input will be collected via a face-to-face interview. As a faculty member, your input will provide insight for work performance

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after *Scholarship Reconsidered* workshops. Throughout the duration of the study and after completion of the study, your identity will be protected and will remain confidential. You will be assigned a code (or pseudonym name) to be referenced during the interview. Only the PI and co-PIs will know your identity, and all interview recordings and transcripts will remain secure and solely in the possession of the researchers. This interview will take no more than 30-45 minutes of your time.

Interviewee will read and sign the consent form.
Begin and test the voice-recording device.

Interview Questions
1. Please talk about your experiences and perceptions of the PLC?

2. What did you consider the advantages or disadvantages of the PLC meetings?

    a. What would you change about the meetings if you were redesigning an experience like this in the future?

3. How did participation in the PLC influence the ways you design and conduct scholarship?
    a. The partners with whom you conduct scholarship?

    b. The topics of your scholarship?

4. How did participation in the PLC affect your scholarly productivity?
    a. How did it affect your teaching?

    b. How did it affect your community engagement or engagement across campus?

5. How did participation in the COE Scholarship Reconsidered professional learning community result in you making conscious changes in the way you view or conduct scholarship?

6. Did you find yourself more interested in pursuing scholarship with students or other faculty after the PLC?
    a. What were the results?

7. How would you like to see the PLC going forward? (ex: faculty ownership; faculty professional development)

8. How can faculty be motivated to be more fully engaged in the PLC and in producing more scholarship related to teaching, discovery, integration, and application?

9. Is there anything else you would like to share?

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