

[▲ Home](#)[◀ Contents](#)**Options and Possibility: Scholarship in the SIAST Nursing Division**  
**An example of advancing scholarship in the polytechnic environment***by Diana Davidson Dick***Development and Scholarship**

The development of people is the Queen Bee in relation to the growth and productivity (Kidd, 2002) of programs, institutions and countries. It is the centre of the concentric circle of sustained improvement. Personal and professional development evokes interest, motivation, and possibility. The development of people includes the development of self, of others, and of providing the environment and emotional and practical infrastructure to allow people to engage in and take charge of their own development. With a supportive environment, people can explore the possibility of ideas and options, develop new skills and knowledge. Such growth fosters a sense of self-discovery and encountering others in new ways. The development of the individual contributes to the development of the collective. The consequence is a synergy of effort whereby goals are met and the unit advances forward. In considering the development of a unit such as a nursing school or a health science school, attention must be paid to the development of both staff and faculty to be true to development principles and to address the full potential and possibility of the unit.

This paper briefly outlines scholarship development as a strategy for the development of faculty as individuals and as a collective. This includes the development of ideas, curricula design and implementation in the Nursing Division, Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST). Different strategies were designed and implemented for and by the administrative support staff and these will not be addressed in this paper. Both groups charted their course in combination with the leadership and support of the dean, and the senior management team both of the school of nursing and of the institution.

**Background**

In 1998 SIAST became one provincial post secondary educational institute/college with four campuses in four major cities: Saskatoon, Regina, Moose Jaw and Prince Albert. This new single organization replaced four previously separate and competing Institutes. The Nursing Division and the first dean of nursing position were created with programs offered in three of the four campuses. Led by the dean, the Division has developed into a school of nursing with currently 133 faculty, 16 staff, and 14 programs offered on-site, on-line and through other distance methods. In 2000 the legislative mandate of SIAST was amended to include applied research, and the

institution adopted a framework of a Quality Learning Organization (QLO). A significant amount of funding for professional development was part of a negotiated contract. The SIAST requirement for faculty teaching in the collaborative baccalaureate RN program was a master's degree or a master in progress. Additional funding was allocated to the Nursing Division for a 5 year period to support faculty in completing their master's degrees and for additional education and professional development.

With the establishment of the Nursing Division, a strategic planning process led by the dean was undertaken to launch the division's future direction to create a vision and future for the new provincial school. This included an incremental and practical approach to the pursuit of applied research, enhanced education, presentation and publication opportunities, built on the solid strengths and reputation of each of the previous independent and competing schools of nursing. Key events and activities were designed to build bridges, and further develop a community of highly skilled professionals into one new school of nursing in three of the four provincial campuses from two previously competing schools of nursing in Regina and Saskatoon.

### **The Boyer Model of Scholarship**

In November 2001 the Canadian Association of University Schools of Nursing (CAUSN) endorsed the Boyer Model of Scholarship. The SIAST Nursing Division adopted the Boyer Model of Scholarship in 2002. Developed by Ernest L. Boyer, this model expands the traditional view of research and teaching to one that focuses on four aspects of scholarship: teaching, application, integration and discovery. In his paper *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* (1990), Boyer re-introduced the scholarship of teaching and crafted a framework of scholarship that went beyond research and publications. This approach allows for faculty participation in scholarship in a way that is inclusive, meaningful and pertinent to the individual faculty member. (See Addendum)

Key to the Boyer model is the central notion that the four categories of teaching, application, integration and discovery are intended to be inclusive guides for application. He speaks of faculty as "a mosaic of talent with each person developing his/her own particular form of inquiry and professional development toward the generation of new knowledge. Such a mosaic honours the contribution of each individual in the creation of a community of scholars." (Boyer p. 23) Boyer's work "demonstrates the role of re-framing, challenging boundaries and tradition, re-conceptualization, inclusiveness, and relationships in the movement toward constructive progress." (Davidson Dick, 2002)

The Fast-Forwarding of Scholarship Development:  
The Boyer model of Scholarship and the Scholar-in-Residence  
Program

### **Summary and Context**

An incremental approach to development was adopted by the dean beginning in 1998 with a focus on building community and a shared pride in expertise and achievements.

Examples of building include:

- Annual faculty and staff meetings with workshops by guest academic and policy leaders on topics such as strategic planning, collaborative research, writing research proposals, the Boyer Model of Scholarship, career and education pathing, Holiday Season open house events and on one occasion live jazz at lunch.
- Annual newsletter with a message from the dean on topical issues, program development, and documenting and celebrating faculty and staff achievements, awards, milestones and honours.
- Leadership provided by the dean; envisioning and creating a context supporting a cultural shift in scholarly expectations within the school.
- Resources to support this context were provided by the Institution through QLO funding, the collective agreement provisions and the Dean's Office.
- Faculty augmented their education credentials such as pursuing masters and doctoral degrees.

The Scholar-in-Residence Program: The key strategy in Scholarship Development

Feb. 27, 2004:

Announcement of the establishment of a Scholar-in-Residence program "to support faculty development in the four components of the Boyer model of Scholarship: teaching, practice (application), integration, and discovery (the development of new knowledge)".

The program included elements such as workshops on qualitative research, considerations for funding proposals including budget development, and dissemination of scholarship such as writing for publication, and abstract presentations. Faculty members were advised that they would be consulted regarding particular additional needs for discussion with the Scholar regarding feasibility.

Annual Faculty one-day meeting and workshop at a Golf and Country Club, Saskatoon with Dr. David Gregory, Professor and former Dean of Nursing, University of Manitoba and SIAST Nursing Division Scholar-in-Residence.

All-day workshop led by Dr. Gregory Scholarship:

a Reflective Workshop with guests from partner institutions and programs invited.

Included the launch of three two-year (2004-2006) priority and overlapping projects: Mentorship, Best Practice and Patient Safety. Followed by a welcoming reception for the Scholar-in Residence with senior

academic and administrative guests and greetings from the President.

Components of the Scholar-in-Residence Program to date: (from Aug. 2004)

Workshops and presentations including Reflections: Tracing Research Paths in an Academic Career (Dr. Gregory's research path as exemplar), Writing for Publication, Scholarly Work: A Reflective Workshop, and Research Grant Writing.

On-site visits at Regina and Saskatoon campuses with Prince Albert faculty joining.

In-person and telephone consultations, advisements by appointment through the office of the dean.

In-person and telephone meetings with the members of the three scholarship projects: Mentorship, Best Practice and Patient Safety.

Timely review of draft articles, proposals.

#### Key Factors in the development of scholarship and the Scholar-in-Residence Program

Building on the strengths and reputation of the faculty prior to the 1998 creation of one provincial SIASST.

Setting the stage through strategic planning, consultation and support for pursuit of educational, and development opportunities including academic keynote workshop leaders on topics such as collaborative research, grants proposal writing from 1998 to present.

Faculty pursuit of graduate education.

Met need for support.

Wisdom, expertise, guidance opening of possibilities.

Scholar as colleague; respectful engagement, communication, exploration and direction.

Recognition of the expertise and achievements of the faculty by the Scholar.

Financial support from the SIASST QLO fund and the Professional development fund.

#### Successes

Validation of value of work, ideas.

Broadened understanding of concept of scholarship and “scholarly currency” of teaching practices.

Motivating re documentation of “everyday practices”.

Publications.

Engaging with colleagues, research activities.

Sense of direction and purpose to discussions.

Affirmation that management supports the development of faculty and scholarship.

Clear direction offered in the context of consultation.

Examples of improved curricula and pedagogy (some projects were accorded faculty development time, for example, the development of patient safety curricula concepts).

Greater job satisfaction reported by some faculty members.

Barriers

Time pressures.

Workload and work assignment.

Scholarly work not considered as part of work assignments under the collective agreement.

Expressed need for greater financial support.

Multiple roles of faculty in the school and in personal, volunteer, community and professional life.

Lack of interest in some cases.

Expectation of on-site Scholar (decreased by second survey after 11 months of the program).

Some programs have a small number of faculty, with fewer to share the work and time of scholarly activities.

Lack of infrastructure such as administrative support, particularly for the three scholarship projects. This has recently been addressed through funding to provide administrative support for the three projects – patient safety, mentorship and best practice - for coordination and communication re meeting schedules, minute-taking and information dissemination.

### **Faculty Survey Results**

Faculty were surveyed on the Scholar-in-Residence Program at 2 months (Oct. 2004) and 11 months (Sept. 2005) following its inception with a response rate of 57% (50/88) and 33% (38/114) respectively. The survey questions addressed response to the workshops by the Scholar-in-Residence, participation in the program, benefits of the program and suggested changes in the program. In addition to those items noted above, the results showed enthusiasm for the work and the initiative, appreciation for the program, pride in the division and the institution (the brand) (Izzo, 2006). There are those who find the workshops and presentations interesting, but can not participate now because of time, work assignment, work-life balance, or because of the stage of their career.

Faculty were surveyed in Feb. 2006 to assess changes in faculty participation in scholarship activities each academic year since 1998/99, the year that the Nursing Division was created. The results are forthcoming. Preliminary findings with a response rate of 30% (36/120) show that: in 03/04 the participation rate in scholarship activities such as submitting abstracts, conference presentations, number of awards, number of publications doubled from the relatively steady state of previous years.

In most activities the rate doubled again in 04/05 and has continued to increase in 05/06.

The increase in activity in 03/04 can in part be accounted for by a faculty workshop on the Boyer model of Scholarship which was followed by the establishment of the Teaching Scholarship Forum, stimulating increased professional development and scholarship activities.

There are areas that have an even greater rate of increase. For example, the number of conference presentations more than tripled in 04/05 and almost tripled again in 05/06. The number of research/evaluation projects faculty are involved in has increased by 7 times from 04/05 to 05/06.

The marked increase in 04/05 and 05/06 can be accounted for by the effectiveness and work of the Scholar-in Residence and the program, the establishment of the three scholarship projects (mentorship, best practice and patient safety) and the continuing work of the Teaching Scholarship Forum. There has also been anecdotal reporting of an increase in student scholarship activities presumably generated by the encouragement and enthusiasm of the faculty.

### Summary

The most recent faculty survey results suggest that the introduction of the Boyer model of scholarship, the Scholar-in-Residence Program and the attributes of the Scholar-in-Residence have played a significant role in the increase in scholarly activity by faculty in the SIAST Nursing Division.

The testimony provided in the 04/05 and 05/06 survey results suggest increased professional and personal development and sense of transformational achievement among those who participated in scholarly work. There appears to be a palpable increase in energy with faculty expressing a joyfulness resulting from the experience of the valuing and validation of their work and ideas beyond the work environment and in the public domain. The “third party endorsement” by the Scholar in Residence of the high level of professionalism, creativity, expertise and drive has created both greater sense of joy and greater productivity among faculty.

### **Conclusion**

In the post secondary polytechnic, college or institute environment, Scholarship can be a key instrument of faculty development, and in the example of the Scholar-in-Residence Program at the SIAST Nursing Division the results have had a tangible and intangible effect. One of the results is the clear desire of many faculty to further pursue scholarship development thus creating demands for consideration in work and teaching assignment. The Program has generated great interest and energy within the Nursing Division, throughout SIAST and among colleagues across the country. It is a model well worth replication.

The application of this model appears to validate Ernest Boyer's important re-framework for scholarship 16 years ago when he also reclaimed a central role for the scholarship of teaching and learning. This model challenges the over 100-year tradition established by Cambridge and Oxford Universities when they decided to emphasize research and publication.

There is an implication that greater involvement in inclusive collaborative and individual scholarship results in greater job satisfaction, enhanced enthusiasm and motivation. This suggests improved teaching and by inference improved learning. Better teaching and greater understanding of scholarship infer greater emphasis on evidence in teaching and practice on the part of students and graduates of programs in these institutions. These issues themselves need further study and the application of scholarship in the polytechnic, college and institute environment.

### **Addendum**

#### **The Boyer Model of Scholarship**

In the Boyer model the scholarship of discovery represents the traditional view of research resulting in the in the creation of new knowledge using quantitative or qualitative methodologies. The scholarship of teaching is defined as the facilitation of knowledge transfer from the expert to the novice. The maintenance of clinical competency of faculty and the advancement of clinical knowledge in the discipline of nursing or other practice-based professions are critical components of the scholarship of application. The synthesis of knowledge from isolated facts or other disciplines into new meaning or perspectives underpin the scholarship of integration, including critical analysis and interpretation. As well, interdisciplinary work may take

place through any medium for scholarship, such as those described as discovery, teaching or practice. Since scholarship is both an art and a science one category may overlap with another. (Storch, p. 526 ).

New models of the design and delivery of education -developed through partnerships, collaboration, joint ventures and reflecting new definitions of scholarship -are changing the face of education in the polytechnic, college and institute environment. In any environment, progress is measured in part by the removal of boundaries and reframing of traditions and practices. The concepts advanced by Ernest L. Boyer illustrate the importance and power that shifting paradigms has in facilitating progress. Ernest L. Boyer, in *Scholarship Reconsidered*, challenged existing views of teaching, research and the traditions of post-secondary education. The work of both of these scholars demonstrates the role of re-framing, challenging boundaries and tradition, re-conceptualization, inclusiveness, and relationships in the movement toward constructive progress. The SIAST Nursing Division has taken pride in participating in and contributing to this movement.

#### **With Appreciation to**

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Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST)  
As a Quality Learning Organization and the QLO Fund  
The Collective Agreement Negotiated Professional Development  
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