Plan for a SoTL Project

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| **Research Question**  What are you curious about?  What would you like to know about strategies that might hinder and/or help students to learn, in your course?  Do you want to know if an activity, assignment, or teaching strategy “works?”  Do you have a question about how to help your students learn a particular skill?  I would like to investigate the following: How could Self-evaluation and Peer Assessment/ Feedback help students in a shop setting?  Instead of all feedback coming from instructors, how would peer feedback be received? Would it result in better projects? Will students give constructive feedback, or just ‘good job buddy’ to classmates? |
| **Identify challenge/outcome related to learning that is related to your question.**  Describe the learning in a way that suggests how you might *measure* it using either qualitative or quantitative methods.  Measuring this will be difficult. I think to start, students would need to do a self-evaluation on their first project. That can be used as the baseline. Then, for future projects that have peer feedback, the ‘marks’ can be compared. Also, for the final project students could complete another self-evaluation to see areas of improvement. |
| **Describe the instructional activity, assignment, or teaching strategy that will promote student learning on the outcome you identified.**  SoTL projects might investigate the impact of a *modification* to an existing strategy or assignment. Describe how the new approach differs from the old approach and why this modification might change student learning on this outcome.  There would have to be a modification to the project timelines, since evaluations take time. Additional time will need to be allocated for self-evaluations, and peer evaluations. Examining another person’s project could have a student really thinking about why they did their own a particular way. This may have them consider doing it a different way, or feel good about the choices they made. Both of these have value. |
| **Describe the evidence that would persuade an external audience that the new or modified teaching strategy improves student learning on the targeted learning outcome.**  Describe the evidence you would need to collect to answer questions about the impact or value of this teaching strategy. How would you convince others that this approach is better than other approaches? What comparisons should you make? Examine students; skill before and after the assignment? Compare students who complete the learning activity to another group of students – what comparisons would be meaningful?  I think photographic evidence would speak the loudest. Pictures of the first projects of the term, and final projects. If I am correct that peer evaluation would lead to improved work, the photos should provide that evidence. I think a survey from students at the end may be beneficial as well, particularly determining their thoughts on the amount of time it took. |
| **How and where would you publish, present, or disseminate this work?**  **I would share these findings with other faculty. It would most likely be informal, during lunch breaks, but also at end of term reviews.** |
| **Considerations for ethical concerns:**  It will be important to be clear on if self/peer feedbacks have any weight on the course marks, or not. I think for the first class I will start with it not being part of the course grade. There may be a small percent for completing feedbacks, but those marks will not be related to the values on those feedback sheets. This can lesson the fear that participation is dependent on participation/ their relationship with peers (if they like them they might grade better).Another important thing will be to not use names if creating a chart with any results. |
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Adapted from: C. J. Stanny, E. M. El-Sheikh, & H-M. Chung (2009) ***Getting Started with a SoTL Project***

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