

---

# REDEFINING SCHOLARSHIP

Don Forrester  
Director of CETL

**L**eadership Kennesaw State recently conducted a session entitled "Leadership in Higher Education," during which Ernest Boyer's book *Scholarship Reconsidered* served as the basis for discussion. Boyer makes a strong case for a much broader definition of scholarship which would include four areas:

Discovery: new knowledge gathered through a process of pure research.

Integration: the process of making connections and giving meaning and perspective to knowledge.

Application: the direction of knowledge and skill toward the fulfillment of "real world" needs.

Teaching: scholarly teaching, which rises above training or mere passing on of information.

The members of Leadership Kennesaw State made some observations regarding the college's priorities for these four thrusts. Here are a few:

● Pure research (Discovery) should be honored at KSC, but its priority should be no higher than Integration or Application. While the administration recognizes this, sometimes departmental Personnel Action Committees do not. Promotion and/or tenure should not be withheld solely because a faculty member has not excelled at publishing in refereed journals. Evaluation should not be limited to counting articles, but should include some form of peer review, including that by off-campus colleagues.

● Integrative scholarship, because of its innovative nature, is often perceived as "fluff" or too "flighty" for an institution such as ours. However, it is hard to deny solid scholarship when connections are made between new knowledge and the vanguard of a discipline, or when rele-

vance is established between two points of the same discipline, or when the boundaries of a discipline are explored to find points of convergence with other disciplines. The faculty member should document achievements in a variety of ways, including: 1) Planning (with CETL's assistance) discussion groups which cross subject or disciplinary lines; 2) Obtaining grants which support integrative activities; 3) Sharing findings through conference papers and published articles; 4) Gathering internal and external peer evaluations; 5) Showing evidence of integrative scholarship in the classroom (e.g., tandem courses, team-teaching); 6) Writing a textbook which makes pure research findings accessible to students.

● The scholarship of application is subsumed under what KSC calls "service," but must be distinguished from that part of service which merely involves "doing good." While the latter should be rewarded, the scholarship of application requires the involvement of one's professional expertise. Examples may include solving environmental problems, addressing social, health, or educational issues, or taking the arts to the community. Boyer says, "New intellectual understandings can arise out of the very act of application—whether in medical diagnosis, serving clients in psychotherapy, shaping public policy, creating an architectural design, or working with the public schools. In activities such as these, theory and practice vitally interact, and one renews the other."

The discussion group's perception was that the scholarship of application is sometimes recognized, but usually under-rewarded in terms of promotion and tenure. Perhaps this is because of a lack of evaluation guidelines, which could include 1) Written external evaluation, when appropriate, or internal, when appropriate; 2) Evidence of physical results of the activity; 3) Efforts which demon-

strate to students and peers how theory and practice interact; 4) Reports of new knowledge (or indications for further research) which grew out of the activity.

● Teaching should be and is the top priority on our campus, but we need to be sure our definition of teaching is broader than sharing information. Teaching requires keeping current in one's field, bringing scholarly preparation to one's classes, experimenting with new methodologies and improving old ones, and providing out-of-class experiences, including one-on-one mentoring.

We need to find a way to evaluate teaching more thoroughly and more objectively than we are, presently. Student evaluations, it was generally agreed, have some value, but are only a partial solution. A voluntary peer evaluation system patterned after the New Jersey model is worth considering. Also worthy of consideration is the HPER Department's system of developing a course portfolio, including a syllabus, tests, audiovisuals, and handouts. Combining Boyer's suggestions with their own, the Leadership Kennesaw State group developed a teaching evaluation portfolio model which would include:

- The professor's written philosophy of teaching.
- Student evaluations.
- Self-evaluations.
- Peer evaluations (preferably from other departments).
- Syllabus and test samples which have been reviewed by colleagues.
- Documentation of contributions to and participation in teaching conferences.
- Copies of articles contributed to teaching journals.

Group members agreed that, given its prominence at KSC, good teaching should be recognized and rewarded in every way possible. A way to evaluate teaching seems to be a good place to start. ●