The SoTL Essay

SoTL essays focus on issues related to the development, use, and support of SoTL in post-secondary education (3,000–5,000 words, including references).

What is the SoTL essay?

The SoTL Essay is a submission type that authors can opt for when they want to share a philosophical or practice-oriented point of view, presenting a coherent argument or reflection resulting from analysis of the specific topic. Formalized data collection is not a requirement for an essay, but the arguments and analysis presented should still be informed by existing literature and experience with the topic, and the essay should present a structured argument with a clear introduction with an objective and thesis, a body, and a conclusion. Essays can be developed from a disciplinary focus or from a broad perspective of student learning or scholarly teaching, and they can serve to present a philosophical stance, an analysis of a topic or issue, a reflection on one's own teaching practice, or a critique of existing practices for the purposes of advancing our understanding of teaching and learning or positioning future inquiry. As Yeo and Miller-Young (2024) advise, SoTl is not only grounded in context, but it is also informed by a theoretical lens. Thus, we expect essays to be situated in theoretical and conceptual frameworks for teaching and learning.

While we expect to see essay submissions that follow a traditional format with an introduction, body, and conclusion, we encourage essays that are drawn from nontraditional modes of academic presentation. The SoTL essay is the visioning of the community in that authors are encouraged to describe their experiences, critically reflect on the teaching and learning context, and conduct an analytical review of the experiences for the benefit of a multidisciplinary audience.

Why should you choose to submit a SoTL essay?

Is there a teaching and activity that you have developed, tried out, or conceptualized and you would like to share it with the SoTL community? Have you had a teaching experience that defies theoretical and common-place understandings of higher education? Have you had a learning experience that you would recommend to other educators? Would you like to engage existing literature on a topic and add your own analytical insights to the conversation? Perhaps there is a question that you would like to explore but have not been able to find a resource that addresses it fully. Your essay would be breaking new ground. These are just some of the areas where your teaching projects can be shared in the essay form.

Essays can be multiauthored, but we encourage you to consider the SoTL Conversation category if you and your collaborators have divergent perspectives and these perspectives can both be held in tandem with each other.

While authors of essays are not typically expected to provide REB approvals because they describe contexts that have not required formal data collection, we caution authors to be mindful of ethical considerations when describing contexts and teaching situations where there is a risk that persons and institutions can be identified.

Are there examples of SoTL essays that I can consult?

Felten, P. (2013). Principles of good practice in SoTL. *Teaching and Learning Inquiry, 1*(1), 121–125.

> This essential reading for SoTL is a theoretical-analytical description of what constitutes SoTL, based on the field's accomplishments at the time of the publication. It has come to be recognized as a thoughtful, appropriate overview of SoTL.

Reference

Yeo, M. M. L., Miller-Young, J., & Manarin, K. (2024). *SoTL research methodologies: A guide to conceptualizing and conducting the scholarship of teaching and learning*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003447054

Contact Information

For more information, and inquiries about our submission categories, please visit our website at https://journals.macewan.ca/pip or contact us via email at pip@macewan.ca.