THE SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS TEACHING SCHOLAR PROGRAM

In March 2000 the School of Liberal Arts, in collaboration with the Campus Conversations on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning initiated the School of Liberal Arts Teaching Scholars program. Each year the program gathers together 5 SLA faculty members, in staggered appointments of two years each, in a learning community dedicated to exploring the meaning and value of the scholarship of teaching and learning (SOTL) both in their own teaching and in the broader life of the school. The program seeks to build a critical mass of SLA faculty knowledgeable about and committed to SOTL.

The program recognized that advancing SOTL required both individual commitment to teaching and learning and peer support and review of work done in pursuing better teaching practices and methods for capturing and presenting work to qualify as SOTL. It also locates its mission as shared with the work of the SLA Teaching and Advising Committee. That committee oversees the recruitment and selection of SLA Teaching Scholars and supports their work as appropriate.

Each cohort meets regularly throughout the year to explore what constitutes SOTL and how SOTL figures in their work in SLA. Early on in the year the Scholars develop among themselves some common understanding of SOTL, and then do what they can to share that understanding with colleagues in their departments and in the school. Some cohorts might choose to focus their energies on collaborating on their own projects to experiment with their own teaching. Others might invest time and energy in bringing in speakers or developing presentations themselves that will help other SLA faculty to understand SOTL and begin their own SOTL work.

Each participant receives a stipend ($500) to cover professional expenses they may incur as part of their SOTL work. The cohort meets regularly during the year and participates in retreats and other activities with other IUPUI faculty learning communities. Participants agree to be available to meet with the faculty learning community and make its work a priority in their professional life for the appointment year.

At the end of their two-year appointment, the exiting SLA Teaching Scholars help the SLA Teaching and Advising Committee in recruiting new Teaching Scholars to replace them. Thus, each year’s cohort has 2 or 3 continuing members and 3 or 2 new ones.

The 2003-2004 cohort of SLA Teaching Scholars included Kate Duffy (04), Ron Sandwina (04), Katherine Wills (05), Archana Dube (05), and Aye Nu Duerksen (05).