Studying the Pedagogy of Public Engagement: From Scholarly Teaching to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Peter Mortensen
Department of English
Overview

• Problems → Solution?
• “Community-based Learning” Project
  – Outline ▪ Structure ▪ Aims
• Study (2004-05, Fall 2005)
  – Scholarly Teaching
• Study (Fall 2006)
  – Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
Problems

- Teaching of English majors need field experience before applying for admission to secondary teaching minor
- Community groups want academic departments to enhance the school curriculum
- Schools need volunteer tutors
Solution?

Project Outline

• Offered as ENGL 199, Undergraduate Open Seminar
• Partnered with the Urban League of Champaign County
• Located at Champaign Central High School (after school in the campus Media Center)
Project Structure

• UIUC English majors develop reading and writing activities that focus on the importance of literacy in the African American cultural tradition

• UIUC English majors provide writing tutorials for Central students on a drop-in basis
Project Aims

• To encourage UIUC English majors to consider teaching careers in urban schools

• To encourage high school students—especially students of color—to consider college (and possibly UIUC) as a choice after graduation
Study: 2004-05

• Scholarly Teaching
  - Reflective writing at beginning, middle, and end of semester
  - Focus group conducted by CTE

• Findings
  - Concerns about venue and structure
  - Findings useful for course revision but not for publication
Study: Fall 2005

- Scholarly Teaching
  - New venue: Centennial High School
  - New structure: in school rather than after school
  - Reflective writing to assess perceptions of new venue and structure
Study: Fall 2006

- Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
  - Conflict of interest eliminated
    - ENGL 199 administered by C. Prendergast
    - P. Mortensen no longer on Secondary Teaching Minor admissions committee
  - Qualitative analysis planned
    - UIUC students’ reflective writing
    - Observation of UIUC students on-site
    - Review of admissions essays
Publication

• Relevant Journals
  – *Pedagogy* (Duke University Press)
  – *College English* (NCTE)

• Contributions
  – External: “Service learning” → “Community-based learning”
  – Internal: argument for departmental support
Contact

Peter Mortensen
Department of English
333-1006
pmortens@uiuc.edu