

# Chapter 2

## Transforming Pedagogy: Best Practices for SoTL in Online Learning Environments

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The improvement of educational practices in virtual spaces is the focus of this chapter's exploration of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). It offers a thorough introduction to SoTL highlighting its significance in the context of online learning for both teachers and students. Exploring cutting-edge techniques that enhance student engagement and learning outcomes the chapter explores best practices for successful online teaching backed by research and case studies. In addition, the chapter looks at how online educators should always be improving their professional development and how to use professional learning communities (PLCs) to promote collaboration. It also discusses the value of having students participate in SoTL projects and the advantages of having learners involved in these endeavours. Common issues that educators run into when conducting SoTL online are covered along with workable fixes and effective case studies.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) has become an essential foundation for improving teaching methods via the incorporation of academic research into the process of teaching and learning. SoTL, which is defined as a methodical analysis of teaching and learning practices, helps teachers to evaluate their pedagogical strategies, collect information on student learning, and make well-informed decisions

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that promote better learning outcomes. With the use of this academic approach, teachers may investigate a wide range of facets of their teaching techniques, including technology integration, student involvement, curriculum creation, and assessment tactics. SoTL fosters a culture of continuous improvement throughout educational institutions in addition to enhancing the performance of individual teachers by placing a high priority on evidence-based approaches (Fukuzawa & Rawle, 2020). The need of SoTL has become more apparent in recent years in online learning settings, which have grown exponentially as a result of global events like the COVID-19 epidemic and technical improvements. The transition to online learning has put established pedagogical approaches to the test and called for a reassessment of how instruction takes place in virtual environments. A strong foundation for comprehending and improving online teaching is offered by SoTL, which helps instructors navigate this constantly changing environment. In order to enhance student learning, encourage engagement, and solve the particular difficulties of virtual classrooms, instructors must employ SoTL in online learning settings. Under the SoTL paradigm, for example, research might reveal best practices for online discussion forums, emphasizing the ways in which prompts, and timely response can promote student involvement and deeper learning (Botes & Botha, 2021).

Furthermore, SoTL gives teachers the instruments they need to evaluate the effectiveness of their online instruction. Understanding how students engage with peers and course material in virtual environments requires a self-reflective approach. By using SoTL, teachers may collect information using a variety of techniques, including surveys, student evaluations, and reflective diaries, to examine how their pedagogical decisions are affecting the performance of their students. In an online course, for instance, a teacher may use the flipped classroom approach, in which students participate in group projects during synchronous meetings and review lecture materials at home. Through an analysis of student performance and feedback, the instructor may ascertain the efficacy of this strategy and implement any required modifications to improve learning outcomes (Eady et al., 2021).

This chapter's goals and objectives are to examine effective strategies for integrating SoTL in virtual learning environments, with a focus on the value of evidence-based pedagogy in promoting successful teaching and learning. The objective of this chapter is to furnish instructors with pragmatic approaches for incorporating SoTL ideas into their virtual classes, hence augmenting student involvement and academic achievements. It will also provide several instances of effective SoTL efforts in online learning environments, demonstrating how teachers have innovated their teaching strategies by utilizing research and reflective practices. Important subjects covered in this chapter include the function of evaluation in SoTL, the value of community and teamwork in online learning, and methods for creating a welcoming and encouraging online learning environment (Gansemer-Topf et al., 2021). The importance of

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