

<https://www.historians.org/jobs-and-professional-development/statements-standards-and-guidelines-of-the-discipline/guidelines-for-the-incorporation-of-the-scholarship-of-teaching-and-learning-in-the-work-of-the-history-profession>

## **Guidelines for the Incorporation of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in the Work of the History Profession (2019)**

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*Approved by AHA Council January 2019.*

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) in History represents a major contribution to the mission of the American Historical Association (AHA) and the discipline and profession of History. Historians in this field present scholarly arguments about historical pedagogy, situate their work in the context of a larger literature on the topic, and rely upon evidence to support their claims. Its products may be shared and evaluated using many of the processes that have been developed for the consideration of other forms of historical research such as conference presentations and peer-reviewed or invited articles, books, and book chapters. Beyond its own value as an independent area of inquiry, it can make major contributions to our profession at all levels from K-12 through graduate programs.

Historians contribute to SoTL in History in five significant ways:

### **A. As producers of knowledge about history pedagogy**

Some historians make the scholarship of teaching and learning a part of their research agenda. As in other historical research, they define intellectual problems in the field, systematically collect evidence, come to reasoned conclusions, and place their work in the context of a larger body of literature. They share their work through conference presentations, publications, or digital media. In some cases this work may be captured in non-traditional means of expression, such as the course portfolio, but in whatever form this work takes, it should be evidence-based, clearly argued, and available for evaluation by other scholars in the field and by colleagues in hiring, tenure, promotion, and salary decisions.

### **B. As scholarly teachers**

History instructors can apply research-based ideas from the scholarship of teaching and learning in their course planning, teaching, assignments and/or assessments. As an evidence-based body of literature, SoTL helps individual instructors frame their own teaching-related questions in the context of research on history teaching and learning. It provides vocabulary and enlarged theoretical perspectives from which to inform and transform individual courses. In some cases this may result in "wisdom of practice" publications or presentations that describe strategies used in particular courses; these are useful contributions to our collective teaching mission, but are distinct from the theoretical and evidence-based exploration of pedagogical issues in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

### **C. As colleagues and contributors to department and institutional curricula**

The scholarship of teaching and learning presents new opportunities and poses new challenges to historians as members of departments and of higher educational institutions in three crucial areas: classroom practice, curricular development, and faculty rewards and recognition.

### *Classroom practice that fosters a culture of teaching*

There is no more important *collective* responsibility for a history *department* than ensuring that its students receive effective instruction. A department can encourage a culture of teaching among faculty by assisting the flow of ideas from SoTL in history into the classroom. In some cases it may be desirable to create initiatives that use this body of knowledge to respond to department-wide challenges, such as bottlenecks in student learning, diversity issues, or emotional resistance to material generated by topics that some students find controversial.

### *Department-wide curricular alignment*

SoTL offers help in creating curriculum that introduces students to history content and skills based on systematic analyses of the challenges faced in the classroom by students at each level. Such research, drawn from our own discipline, can further inform departments charged with campus-mandated curriculum alignment processes or developing assessment data.

### *Faculty Rewards and Recognition*

Because the scholarship of teaching and learning has a meaningful role in the work of our profession, departments, colleges, and universities have a responsibility to recognize and reward contributions to this field in making decisions concerning hiring, tenure, promotion, renewal, and salary. As is always the case with a new area of scholarly endeavor in our discipline, chairs and departmental committees must gain some understanding of the norms in this field and, in some cases, solicit the evaluation of outside experts in this specialty.

We strongly encourage departments to consider how they will recognize and reward engagement with SoTL as a consideration in the effectiveness of teaching in the discipline (<https://www.teachingframework.com/>) and as a research field.

## **D. As mentors in training the next generation of historians**

AHA research shows that close to 70% of historians end up as faculty (tenure-track and non-tenure-track) in an institution of higher education (2-year or 4-year, research intensive or teaching intensive).<sup>[1]</sup> The development of an extensive body of literature on teaching and learning in history provides departments an opportunity to better prepare future historians, especially those who will enter the professoriate.

## **E. As a national organization of historians**

As the professional disciplinary society for historians in the United States the AHA has the responsibility to promote this work, uphold standards for its practice, and recognize its study as a scholarly endeavor and a means of improving the quality of teaching and learning in the discipline.

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[1] Interactive Database, "What Do People Do With a History PhD?: Employment Outcomes for all Alumni," American Historical Association, accessed May 17, 2018, <https://www.historians.org/jobs-and-professional-development/career-diversity-for-historians/career-diversity-resources/where-historians-work-an-interactive-database-of-history-phd-career-outcomes>.