

SoTL²: *Inquiring into the Impact of Inquiry*

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Outline

- Background: MRU and the Nexen Scholars Program
- Assessing Impact
- Emerging Findings and Discussion



Institutional Context

- Mount Royal University
 - Became a University in 2009
 - Instructionally focused
 - Teaching and teaching/scholarship streams
- Institute and Nexen scholars program also started in 2009
 - Initially funded from Provost and Dean budgets
 - Now running on external donations
- New Director in 2013
- Background

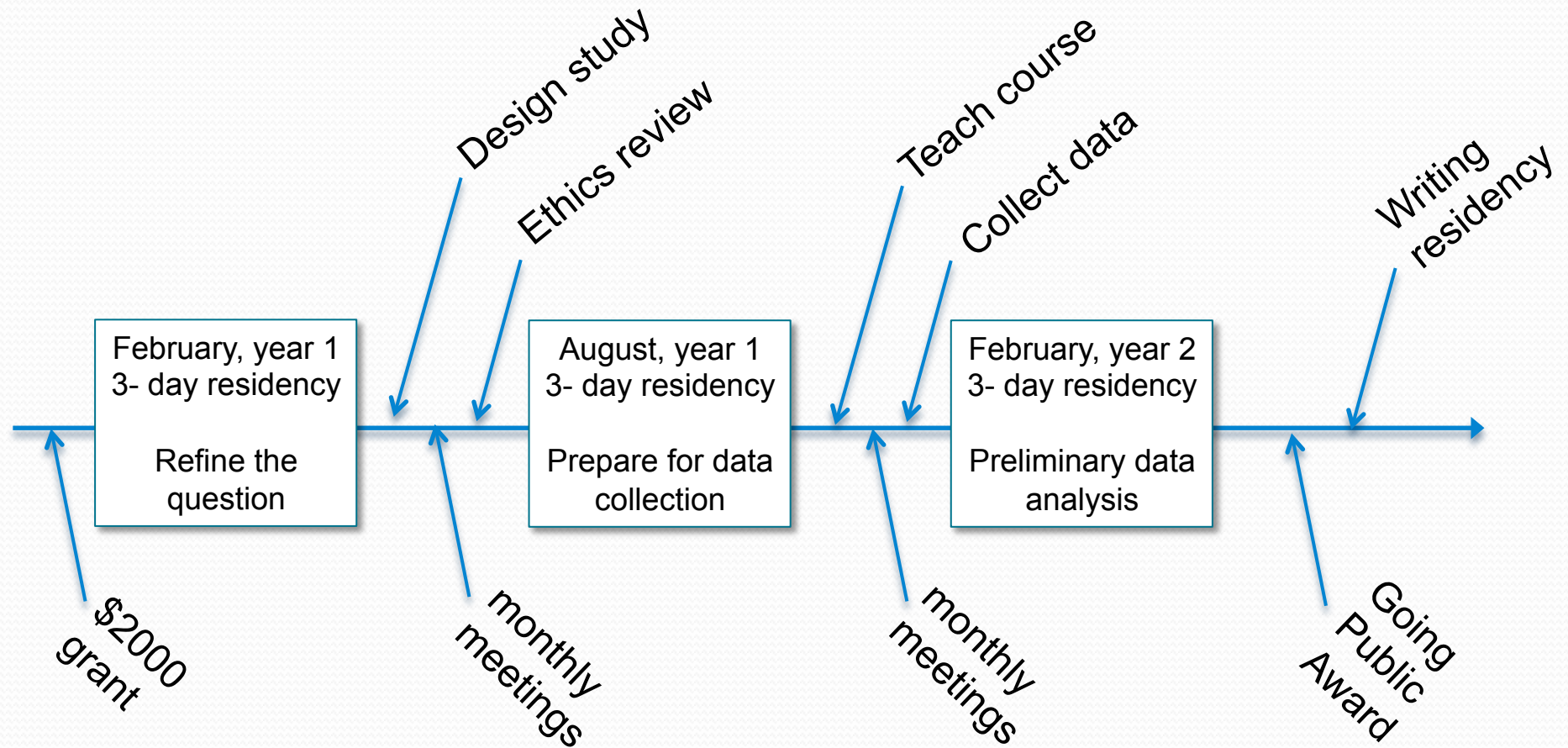
Nexen Scholars Program 2009 - 2014

Participation



- ‘mini’ Carnegie Scholars Program
 - Interested faculty apply in fall with a proposed research topic and brief literature review
 - One cohort per year, has varied in size from 3 – 12
 - 3 retreats over a year facilitated by previous scholars
-
- **Background**

Program format



- Background

Program outcomes

Dissemination

33

Going
Public
Awards



9

Peer-
reviewed
publications



Research questions

- What were faculty member's goals for participating in the program?
- Did they achieve their goals?
- How has the program and/or their project impacted their teaching, scholarship, and career trajectory?

- **Background**
- **Assessing Impact**



Methods

- Recruitment: all program participants 2009-2013 invited to participate by email
- 2-phase data collection
 - online survey
 - follow-up interview
- Confidential but not anonymous
- Study cleared by MRU HREB

- Background
- Assessing Impact

Methods

- Total participants
 - Survey: 22
 - Interviews: 17
 - Good representation across Faculties

Cohort year	# of participants
2009	7/10
2010	6/12
2011	3/11
2012	5/6
2013	4/6
Total	25/45

- Background
- Assessing Impact



Methods

- Survey questions:

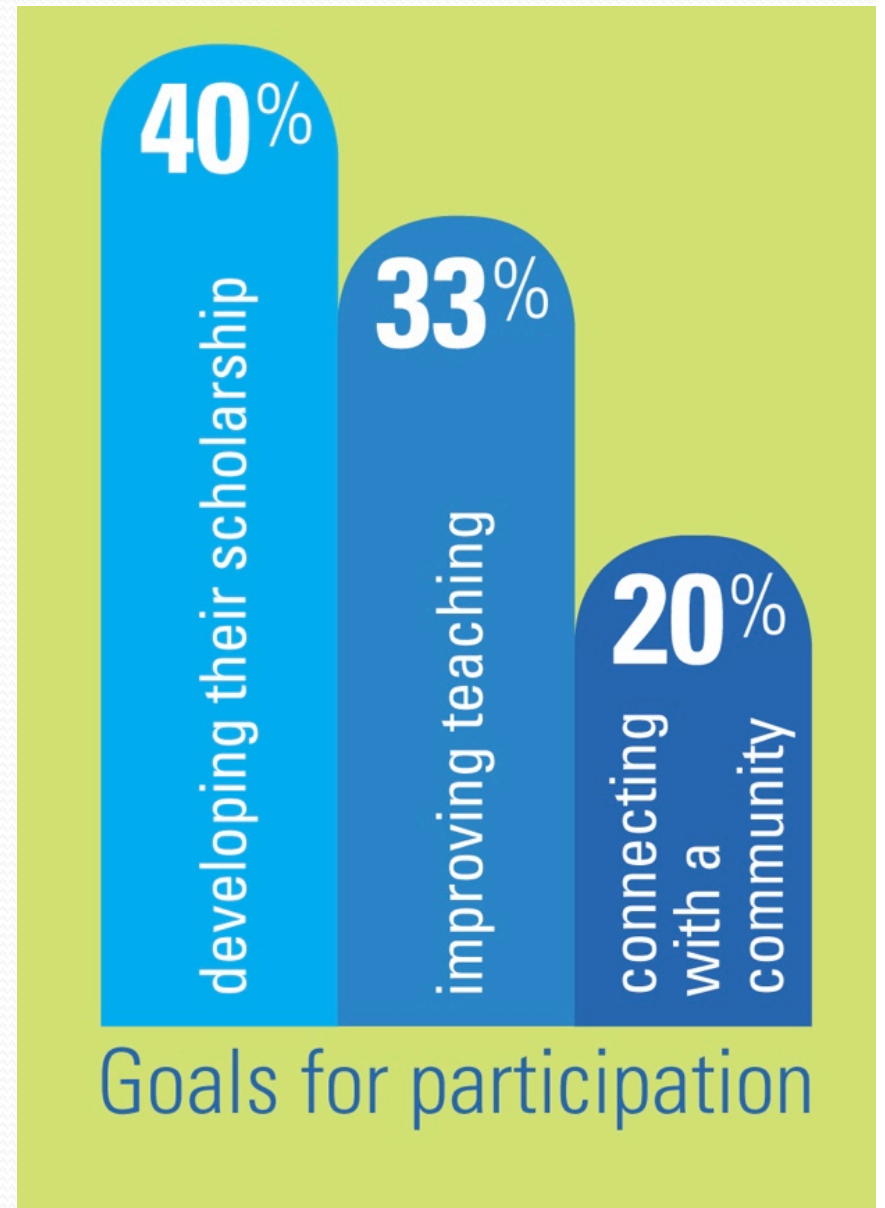
- What were your **goals** for participating and did you achieve them?
- Describe **the study and outcome**
- **How much impact did your project have** on your teaching/ subsequent scholarly activity?
- Do you **continue to conduct SoTL investigations**?
- **Has participation in the Nexen program impacted** your teaching/probability of pursuing subsequent SoTL projects/ subsequent scholarly activity?
- Please describe your **professional trajectory** since participating in the program. Impact of program?

- **Background**
- **Assessing Impact**

Most frequently reported goals

- From survey (N = 22)

- Background
- Assessing Impact



Impact

- From survey
(N = 22)

significant impact of
project on teaching

80%

significant impact of
project on scholarship

75%

significant impact of
program on teaching

89%

significant impact of
program on scholarship

89%

Significant impact reported



Interviews

- Semi-structured
 - Explored survey responses in more depth
 - Explored 2 emergent themes: levels of impact; differences in SoTL understanding/translation
 - Conducted by investigator who had least involvement with the program
- 17 interviews, saturation of themes reached

• Background

• Assessing Impact

• Emerging findings



Levels of Impact

- Individual (teaching/scholarship/career)
- Department (leadership in SoTL or influence at the department level)
- Institution (interest in making a contribution to the culture of the institution)
- Disciplinary (leadership or contribution to teaching in the discipline)

- Background
- Assessing Impact
- Emerging findings



Individual impact

- *“I didn’t even think of it impacting my teaching and so I was quite surprised when it did. Especially since it made me re-examine a lot of my different assumptions around my discipline and around my students, and it challenged some of my deficit narratives [about what students can’t do]. . . and it started me focusing more on what they were doing, rather than just my assumptions about what they could or couldn’t do.”*

- Background
- Assessing Impact
- Emerging findings



Individual impact

- *“It has increased my interest in the scholarship of teaching and learning more broadly; so even though the project itself didn’t do what I wanted it to do, understanding that there is a field out there and there are a lot of things that happen in that field has encouraged me to be more engaged in what is going on. So it has changed my understanding of how students learn, but also how I teach right now and why I teach the way I do.”*



Seniority & levels of impact

- New to the institution -> individual goals
 - *Meet other people, learn about the institution*
- Longer at the institution -> broader goals
 - *Have connections, visible enough to make a difference*
- Implications for program & recruitment

- Background
- Assessing Impact
- Emerging findings



Seniority & levels of impact

- *“I am a believer in SoTL and I think sometimes people listen to me because I have been around a while, making a pretty public stand going into SoTL”*

- **Background**
- **Assessing Impact**
- **Emerging findings**



Continuing work

- Further analysis
 - Levels of impact
 - Sense of discomfort
 - Disciplinary translation
- Program re-design & action research

• Background

• Assessing Impact

• Emerging findings



Stay tuned!

- **Background**
- **Assessing Impact**
- **Emerging findings**