The 360-degree Model: A Reflective Framework for Faculty Exploring SoTL

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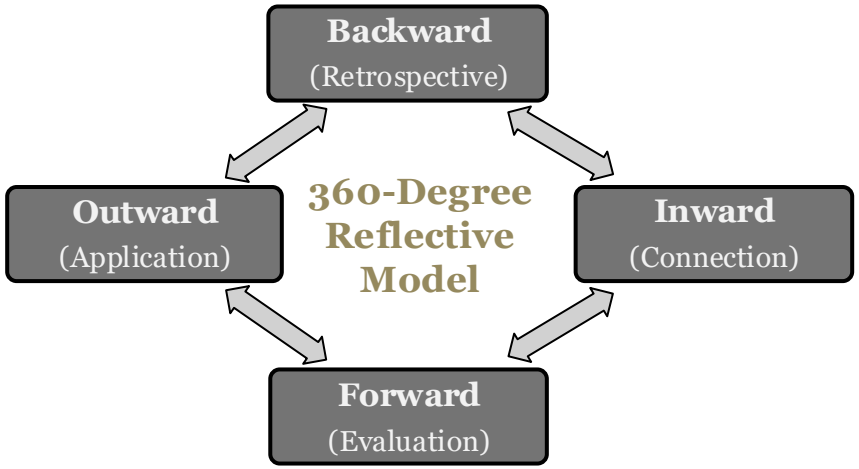
SoTL is a Reflective Practice
Faculty study courses and pedagogy to improve teaching and learning, then share and apply this knowledge in new contexts through "going public" and implement curricular changes (see Cook-Sather, Abbot, and Felten 2019; McKinney 2012). Reflective writing as SoTL practice should be legitimized (Cook-Sather, Abbot, and Felten 2019; Cruz, Grodziak, and Steiner 2024), and SoTL journals should elevate reflection as a scholarly act and reflective writing as a form of scholarly discourse (Cruz, Grodziak, and Steiner 2024).

Definition in SoTL
Reflection is a deliberate, systematic process in which faculty critically analyze their teaching practices, integrating theoretical insights and evidence to evaluate effectiveness, inform improvements, and support ongoing professional growth (see also Taczak and Sponsler 2025).

Directional Reflection
This model is not solely forward-focused; it is directional. Faculty can begin at any point on the circle, as each stage can encourage intentional reflection. This reflective process then guides systematic inquiry, helping faculty implement sustainable pedagogical changes that contribute to the collective knowledge base.

Significance of 360-Degree Model
The 360-degree reflective model's significance lies in its ability to (1) break reflection out of linearity, (2) legitimize reflective writing as SoTL scholarship, (3) connect individual practice to collective knowledge, (4) support holistic faculty identities, and (5) provide a structured yet flexible framework (see Taczak and Sponsler 2025).

360-degree reflective model	Components of the model	Definition of reflective process	SoTL application
Backward	**RETROSPECTIVE:** Recall prior understanding about knowledge, dispositions, beliefs, and/or attitudes about SoTL	Faculty reflect on prior understandings of teaching and learning contexts in response to a "complex wicked [teaching] problem" (Bass 2020)	Generate inquiry focus/research questions
Inward	**CONNECTION**: Reframe, rethink, and/or revise current understandings about SoTL	Faculty read and engage with scholarship on the topic	Conduct a literature review
Forward	**EVALUATION**: Relocate SoTL practices through systematically assessing their effectiveness	Faculty critically assess the impact of their instructional strategies, analyze student outcomes, and/or seek peer or student feedback	Conduct data collection and analysis; identify connections between teaching practices and SoTL scholarship
Outward	**APPLICATION**: Explore future personal and professional goals as they relate to understandings of scholarship, identity, teaching, and experiences in SoTL	Faculty revise and/or update practices in teaching and learning, and/or share their work through writing (empirical research articles, conceptual articles, reflective essays, and opinion pieces) (Healey, Matthews, and Cook-Sather 2009)	Go "appropriately public" (Felten 2013)



Future Steps

- Expanding the population of faculty studied (Taczak and Sponsler 2025; Taczak, 2026)
- Testing applicability of the model across contexts;
- Building structured faculty development supports using the model.