

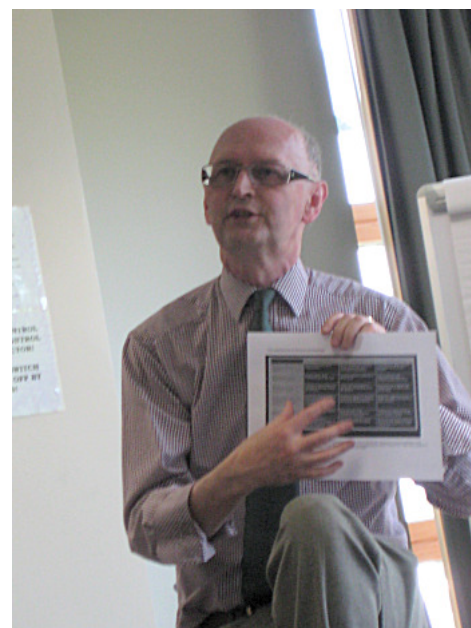
- Title:** Research Informed Teaching Conference 2009
- Venue:** Powell Building, Canterbury Christ Church University
- Date:** 16 – 17 April, 2009
- Keynote Speaker:** Professor Mick Healey  
Director of the [Centre for Active Learning](#), University of Gloucestershire

## Introduction

The conference was comprised of a keynote, **Professor Mick Healey**, plus a number of parallel sessions of discussion papers and workshops. The conference themes included:

- Research-Teaching Linkages;
- Research-based and Research Informed Teaching (RIT);
- Developing Students as Researchers;
- Pedagogic Research.

The conference was the culmination of a three-year initiative that encouraged the development of over 30 departmental based research projects into a range of aspects of teaching, learning and research. The conference provided an opportunity to share and discuss aspects of RIT with academics who are interested in the “scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL)”.



## Keynote 1: The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

*“The scholarship of teaching and learning is about making transparent how learning is being made possible.”*

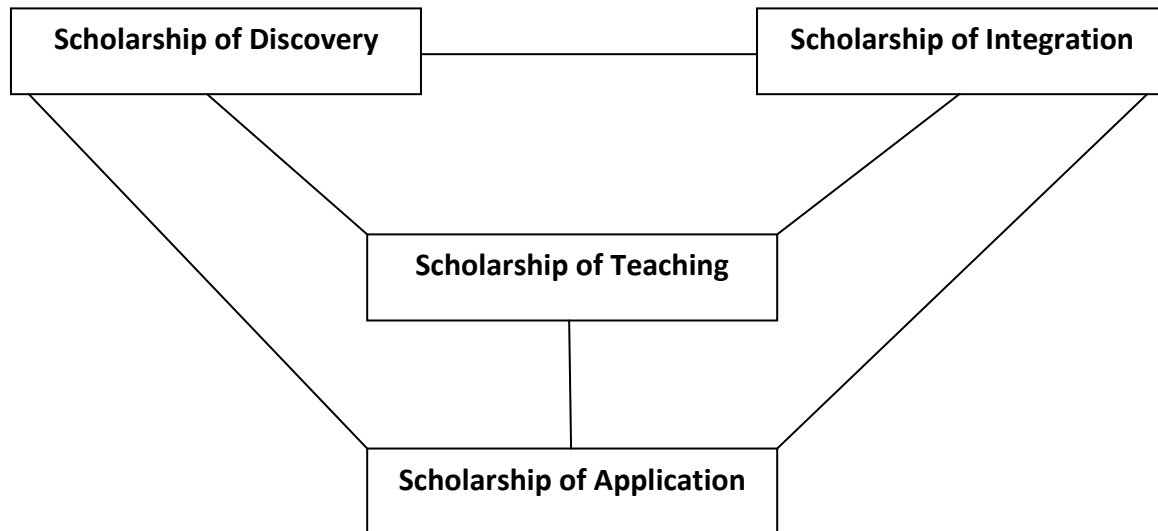
- Trigwell, 2004

Professor Mick Healey begins his keynote presentation by introducing the concept of “scholarship of teaching and learning” which is a concept that is unfamiliar with most university lecturers. He suggests that one way to engage lecturers in their development as “critical and reflective teachers” is to stimulate their intellectual curiosity: the asking of questions is at “the heart of intellectual curiosity and engaging staff in the scholarship of teaching and learning”.

The audience were then invited to voice their opinions on a number of pedagogic research and scholarship issues such as: *“pedagogic research and scholarship should underpin the learning,*

*teaching and assessment strategy for any HEI aspiring for an outstanding reputation for its teaching”.*

Healey suggested that there are four types of scholarship, see the figure below:



Healey suggested that the concept of SoTL has evolved over time and that many institutions have practices that are associated with SoTL but may not use the term.

The audience were asked to take part in another exercise to rate their familiarity with the debate on developing the scholarship of teaching in HE by agreeing or disagreeing to 12 statements around the concept of SoTL.

Healey discussed the following issues surrounding the evolution of the SoTL concept:

1. Is the scholarship of teaching best developed through the disciplines?
2. How may the status of the scholarship of teaching be raised?
3. What is the role of pedagogic research / development in the scholarship of teaching?

In his conclusion, Professor Healey suggested that SoTL / Pedagogic Research & Development is a relatively new field of enquiry and that theoretical approaches and concepts are limited. There is currently a lot of work going on in this field particularly in Europe and Australia. He suggested that lecturers needed to learn how to adopt a scholarly approach to teaching; teaching needed to be better understood and communicated; and the scholarship of teaching would only be developed if it is appropriately recognised and rewarded.

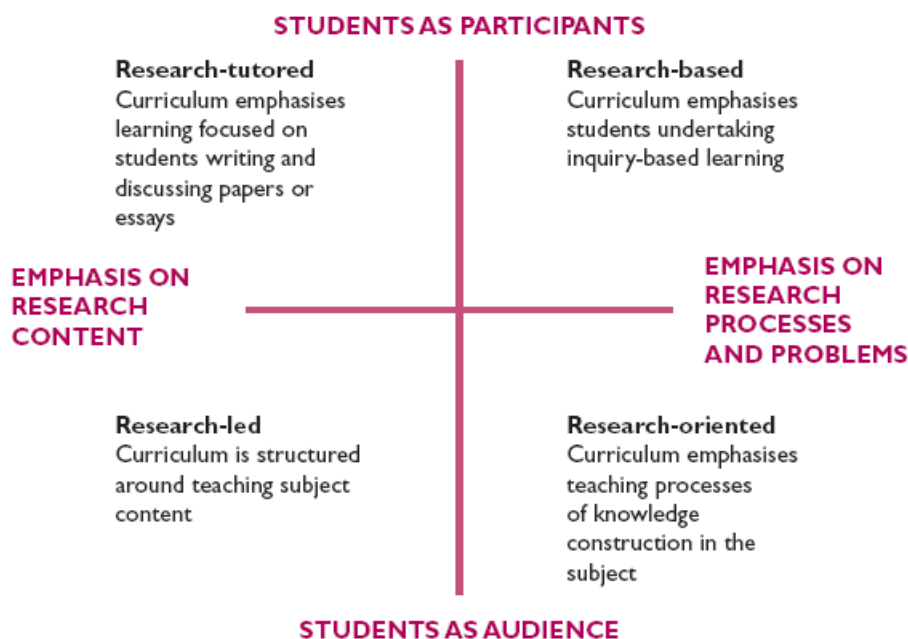
## **Keynote 2: Engaging Students through Research and Inquiry**

In his second keynote speech, Professor Mick Healey examined the strategies for the RIT initiative at Canterbury Christ Church University by linking these to the student experience. He suggested that students will be the “professionals of the future” and would need to develop a range of skills

that will allow them to solve problems and make sound judgements. He goes on to say that “*research and inquiry is not just for those who choose to pursue an academic career ... it is central to professional life in the twenty-first century*”.

Healey goes on to say that if we develop a “Student as Scholar” model, it would require a fundamental shift in the whole student experience. It would require a “culture of inquiry-based learning infused throughout the entire ... curriculum”. Through an extensive range of case studies taken from different universities and subject disciplines (see *Bibliography*), Healey demonstrates how students are being engaged in the research process. He outlines different ways in which research can be conducted:

- Learning about others’ research;
- Learning to do research – research methods;
- Learning in research mode – enquiry based;
- Pedagogic research – enquiring and reflecting on learning.



Source: Based on Healey (2005a, 70)

Healey offers a model that illustrates how students can take part in the research process (see *figure above*) and discusses the different viewpoints and dimensions on undergraduate research and inquiry which could include:

- Student – process centred;
- Student initiated;
- Curriculum based;

- Collaborative;
- Outcome – product centred;
- Faculty initiated;
- Individual
- Discipline based;
- etc.

Healey offers the following working definition (taken from Childs *et al*, 2007) for undergraduate research and inquiry:

*“... undergraduate research describes student engagement from induction to graduation, individually and in groups, in research and inquiry into disciplinary, professional and community-based problems and issues, including involvement in knowledge exchange activities.”*

However, Healey asserts that if undergraduate research is to be truly integrated into HE then the nature of higher education itself would need to be reconceptualised: moving towards “creating inclusive scholarly knowledge-building communities” and to start thinking more “outside of the box”. Based upon some recent research on final year students experience of research, most felt that it was “beneficial”.

In his conclusion, Healey suggests that one way to re-link teaching and research is to get students to produce knowledge rather than just consume knowledge; attempt to mainstream undergraduate research so that all students may potentially benefit; adopting a more broader definition of undergraduate research than is currently common.

## **Presentations and Workshops**

There were 6 x 30 minute presentations before lunch; 3 x 50 minute workshops after lunch; and 6 x 20 minute presentations after the afternoon break. These presentations and workshops were delivered by RIT project holders and the Faculty of Social and Applied Sciences was particularly well represented by:

- Professor Mike Weed (*Dept of Sport Science, Tourism and Leisure*)
- Dr Leo Raznovich (*Dept of Law and Criminal Justice Studies*)
- Denis Edgar-Nevill (*Dept of Computing*)
- Dr Kevin Carlton (*Dept of Geographical and Life Sciences*)

## **Bibliography**

Jenkins, A., Healey, M., and Zetter, R. (2007). *Linking Teaching and Research in Disciplines and Departments*. Higher Education Academy. Available at:  
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[Accessed 5 May 2009]