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Letter from the Editor: Commitment

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Commitment

by Ardith Baker, General Editor

If I were asked to describe in one word, what it takes to be a great teacher in higher education, that one word would be *commitment*. Teaching requires knowledge of the subject area and the skills necessary to impart that knowledge to students. But greatness requires commitment. It takes commitment for great teachers to stay abreast of current trends in their discipline, both for the benefit of themselves and their students. It takes commitment to challenge students to learn by searching for and providing the best textbooks, assignments, tests, and other opportunities for learning. It takes commitment to step out of their comfort zone in order to enhance their technical skills and stay current with new technology and software that students utilize with ease. It takes commitment to spend hours of their own time working to get that lecture or lab just right, to read the latest book or article, to grade all those papers, or even to write for a publication. It takes commitment to scholarship in the forms of discovery, integration, application, and teaching, all of which Ernest Boyer (1997) described in his seminal work *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. Great teachers are not afraid to commit to take on new challenges and opportunities.

Commitment to greatness leads to inspiration, which in turn leads to innovation. This innovation not only benefits students, but motivates our colleagues to greatness as well. Therefore, *SoTL-CHEd* is committed to providing a forum for the presentation and dissemination of the results of your commitment to education—that is, your scholarly works. This issue of *SoTL-CHEd* features scholarly works from many great teachers who desire to inspire and motivate *you* to greatness. In this issue, Chris Putman shares her innovative experiences in incorporating service learning activities into her coursework ([Serving Students through Service Learning](#)). Charlene Huntley shares her research on teaching pre-service teachers in the theoretical article ([Supporting Critical Reflection in Pre-service Teacher Education](#)). The review by Dr. Timothy D. Norton provides a glimpse of the expertise presented in the book ([The Advancement of Learning: Building the Teaching Commons](#)) while the review by Dr. David Hand challenges us to consider the future of teaching in an online environment ([Disrupting Class: How Disruptive Innovation Will Change the Way the World Learns](#)).

Are you tired of PowerPoint slides? The [SoftChalk™ software review](#) by me and honors student Lisa Sobilo provides a critique of this new instructional tool. These reviews, editorials, and article challenge you to expand your knowledge and encourage you to take another step toward becoming a great (or even greater) teacher. This is the desire of the editors and contributors of *SoTL-CHEd*. Indeed, we applaud all of your efforts. So, why not share the great things that you are doing with the rest of the Academe? There are many opportunities to publish in *SoTL-CHEd* (see the [submission guidelines](#)). We welcome your submissions as we strive for greatness together.

Reference

Boyer, E. L. (1997). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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