

# **Regents Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award Nomination Portfolio**

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November 15, 2025

Dear Regents' Award Committee,

It is my great pleasure to support the nomination of Dr. Deborah Richardson, Professor of Psychological Sciences at Augusta University, for the Regents' Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award. For more than four decades, Dr. Richardson has advanced the study and practice of teaching and learning with intellectual rigor, creativity, and deep commitment to student success.

Guided by the principle that "good teaching is about student learning," Dr. Richardson has consistently used evidence to shape and improve instruction. Her research explores how instructor mindset affects student outcomes, how students respond to active learning, and how teaching awards shape perceptions of great teaching. These studies — published widely and presented nationally and internationally — have generated important insights into the cognitive, motivational, and social factors that drive learning.

Dr. Richardson's work has also transformed the culture of teaching at Augusta University and beyond. As founding director of the Center for Teaching and Learning and later Director of Faculty Development, she created programs that helped faculty design, conduct, and publish SoTL projects. She has mentored numerous colleagues and students — many of whom are now SoTL scholars themselves — and played a key role in revising USG policy to better recognize SoTL in faculty evaluation.

Her scholarship is distinguished by its breadth, depth, and practical impact. Studies on growth mindset have shown how faculty approaches can increase student self-efficacy and narrow achievement gaps. Research on immersive pedagogies such as *Reacting to the Past* has revealed how active learning fosters engagement and deeper understanding. And her investigations into teaching awards have illuminated the qualities students most value in excellent teaching.

Dr. Richardson's legacy is measured not only by her impressive record of publications and presentations, but also by the ripple effect of her mentorship, leadership, and advocacy. Through her scholarship, she has shaped classrooms, guided careers, and strengthened the teaching mission of higher education.

It is with great pride and the highest confidence that I offer my strongest endorsement of Dr. Richardson's nomination for the Regents' Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award.

Sincerely,

Maggy Tomova  
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

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## Teaching philosophy

My teaching philosophy derives from the scholarly literature on effective teaching principles and my own research on student learning. It also derives from experience--from reflecting on my students' learning and evaluating my teaching. I have taught in a wide variety of contexts: from small seminars of a few upper-level students to 300-student classes taught in auditoria; from introductory psychology through undergraduate and graduate research methods; from service courses to directing theses and dissertations. That variety of experience has led me to develop a very simple, focused teaching philosophy that applies in all these contexts: ***Good teaching is about student learning. Good teaching has happened when students have learned.*** Several principles follow this general teaching philosophy.

*Students learn when instructors listen and adapt.* If we want students to learn, then we must be willing to seek and attend to direct and indirect feedback--and modify instruction to support their learning. Indirect feedback comes from students' performance in the class; if assessments of their learning (e.g., quizzes, reflections) suggest that they are not learning, then we need to have a conversation. I also seek direct feedback from the students, especially early in the semester. If the direct feedback I request about aspects of the course that are helping or hindering their learning suggests that they are facing challenges, then we have a conversation. That conversation allows them to share their concerns, allows me to remind them of the learning outcomes for the course, and allows me to adapt the course accordingly.

*Students learn when they feel safe.* I aim for students to engage in rigorous learning in a supportive environment. Students can meet high expectations for learning without encountering unnecessary challenges that create distress or anxiety. I can help students feel safe by responding with empathy to their challenges and by being flexible. I ask my students to engage with my classes a lot (see next principle) – with reflections, quizzes, projects, and tests, for example. I try to arrange assignments and assessments so they are distributed reasonably. Nevertheless, in view of the expectations students are likely to face from multiple courses and other demands of their lives, they may have difficulty meeting deadlines. I would rather they *learn* by focusing on an assignment than produce work simply to meet a deadline. In most of my classes, therefore, I build in target deadlines, late deadlines, and final deadlines for reflections, with students receiving some credit and still having an opportunity to learn if they meet any deadline.

*Students learn when they practice and receive feedback through a variety of learning experiences.* Learning is not the same for all students. Some appreciate a well-crafted lecture; others prefer to engage more actively with their learning. All my classes employ some form of active learning, some direct instruction from me (sometimes a formal lecture; sometimes a guided discussion), and a variety of assessment approaches (e.g., projects, interactive quizzes, reflections). So, students have a variety of opportunities to learn, to demonstrate their learning, and to receive feedback.

For example, in my Introductory Psychology class, I introduce a topic in an introductory lecture; students read and complete a reflection on the chapter that covers that topic; my review of their reflections tells me what they do and do not understand and provides an opportunity to provide individual feedback; I offer a “review” lecture to answer questions and clarify misunderstandings; students take an interactive quiz, providing an opportunity for them to learn from one another; they receive immediate feedback when we review the quiz in class; finally, students demonstrate their learning through unit tests.

Living this teaching philosophy is challenging. It requires a lot of work, and seemingly constant attention. I live it because I enjoy it. I do it because I love seeing the light go on, observing the understanding reflected in wide eyes or nods of agreement. For me, it’s a truly rewarding experience.

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### **The impact of SoTL on student learning and on teaching and learning in the discipline**

I have been conducting research on teaching and learning for several decades. My SoTL work has been inspired by opportunities presented by roles I have held in the academy—from teacher in the classroom to director of educational development programs. I am fortunate that my training as a social psychologist equipped me to take an empirical approach to answering my questions about teaching and learning. Most of the programs of research summarized below came about because I had questions, and I had the tools to seek evidence to answer those questions.

I have employed a wide variety of evidence-based approaches for answering those questions --from a scholarly personal narrative to quasi-experimental investigations that examine specific teaching practices. Most of the research has involved the evaluation of specific practices or programs. The work has contributed to my own teaching and to the development of students and colleagues that I have mentored. This work has been peer-reviewed and published or presented, so I hope that it has also inspired the teaching and research of members of the broader academic community.

Instead of providing annotated bibliographies of each relevant study I have published or presented over the 40+ years I have been doing SoTL, I have organized the summary of my work thematically, with an explanation of the aim and outcome of each program of research. In each section, I identify the question we were trying to answer, list some products that derived from the program of research, describe the research program, identify the impact in terms of number of publications and presentations that resulted from the work, note how my own practice has been impacted by the work, and highlight the contributions of student co-authors.

### ***Faculty Mindset and Motivation***

Question: The academic community has been emphasizing the importance of student mindset to academic success. What about instructor mindset?

Richardson, D. S., & Bledsoe, R. S. (2025). Motivation and mindset of STEM and non-STEM faculty. *Education Sciences*, 15(6): 720.

\*Jarrard, C., Richardson, D. S., & Bledsoe, R. S. (2025). Student perceptions of faculty mindset. *Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 25(1).

Richardson, D. S., \*Manning, K., & Bledsoe, R. S. (2024). Faculty mindset, goal orientation, and likelihood of seeking feedback about teaching. *College Teaching*. Online.

Richardson, D. S., Bledsoe, R. S., & \*Cortez, Z. (2020). Mindset, motivation, and teaching practice: Psychology applied to understanding teaching and learning in STEM disciplines. *CBE-Life Sciences*, 19(3).

This ongoing program of research in collaboration with Dr. Robert Bledsoe has two foci: (1) the relationship of faculty mindset to teaching practice, and (2) the effect of faculty mindset on outcomes associated with student success. We have published 4 articles and made 12 presentations at multiple venues (e.g., USG T&L, CHEP, ISSOTL). Six graduate students have co-authored manuscripts or presentations, and two masters theses have been based on this program of research.

Jarrard et al. (2025) found that students expect better grades, report greater self-efficacy, and expect the instructor to be fairer when they encounter a growth-oriented syllabus than when they encounter a fixed-mindset syllabus. Importantly, although female students expected poorer outcomes than males in response to the fixed mindset syllabus, those gender differences disappeared in response to the growth mindset syllabus.

Richardson et al. (2020) found that STEM instructor mindset and motivation are related to teaching practices. Richardson and Bledsoe (2025) found that non-STEM instructors reported using more evidence-based teaching practices and having a stronger belief in student efficacy than STEM instructors. Richardson et al. (2024) found that instructor growth mindset is related to the likelihood of seeking feedback about teaching from students.

My own teaching has been impacted by our findings. I articulate my own growth mindset in my syllabus and design learning experiences that reward a growth mindset in students. I have come to adopt more of a mastery orientation in my teaching, and I employ teaching practices that encourage student mastery motivation. The clearest evidence of impact on the scholarly community is the relatively large number of citations ( $n = 59$ ) of the fairly recent Bledsoe, Richardson, and Cortez (2020) article.

### ***Response to active learning pedagogy***

Question: What factors are related to student learning and engagement with active learning approaches?

Bledsoe, R. S., & Richardson, D. S. (published online September, 2025). The role of personality traits in response to active learning. *Active Learning in Higher Education*.

Bledsoe, R. & Richardson, D. (2025) Individual differences in the context of active learning. *Teaching & Learning Inquiry*, 13(1), 1.

Richardson, D. S., Bledsoe, R. S., & \*Manning, K. (2023). Pushing active learning to the extreme: Is it worth it?. *College Teaching*, 71(1), 9-17.

Bledsoe, R. S., & Richardson, D. S. (2022). Impact of *Reacting to the Past* and effect of role on student attributes and academic outcomes. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 33(3), 361-373.

Bledsoe, R., Maynard, L. A., & Richardson, D. S. (2018). The crowded streets of Paris: Using RTTP in less than ideal situations. In Watson, C. E., & Hagood, T. C. (Eds). *Reacting to the Past: Research into Best Practices and Student Learning* (pp. 41-74). Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

This program of research, also in collaboration with Dr. Robert Bledsoe, explores student responses to *Reacting to the Past*, an immersive active learning pedagogy in which students play roles of historical figures – and which we have employed in our own teaching practice. In addition to the publications listed above, we and 3 graduate students have made 10 presentations at scholarly conferences.

Bledsoe et al. (2018) revealed that adding roles to a *Reacting* game or allowing students to share roles did not have a negative impact on student learning or engagement. Bledsoe and Richardson (2022) found that students who took classes that used *Reacting* reported more engagement, learning, and self-efficacy than students who took comparable classes without *Reacting*. The two Bledsoe and Richardson (2025) articles examined how background characteristics (e.g., race, gender) and personality traits related to the student experience with *Reacting*.

The collaboration with Rob Bledsoe, the team expert on this pedagogy, led us to adopt an extended role-playing experience modeled on *Reacting* in my History and Systems of Psychology class. My approach to the pedagogy and to enhancing student experience is informed by the lessons we have learned from our research. Some of those lessons were shared with the academic community in Richardson et al. (2023), which also reports the students' positive responses to their *Reacting* experience.

### ***Evaluating Teaching***

Questions: Is a program of teaching awards valuable to individuals and the institution?

What do students value/emphasize when they nominate an instructor for an award?

Bledsoe, R. S., Richardson, D. S., & \*Kalle, A. (2021). Student perceptions of great teaching: A qualitative analysis. *Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 21(3), 21-32.

Bledsoe, R. S., & Richardson, D. S. (2020). Maximizing learning using cognitive load theory. *Learning and Teaching Journal*, 2(2), 148-150.

Richardson, D. S., Bledsoe, R. S., & \*Kalle, A. (2019). Assessing the institutional impact of a teaching award. *Journal on Centers for Teaching and Learning*, 11, 62-77.

Bledsoe, R. S., & Richardson, D. S. (2016). An innovative teaching award catches faculty in the act of great teaching. *Journal on Centers for Teaching and Learning*, 8, 51-69.

Hunt, H. D., Davies, K., Richardson, D. S., Hammock, G. S., Akins, M., & Russ, L. (2014). It is (more) about the students: Faculty motivations and concerns regarding teaching online. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*

These studies arose from my work as Director for Faculty Development at Augusta University and include articles and presentations that describe and evaluate programs that we launched from our Center for Teaching and Learning. This theme includes 11 scholarly presentations in addition to the publications listed above. Two graduate students were educated about teaching and learning during their participation in this program.

Bledsoe and Richardson (2016) described a new award program, “Caught in the Act of Great Teaching” and reported how it promotes teaching excellence. Richardson et al. (2019) revealed that faculty members, especially those from the health sciences, agreed that the award should bring other positive outcomes. Bledsoe et al. (2020) used student nominations for the award to examine how students defined “great teaching.” That qualitative analysis revealed that students defined great teaching in terms of socioemotional connection (e.g., caring for students as people, approachability), focus on student learning (e.g., concern for student success, effective teaching techniques), and instructor expertise and enthusiasm.

Bledsoe and Richardson (2020) proposed cognitive load theory as a framework for categorizing and explaining the effectiveness of many evidence-based teaching practices. Hunt et al. (2014), which addresses online teaching practice, was the outcome of a SoTL Faculty Learning Community that I organized.

Several other CTLs in the USG and at least one program outside the state adopted award programs similar to our “Caught in the Act” after learning about our work from presentations or publications. Our results also have directly impacted my own teaching. Although I have long been known for enthusiastic teaching, what we learned about the characteristics that students value has led me to focus more on making socioemotional connections with students. I incorporate my knowledge about how cognitive load can impact student learning in my course design and delivery.

### **Research Education**

My first SoTL work (even before the idea of SoTL had been formalized by Boyer) was inspired by a simple question: how much do students learn when they serve as participants in psychology research?

\*Toomey, M., Richardson, D. S., & Hammock, G. S. (2017). Introductory psychology: How student experiences relate to their understanding of psychological science. *Teaching of Psychology*, 44, 246-249.

Richardson, D. R., \*Pegalis, L., & Britton, B. (1992). A technique for enhancing the value of research participation. *Contemporary Social Psychology*, 16 (1/2), 11-13.

\*Smith, S. S., & Richardson, D. (1985). On deceiving ourselves about deception: A reply to Rubin. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 48, 254-255.

\*Smith, S., & Richardson, D. (1983). Amelioration of deception and harm in psychological research: The important role of debriefing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 44, 1075-1082.

Britton, B. K., Richardson, D., \*Smith, S. S., & Hamilton, T. (1983). Ethical aspects of participating in psychology experiments: Effects of anonymity on evaluation and complaints of distressed subjects. *Teaching of Psychology*, 10, 146-149.

I conducted a series of studies to determine how and when student learning is impacted by their participation in psychology research. We found that students who had been deceived about the purpose of studies reported more positive experiences than those who had not encountered deceptive practices and noted that effective debriefing eliminated negative effects (Smith et al., 1983, 1985). We also developed and reported strategies for improving student learning from research participation (Britton et al., 1983; Richardson et al., 1992).

That connection between research experience and student learning was reintroduced in my research program when an undergraduate student asked to pursue the question further (Toomey et al., 2017). In that case, the question was expanded to ask what kinds of experiences contribute to student understanding of psychology as a scientific discipline. Students reported that in-class experiences (e.g., lectures) contributed more to their understanding of psychological research than out-of-class experiences (e.g., research participation).

This research theme has produced 5 peer-reviewed publications and 3 scholarly presentations with the assistance of 2 undergraduate and one graduate student. I apply our findings especially when I teach Introductory Psychology and ask students to have direct experience as research participants. I emphasize why that out-of-class experience is important for their understanding of psychological science, and students write short reports about their research experience that make connections to what they are learning in the class.

### ***Techniques to improve student learning***

The question: Does what we are doing improve student learning?

Janit, A., Hammock, G. S., & Richardson, D. S. (2011). The power of fiction: Reading stories in abnormal psychology. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 5(1).

\*Harton, H. C., Richardson, D. R., \*Barreras, R., \*Rockloff, M. J., & Latané, B. (2002). Focused interactive learning: A tool for active class discussion. *Teaching of Psychology*, 29, 9-14.

Although not a coherent program of research, these projects share a focus on specific techniques that contribute to student learning. The primary focus for me has been on examining how focused interactive learning (FIL), whereby students examine ideas and take quizzes in small groups, contributes to student success. Harton et al. (2002) reported that students were more likely to answer questions on an exam correctly if they had first encountered the material in a FIL quiz and discussion than if the material had been addressed only in lecture.

I incorporate FIL in my undergraduate classes, and students report that it is helpful for their learning and that they enjoy the opportunity to interact with classmates. The 6 presentations under this theme primarily address the use of FIL in an online context.

### ***STEM Education***

The question: What factors contribute to STEM student success?

\*Cudzilo, E., Richardson, D., Bledsoe, R., & Spencer, A. (2024). *Influence of Perceived Community Mindset on Student Sense of Belonging*. ISSOTL, French Lick, IN.

\*Ravula, H., \*Bell, S., Richardson, D., & Spencer, A. (2023). *Persistence in STEM: Mindset and sense of belonging*. SEPA, New Orleans.

As assessment coordinator for the NSF S-STEM grant, “Promoting Opportunities and Pathways for Undergraduate Persistence in STEM (POPUPS)” and PI for a USG STEM-IV project, I have supervised the work of graduate students who have analyzed data and made 11 scholarly presentations, and we will be submitting a manuscript based on this

research by the end of October. The projects have addressed psychological factors related to STEM student success, especially mindset and sense of belonging. The most impactful finding is that, across 3 years of data collection, the students' perceptions of the mindset of their major community predicts their sense of belonging better than their own mindset; their own mindset is the better predictor of their academic self-efficacy.

These findings about sense of belonging have had an impact on my own teaching philosophy and behavior as I consider how to best support student learning and engagement.

### **Educational Development**

The question: Are our programs contributing to improvement of teaching and learning?

Bledsoe, R., Richardson, D., & Hayward, P. (2014). *Curriculum Design Academy: A GRU Complete College Georgia initiative*. USG T&L, Athens, GA.

Richardson, D., Palladino, C., & Thomas, A. (2011). *Evaluating an innovative medical education research fellowship*. Southern Group on Educational Affairs, Houston, TX.

This theme includes reports on evaluations of faculty development programs that we developed in the AU CTL or as part of the MCG Educational Research Fellowship program. The AU (formerly GRU) Curriculum Design Academy was a multi-day workshop for teams from academic departments during which they reviewed and evaluated the design and delivery of their courses. The report on the evaluation of the MCG Educational Research Fellowship received an award as "Outstanding Poster by a Professional Medical Educator." Two graduate students and several educational research fellows co-authored 6 presentations related to this theme.

### **Medical Education**

Novak, M. N., Palladino, C., Ange, B., & Richardson, D. S. (2014). Measuring health professions students' orientation toward lifelong learning, *Journal of Allied Health*, 43(3), 146-149.

Stallworth, L., Palladino, C., Leggio, L., Hudson, V., \*Elam, R., & Richardson, D. S. (2014). Senior student goal setting during sub-internship: A mixed methods study. *Teaching and Learning in Medicine*, 26, 225-229.

Novak, M. K., Palladino, C., Ange, B., & Richardson, D. S. (2014). Jefferson Scale of Lifelong Learning-Health Professions Students Version (JeffSLL-HPS): An instrument to measure health professions students' orientation toward lifelong learning. *MedEdPORTAL* [www.mededportal.org/publication/9671](http://www.mededportal.org/publication/9671)

Palladino, C. L., Ange, B., Richardson, D. S., Casillas, R., Decker, M., et al. (2013). Measuring psychological flexibility in medical students and residents: A psychometric analysis. *Medical Education Online*, 18, 20932.

As Educational Research Fellowship Director at the Medical College of Georgia, I trained and supervised physicians in research methods and research design. I was approached to take on the directorship because of my SoTL work. I became a certified Medical Education Researcher and represented MCG at the Society of Directors of Research in Medical Education.

This work led to 4 peer-reviewed publications and 9 scholarly presentations. The impact of this work is evidenced in the Fellows' development of practices that they incorporated into their own teaching and in the effect on the careers of several, whose research supported their promotions. Although there was less direct impact on my teaching, this experience helped develop my skills for preparing others to conduct SoTL.

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## **Support and Promotion of SoTL**

I have supported SoTL primarily through mentorship, encouraging scholarly teaching and promoting SoTL as a path for research that contributes to student success and faculty development. When my tenure as Psychology department chair ended, I immersed myself into supporting teaching and learning initiatives, including faculty development for SoTL. As Director of the MCG Educational Research Fellowship, I directly mentored 8 MD faculty members in developing research examining their teaching practices. Their products are included in the document that summarizes the impact of my SoTL work. As Founding Director of the ASU Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and, after consolidation of ASU and GHSU, as Director for Faculty Development at the "new" Augusta University, I promoted programs that encouraged and supported SoTL.

SoTL was a major focus of the ASU Center for Teaching and Learning. I designed programming on SoTL, including a series of presentations and workshops to encourage faculty to do SoTL. At that time, ASU was a regional comprehensive university, and the primary responsibility of faculty members was teaching. I saw SoTL as a way to encourage a scholarly approach to teaching, improve teaching and learning at the university, and help faculty develop scholarly work that was relevant to their primary role as instructors. The Center for Teaching and Learning provided support for travel to teaching and learning conferences, facilitated a SoTL faculty learning community, and recognized individuals involved with SoTL at the annual Celebration of Faculty.

After consolidation, when the ASU CTL became the Office of Faculty Development and Teaching Excellence, I designed a SoTL Fellows program for faculty members from both campuses. This was an intensive program of direct mentorship in which each Fellow developed a research project that was approved by the Institutional Review Board, collected and analyzed relevant data (with my direct support). Most of the Fellows also made scholarly presentations about their work and some published articles in peer-reviewed outlets. These scholarly works contributed to the promotions of at least two faculty members.

### SoTL Fellow Publications

The benefits to individual faculty members and to the broader academic community are evidenced by the SoTL Fellow record of publications and presentations.

Heckman, C. (2021). Playing the Game: Collaborative Project-Based Learning in the Medieval Literature Classroom. *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Teaching*, vol. 28, no. 1, 2021, pp. 7-33

- Johnson, M., & Armstrong, R. (2020). Opening the Canon: OERs in Literary Studies. *The Complete Guide to Open Scholarship*. American Library Association.
- Meyer, E. N. (2019). Fractured Families: Program Growth through Innovative Teaching of French and Francophone Women's Autobiography. In E. N. Meyer & J. Johnston, eds. *Rethinking the French Classroom: New Approaches to Teaching Contemporary French and Francophone Women*. NY: Routledge.
- Spencer, A. (2020). Not Your Ordinary Supplemental Instruction: A Focus on Metacognition. *Engaged Student Learning: Essays on Best Practices in the University System of Georgia*, Vol 2, 34-36.
- Weeks, T., & Johnson, M. (2019). Breaking New Ground: Librarians as Partners in a SoTL Fellowship. *The Grounded Instruction Librarian*. Association of College and Research Libraries.

#### SoTL Fellow Presentations

- Armstrong, R., & Johnson, M., (2016). Teaching an Entirely Open Access Survey." Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association, Salt Lake City.
- Armstrong, R., & Johnson, M. (2016). Using Freely Available Texts in a Literature Classroom. USG Teaching and Learning Conference, Athens, GA.
- Datta, T., & Richardson, D. S. (2016, April). *Investigation of the benefits of Visual Python computational activities in introductory calculus-based physics courses*. Oral presentation at University System of Georgia Teaching and Learning Conference, Athens, GA
- Hayward, P.A. (2023, April). *Students' deception of instructors: Methods, motives, and affective states*. Southern States Communication Association Conference, Tampa, FL. (Top Paper Panel, Instructional Development Division)
- Heckman, C. (2018, September). Project-Based Learning and Career Readiness Across Disciplines," with Anna Harris-Parker and J. Andrew Hauger. National Society for Experiential Education, 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, Savannah, GA.
- Heckman, C. (2017, Atlanta). Learning in Three Dimensions: Early English Cultures at Play" (with Katie Humphrey). National Collegiate Honors Conference.
- Meyer, E. N. (2017, July). "Going Beyond Surface Culture: Engaging Students through Health and Medical French." 89<sup>th</sup> Annual American Association of Teachers of French Conference, Saint Louis, MO.
- Meyer, E. N. (2018, February). "Lessons Learned: Integrating Medical French into the French Studies Curriculum." IV International Symposium on Languages for Specific Purposes (ISLSP) / Centers for International Business Education and Research (CIBERs) Business Language Conference, Gainesville, FL.
- Meyer, E. N. (2018, November). "Nutrition, Dietetics and Health in the French Classroom." American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Annual Convention, New Orleans, LA
- Meyer, E. N. (2019, March). Engaging Students at all Levels through Health and Medical French. Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Columbus, OH.

Richardson, D. S., Datta, T., Hammock, G. S., & Casaletto, K. (2015, April). Assessing students' perceptions of learning and engagement. Pecha kucha presentation at University System of Georgia Teaching and Learning Conference, Athens, GA.

Spencer, A. (2017, Charlotte). Lessons learned from a general chemistry supplemental course. SERMACS.

Weeks, T. (2016, Savannah). "Exploring threshold concepts in one-shot information literacy instruction." Georgia International Conference on Information Literacy.

I have supported SoTL in other ways. At the USG system level, I served on the workgroup charged with revising the USG Board of Regents policy on Work in Schools. We clarified the role of scholarship of teaching in evaluation of faculty in USG institutions. I also conducted sessions on quantitative research design and analysis and hosted a meeting of the USG SoTL Fellowship program. I have encouraged AU faculty to attend and present their SoTL work at the USG Teaching and Learning conference, where they also have had opportunities to learn from others' work. As Director for Faculty Development, I distributed information about and endorsed faculty applications for the USG SoTL Fellows Program. I provided feedback on three applications for Affordable Learning Georgia grant applications, all of which were funded, and I helped with evaluating the effectiveness of those projects.

Although I no longer have administrative responsibilities, I have continued promoting SoTL with students and with colleagues. Psychology graduate students that take their research practicum under my direction learn about and engage with SoTL, and they present their work at SoTL and Teaching and Learning conferences (my CV identifies student co-authors). Two of those students continue SoTL or faculty development work in their PhD programs. I have mentored many students and colleagues through collaborative projects (see CV), including graduate student assistants who worked with the Office of Faculty Development and Teaching Excellence.

**CURRICULUM VITA**  
**DEBORAH SOUTH RICHARDSON**

**Academic Positions**

Augusta University

Professor, Department of Psychological Sciences, 2001 – present; chair 2001-2009

Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, College of Science and Mathematics,  
2019-2022

Adjunct Professor, School of Medicine, Medical College of Georgia, 2010 – present

Director for Faculty Development 2013 – 2018; Director, Center for Teaching and Learning,  
2010 – 2014

Director, Educational Research Fellowship, Medical College of Georgia, 2010-2014

Florida Atlantic University, 1990-2000, Associate Professor to Professor

University of Georgia, 1977-1989, Assistant to Associate Professor

**Education**

Ph.D. Kent State University, 1978

M.A. College of William and Mary, 1974

B.S. Virginia Commonwealth University, 1972

**Education-Related Grant Support**

University System of Georgia (2019-2024): \$150,000 for “Augusta University’s Support for STEM Student Success” (PI)

National Science Foundation (2019-2025): \$904,000 for “Promoting Opportunities and Pathways for Undergraduate Persistence in STEM (POPUPS).” (co-PI)

**Peer-Reviewed SoTL Publications (selected)<sup>1</sup>**

Richardson, D. S., & Bledsoe, R. S. (2025). Motivation and mindset of STEM and non-STEM faculty. *Education Sciences*, 15(6): 720.

Bledsoe, R. S., & Richardson, D. S. (published online September, 2025). The role of personality traits in response to active learning. *Active Learning in Higher Education*.

Bledsoe & Richardson, D. (2025) Individual differences in the context of active learning. *Teaching & Learning Inquiry*, 13(1), 1.

<sup>\*2</sup>Jarrard, C., Richardson, D. S., & Bledsoe, R. S. (2025). Student perceptions of faculty mindset. *Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 25(1).

Richardson, D. S., \*Manning, K., & Bledsoe, R. S. (2024). Faculty mindset, goal orientation, and likelihood of seeking feedback about teaching. *College Teaching*, pub. online 20. Aug. 2024.

Richardson, D. S., Bledsoe, R. S., & \*Manning, K. (2023). Pushing active learning to the extreme: Is it worth it?. *College Teaching*, 71(1), 9-17.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: In addition to my SoTL work, I have continued disciplinary psychological science research, with over 100 scholarly presentations and over 60 articles in scholarly journals since 1980.

<sup>2</sup> asterisks indicate student co-authors

- Bledsoe, R. S., & Richardson, D. S. (2022). Impact of *Reacting to the Past* and effect of role on student attributes and academic outcomes. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 33(3), 361-373.
- Bledsoe, R. S., Richardson, D. S., & \*Kalle, A. (2021). Student perceptions of great teaching: A qualitative analysis. *Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 21(3), 21-32.
- Richardson, D. S., Bledsoe, R. S., & \*Cortez, Z. (2020). Mindset, motivation, and teaching practice: Psychology applied to understanding teaching and learning in STEM disciplines. *CBE-Life Sciences*, 19(3), ar. 19-11-0238.
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### **Peer-Reviewed SoTL Presentations (selected, since 2020)<sup>3</sup>**

- \*Cudzilo, E., Richardson, D., Bledsoe, R., & Spencer, A. (2024). *Influence of Perceived Community Mindset on Student Sense of Belonging*. ISSOTL, French Lick, IN.
- Bledsoe, R., & Richardson, D. (2024). *Active Learning: Lessons from students, faculty and reports from the field*. SoTL Commons, Savannah, GA.
- \*Adams, N., Richardson, D., Bledsoe, R., & \*Jarrard, C. (2024). *Influence of Instructor Mindset on Student Course Expectations*. ISSOTL, French Lick, IN.
- Richardson, D., & Bledsoe, R. (2024). *Black and White Women Perceive Growth Mindset Instructors Differently*. ISSOTL, French Lick, IN.
- Richardson, D. S., Bledsoe, R. S., \*Shanks, C., & \*Jarrard, C. (2024). *Perceived Instructor Mindset Influences Student Motivation*. USG T&L, Athens, GA.
- Bledsoe, R. S., & Richardson, D. S. (2023). *Individual Differences in the Context of Active Learning*. ISSOTL, Utrecht, Netherlands.
- Richardson, D. S., & Bledsoe, R. S. (2023). *Pushing Active Learning to the Extreme: Costs and Benefits*. ISSOTL Utrecht, Netherlands.
- Richardson, D. S., & Bledsoe, R. (2022). *Faculty growth mindset serves students underrepresented in STEM*. ISSOTL, Kelowna, Canada.
- \*Manning, K. Q., Richardson, D. S., & Bledsoe, R. (2022). *Mindset, motivation, and faculty feedback seeking*. SEPA, Hilton Head, SC.
- Richardson, D. S., & Bledsoe, R., (2022). *Mindset, motivation, and evidence-based STEM teaching practices*. SEPA, Hilton Head, SC.
- Bledsoe, R., & Richardson, D. S. (2022). *Extraverted and conscientious students appreciate active learning*. ISSOTL, Kelowna, Canada.
- \*Hill, S., Bledsoe, R., & Richardson, D. (2021). *“Know thyself”: Does RTTP character investment affect student worldview?* SEPA, virtual
- \*Manning, K., Richardson, D., & Bledsoe, R. (2021). *Reacting to the Past: Active learning pedagogy in psychology courses*. SEPA, virtual
- Pires, L., Walker, D., Richardson, D., Bledsoe, R., & Steiner, H. (2022). *Challenges and contributions of SoTL practices in the southern USA*. ISSOTL, Kelowna, Canada.
- Bledsoe, R. S., Richardson, D. S., & \*Manning, K. (2020). *Reacting to the Past: Effects on student learning and engagement*. USG T&L. [conference cancelled]
- Bledsoe, R. S., & Richardson, D. S. (2020). *Nurturing student success by reducing cognitive load*. Southeastern Regional Faculty and Instructional Development Consortium meeting, Spartanburg, SC.

Additional SoTL Presentations by decade: 2010's – 17; 2000's – 3; 1990's – 2; 1980's: 4

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<sup>3</sup> ISSOTL: International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning; SEPA: Southeastern Psychological Association; USG T&L: University System of Georgia Teaching and Learning Conference



May 23, 2025

I am pleased to write in support of Dr. Deborah Richardson's nomination for Augusta University's Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award. The outstanding quality of Dr. Richardson's research in SoTL is evident; to my mind, though, it is her extraordinary work in promoting SoTL and mentoring her colleagues that makes Dr. Richardson most deserving of this award.

Notably, Dr. Richardson's SoTL research extends well beyond her own discipline. She has established herself not only as a scholar of teaching and learning in psychology and medical science, but she has also developed a strong scholarly reputation in the discipline of SoTL itself. Her recent publications have appeared in widely read, selective SoTL journals such as *College Teaching*, the *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, and the *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. Her recent research on mindset and active learning, especially, has wide-reaching, cross-disciplinary impact. I had the opportunity to see this impact in action at Dr. Richardson's recent Life of the Mind talk for Pamplin College faculty, where the discussion quickly turned to how colleagues from across the college could revise their own syllabi to encourage students to think differently and learn more effectively. Faculty left that talk with concrete ideas to put Dr. Richardson's research into action, directly impacting Augusta University students. I believe Dr. Richardson's SoTL work is so immediately and obviously valuable to us as teachers because she answers those questions we most need answered about teaching with the insight and carefully crafted research that comes from more than 40 years of engagement with the scholarship of teaching and learning. Her experience and expertise in developing productive research questions and her extensive knowledge of the existing scholarship have led to a SoTL research agenda that has influenced teaching and learning at AU and beyond.

In addition to her own prodigious SoTL research, Dr. Richardson has had a greater impact on the promotion of SoTL at Augusta University than anyone I know. I was fortunate to participate in a year-long SoTL fellowship with Dr. Richardson when she was Director of Faculty Development. My colleague Melissa Johnson and I were questioning widely held but little-studied assumptions about how students read in a literature class. Neither of us had engaged in SoTL research prior to this project, but Dr. Richardson helped us transform our ideas into a focused research question grounded in the broader scholarly conversation and to craft a plan of study. It was Dr. Richardson who encouraged us to present our initial research at the USG Teaching and Learning Conference, where we were able to engage with other SoTL scholars. This project ended up being the first SoTL publication for both of us, and it likely would not have come to fruition had Dr. Richardson not led that fellowship to encourage faculty to explore this new (to us) area of research.

**ENGLISH and WORLD LANGUAGES, PAMPLIN COLLEGE OF ARTS, HUMANITIES, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

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I know there are many faculty at AU with similar stories of how Dr. Richardson offered advice and mentorship as they developed SoTL projects, some leading to years-long research agendas. I served for five years as chair of the Department of English and World Languages, and I cannot count how many times Dr. Richardson's name was mentioned when faculty talked about their SoTL-related projects. Maybe they had met with her one-on-one; maybe they had attended a workshop or on-campus SoTL conference she had organized. One way or another, Dr. Richardson had encouraged, guided, or provided support for their SoTL research. Several of those colleagues have gone on to present or publish that research, and some have won teaching awards related to the SoTL work she helped them shape. Her expertise and authority in this area is so accepted that in my department, any discussion of a potential SoTL project is likely to lead to the comment, "You can research that! You need to talk to Deborah Richardson" – with, in recent years, the added advice to talk to one of the growing list of Augusta University scholars who have collaborated with or been influenced by Deborah Richardson and her SoTL work.

Dr. Richardson's record of SoTL research, and her work in promoting SoTL as a discipline both at AU and beyond, is so outstanding that I was surprised to learn that she had not already won the university's Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award. Her name is the first one I think of when I think of SoTL at AU. She has a long, impressive list of publications, posters, and presentations in some of the most respected outlets for SoTL research, and she has influenced who knows how much additional SoTL research among her colleagues. I cannot think of a more deserving candidate for this award.

Sincerely,



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