



The disciplinary scholarship of teaching and learning in political science and international relations: methods, topics, and impact

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Abstract

Within the disciplines of political science and International Relations, rich debates around pedagogy have crystallized into a robust set of scholarly institutions. This review article analyzes the current state of the disciplinary scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) by canvassing the field's journals where SoTL research is published and situating current developments within the broader SoTL ecosystem. We analyze the growth of publications, methodological and topical trends in the literature, and assess the scientometric impact of these debates. Moving forward, we call on these debates to methodologically prioritize rich expressions of student voice and to promote further collaborative practices in SoTL research.

Keywords Scholarship of teaching and learning · Political science education · Disciplinary SoTL · Research methodology · Research impact · Scientometrics

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Introduction

For over a century, discipline-specific scholarly communities have gathered to discuss and publish research on pedagogical practices immediately relevant to their higher education niche.¹ In our own fields of political science and International Relations, student simulations of international organizations date back to the early 1920s (e.g., *Harvard Crimson* 1923)—arising first as Model League of Nations before the United Nations was formed—and scholarly articles have analyzed teaching practices for decades (e.g., Clarkson 1970). However, a major shift occurred in the 1990s, as Kathleen McKinney (2007) describes, when Ernest Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* introduced the term 'scholarship of teaching' to the academy. While the familiar 'and learning' would soon be appended to form the acronym 'SoTL,' Boyer's text (1990) serves as a touchstone for the field because it effectively highlighted the importance of scholarly pedagogical reflection in the academy. The coining of SoTL serves as a moment of confluence, where disparate scholarly tributaries merged. The decades since have witnessed both a strengthening of the currents of transdisciplinary SoTL as well as the flourishing of numerous disciplinary distributaries. SoTL incorporates many methodological and theoretical research traditions, and that research is communicated through multiple genres of scholarly writing (Healey et al. 2019). Now consisting of both the rushing central river and a fertile delta, the SoTL ecosystem is an intellectually diverse, productive, and complex arrangement of disciplinary and cross-curricular institutions, associations, publications, and scholarly fora.

While we sketch the contemporary contours of the SoTL ecosystem in political science and International Relations in the next section, it is worth highlighting at this point that there has been a proliferation of what we call 'SoTL institutions' (conferences, journals, sections, etc.) from the 1990s into the new millennium. Key moments include the founding of the Active Learning in International Affairs Section (ALIAS) of the International Studies Association in 1995, the founding of the *Journal of Political Science Education* in 2007, and the rise of academic conferences and tracks on teaching and learning (Trepannier 2017; Witman & Richlin 2007, 12).² The benefit of having strong SoTL institutions in the disciplinary ecosystem is that various materials produced and shared within academic journals will not only be useful for instructors in terms of pedagogical approach, but also directly relevant in terms of subject matter. The pillars of such disciplinary SoTL communities are the field's available journals and conferences,³ and an interesting feature of the disciplinary SoTL conversation in political science in International Relations—one that parallels broader patterns in IR (Waever 1998)—is the extent to which the

¹ We can turn to the founding of the Section of Chemical Education, chartered in 1922, which launched the *Journal of Chemical Education* in 1924 (Gordon 1924).

² E.g., the American Political Science Association's *Teaching and Learning Conference* and the International Studies Association's *Innovative Pedagogy Conference*.

³ However, as Ishiyama et al. (2015) note, the conferences are impactful for participants but must abide by a participation limit that does not constrain written works.



bulk of scholarship has been transmitted through the medium of articles published in academic journals. While there are notable outliers, such as the landmark *The New International Studies Classroom* collection (Lantis et al. 2000), *Connecting in the Online Classroom* (Glazier 2021), and the recent success of volumes published in Palgrave's *Political Pedagogies* series (e.g., Frueh 2020; Smith & Hornsby 2021) or by the American Political Science Association (Matto et al. 2017; Bennion & Nickerson 2022; Witman & Richlin 2007)⁴ which may indicate shifting sands, at present time intervention into the community's journals remains 'the most direct measure of the discipline itself' (Waever 1998, 697). Healey et al. (2019) suggest that SoTL articles can take the form of empirical research articles, conceptual articles, reflective essays, and opinion pieces. By these categories, submissions to *PS, Politics, European Political Science*, and *International Studies Perspectives* largely take the form of empirical articles or reflective essays presenting instructor perspectives, and in addition to those two genres, the *Journal of Political Science Education* is open to what Healey et al (2019) term opinion pieces, with the caveat that these typically be written by senior scholars in the discipline. There has also been growing interest in pedagogies that encourage civic engagement, as demonstrated by the creation of The Civic Engagement Section of the American Political Science Association (APSACivic) and the publication of various edited collections on experiential learning designed to promote the knowledge, skills, and dispositions associated with civic and political participation⁵ (Matto et al 2021, 2017; McCartney et al 2013). Other genres of SoTL writing, such as conceptual articles (Healey et al 2019), are not explicitly welcomed into the disciplinary SoTL discussions, despite making contributions in the wider SoTL context.

In this review, we examine SoTL literature in key journals of political science and International Relations, with the goal of determining what types of research methods are common in scholarship that researches teaching and learning. In so doing, we contribute to an infrequent but important stocktaking effort that examines the evolving conversation around teaching and learning in political science and International Relations. These reviews largely cover the maturation phase of the field, centering largely on the turn of the millennium. While source material differences will be discussed below, the time scale is significant to note: Kehl (2002) covers the years between 1990 and 2001, while Hamann et al (2009) move forward to analyze 1998–2008, and Craig (2014) extends the sample from 1997 to 2012. Others have analyzed through a deep-dive approach, either into articles published in a single year, (Blair 2015) or a particular suite of topics (Baranowski and Weir 2015; Ishiyama 2013). By taking a larger scope, we offer a more comprehensive review of the SoTL ecosystem as expressed through these key disciplinary journals. This is notable not only for the novel insights that emerge from our review, but also for the replication of some findings from prior studies across a larger scope than undertaken

⁴ Each of these mark significant contributions. At the time of writing, the *Political Pedagogies* series includes three volumes addressing the impact of COVID-19 on political science education, while the APSA volumes cited here address the practice of teaching as a matter of civic education.

⁵ We thank one of the reviewers for suggesting this definition.



by the precedents. Our review looks at the period 2000–2019, capturing a period of rapid change due to an increasing digitalization ending just as the first cases of COVID-19 were identified. While the period of ‘pandemic pedagogy’ and ‘emergency eLearning’ that defined 2020 has received much attention (e.g., Smith and Hornsby 2021; Szarejko 2022), accurate accounting of the pre-pandemic period is paramount to ensure that discussions about how to move forward post-COVID do not fall into the traps of either glowing nostalgia or rough approximations. Our novel contribution is a reflection on the contemporary period that pre-dated COVID-19 and our main findings can be helpful for thinking about what comes next.

Reflecting on the methodological trends in the existing literature, we draw two main findings: First, student voices are underrepresented in the collective knowledge of SoTL. Second, collaborative scholarship remains an important opportunity for addressing methodological gaps in the literature. Thus, we recommend that the discipline could benefit from the inclusion of student experiences and perspectives, both through the adoption of qualitative methods that allow scholars to highlight the student experience and through student–instructor collaboration that includes student voice. We also call upon SoTL scholars to embrace collaborative opportunities for broader engagement, including but not limited to the development of multi-course and multi-institution projects. The remainder of our review proceeds in three sections. The first section outlines our research methodology. Turning to the results, the second section highlights our findings in terms of the growing body of scholarship within key disciplinary SoTL journals, frequency of topics (and their change over time), and research methodologies employed (and their change over time). In light of the methodological discussion, an analysis of citation counts provides an introductory assessment of the impact of different kinds of prominent SoTL projects. Finally, the conclusion highlights particular areas of concern for future research, namely the benefits of further incorporation of student voice and the methodological importance of collaborative research.

Review methodology

The research design of this review follows standard practices in the analysis of the disciplinary SoTL of political science and International Relations, as well as the impact metrics relevant to SoTL work. We first define these practices before outlining our specific methodological approach. As noted below, we follow prior investigations into this disciplinary SoTL community by analyzing the key journals that typically feature the disciplinary SoTL of politics and International Relations: *Journal of Political Science Education*, *International Studies Perspectives*, *PS: Political Science and Politics*, *European Political Science*, and *Politics*. Each of these journals is linked to a scholarly association and the pedagogical communities within them. The American Political Science Association hosts *PS*, which serves as the association’s journal of record but has for decades included a dedicated section on teaching and learning, as well as the pedagogically focused *Journal of Political Science Education*. The International Studies Association publishes *International Studies Perspectives*; the Political Studies Association publishes *Politics*; and the European



Consortium on Political Research publishes *European Political Science*. Each of the final three cover a broad range of topics in disciplinary research in addition to topics in teaching and learning. Prior investigations have consistently included *JPSE*, *ISP*, and *PS* in their studies (Craig 2014; Hamann et al. 2009, 2017). *Politics* and *European Political Science* have been included in this study because they also seek to contribute to the same general discussion in the disciplinary SoTL community.⁶ We recognize that SoTL articles also appear from time to time in other disciplinary journals⁷ and that political scientists and IR scholars publish in non-disciplinary SoTL journals.⁸ However, because these appear infrequently and separately from the clearly defined SoTL institutions of political science and International Relations (the purpose-driven journals), we have omitted them from our review.

The second practice that we have followed from the literature relates to the measurement of citational impact through the data from Google Scholar (GS). While scholars have raised issues around the accuracy of uncleaned Google Scholar items—with memorable examples being the prevalence of the author ‘1 Introduction’ in GS’s early years (Jasco 2006) and the more recent cataloging of a lunch menu (Klotz 2020)—the memorability of these exceptions to some extent proves the meritorious rule of GS’s wider inclusion criteria. The comprehensive coverage of GS provides a faster integration, greater geographical and multilingual representation, and evidence of scholarly impact beyond journals’ impact rankings, including scientific reports, reports and briefs from university research centers, and so on (Delgado López-Cózar et al. 2019). The benefits in the case of SoTL impact analysis are particularly evident, as impact on university-based pedagogical guides, Open Educational Resources, and scholarly association resources is clearly within the remit of SoTL work (Murphy 2020). To ensure consistency in citational data, Andrew completed the citation data collection in a single 24-h GS-refresh cycle.

Our research project began with a preliminary review of the literature undertaken by Michael, which was used to isolate frequent methodological approaches and general topic categories. While previous studies have used a variety of methods to develop categories for further analysis, this preliminary review exercise ensured that the categories would be directly relevant to the scope of articles under review. The second phase of the project saw all authors perform a manual review of all journal issues since 2000 (or inception, if later) for the five journals selected. To be included in the review, an item had to introduce new pedagogical material. While important

⁶ We note that Blair (2015) also includes the industry-focused *Teaching Public Administration*, and Hamann et al (2017) include eLearning journals. In our case, because we seek to capture the SoTL ecosystem within the discipline, we have omitted these journals. Kehl (2002) includes conferences papers, roundtables, and workshops as evidence of growing momentum at that time; while we recognize the insights offered through this method for the purposes of scholarly associations, our focus is more directly on the research output.

⁷ e.g., Katz-Rosene et al 2020 in the *Review of International Political Economy*; Smith & Summerville 2017 in the *Canadian Journal of Political Science*. See a similar observation by Craig (2014, 27-28).

⁸ E.g., Glazier & Skurat Harris (2021) in *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*; Hornsby & Ousman (2014) in *Higher Education*. See also the recent special issue of the *International Journal of Students as Partners* (Munavar-Pelton et al. 2022).



contributions to knowledge of the profession of IR are made by surveys of departmental attitudes, literature reviews, analyses of reading lists, evaluations of syllabi, and retention rates, these do not speak to the practice of teaching and learning.⁹ As such, classroom practice had to feature prominently in the article in order to qualify for inclusion. Special issue articles were included, although editorial introductions were often omitted if no unique classroom practice was explored. Using a collaborative Google Sheet, marginal cases were highlighted and subject to secondary confirmation to ensure inter-coder reliability. Reference data, methods employed,¹⁰ technology used, subfield referenced, and teaching topic¹¹ were all coded based on a numerical code system drawn from Michael's preliminary review. Due to unforeseen difficulties in subfield and technology-related coding, these data ended up too noisy for substantial analysis. While issues of inter-coder reliability are inevitable in collaborative projects, the development of the coding scheme through a preliminary review permitted the proverbial kinks to be worked out (and secondary review of any marginal coding cases was adopted as a second mitigation strategy).

Findings, frequencies, and trends

Similar to the key finding of a growing conversation observed by Kehl (2002) two decades ago, one of the most readily apparent findings from our review is the consistent momentum in scholars attending to pedagogical practice in the field. Indeed, scholars of political science and IR have noted sustained growth in academic interest in SoTL research in recent years (Hamann et al. 2009, 2017; Craig 2014; Lantis et al. 2010). Figure 1 demonstrates the consistent growth in SoTL articles over time. While earlier stocktaking efforts have highlighted the growth of the field through the timelines when new journals were being founded (e.g., Kehl 2002; Hamann et al. 2009; Craig 2014), our longer time horizon demonstrates that the growth continues. For example, while we see a bump after the founding of the *Journal of Political Science Education* in 2005, the continued growth is all the more impressive when we recall that a 1000-page online issue was necessary to clear the massive backlog at that journal that had developed just at the end of this sample in what an editorial

⁹ For recent examples, see Almasri et al. (2022), Murphy & Wigginton (2020), Smith et al (2020), Hamann et al (2021), Wallace (2022).

¹⁰ Methods were set as: instructor reflection, quantitative (survey-based), quantitative (course marks-based), quantitative (pre- and/or post-quiz), quantitative (SET-based), quantitative (demographic/GPA analysis), quantitative (other), qualitative (survey-based), qualitative (content analysis of assignments), qualitative (focus groups), qualitative (interviews), qualitative (other).

¹¹ Topics were defined as: simulation/role-playing, game, debate, service learning/placement, pop culture/film/tv, critical thinking, writing, small group, lecture course, case studies, international students/education, other.



referred to as an ‘explosion of interest’ (Asal 2021).¹² As one reviewer suggested, increases to journals’ page budgets may offer part of a demand-side explanation for an accelerating rate of growth for articles (from the perspective of the academic publishers). However, the backlog that developed at *JPSE* indicates that supply-side forces (increases in authorial/researcher activity) are also an important part of the story.¹³

While growth is exciting, we can only learn so much from it as such. More interesting insights arise from an examination of the topics covered and the research methods employed in the literature. As noted above, a preliminary review of the literature established a set of topical categories. While some articles covered multiple areas (for example, a small group project designed to improve writing skills might count for both ‘small group’ and ‘writing’), many focused on one topic alone. Figure 2 provides a summary of the most frequent topics covered during the period 2000–2019.¹⁴ A striking result is the abundance of articles on simulations and other role-playing activities in the classroom, which far exceeds the frequency of other topics. The prevalence of simulations as a teaching technique in political science classrooms has previously been attributed to the fact that students tend to find them enjoyable, which may enhance student engagement and participation (Ishiyama 2013). Further, simulations have become widely available online, including those that can be implemented at little to no cost (Ishiyama 2013).¹⁵ While Fig. 3 indicates that there was a decline in the number of articles outlining simulation/role-playing activities from 2010–2014 to 2015–2019, interest still remains high. The topics of games, writing, and service learning/placements demonstrate growth through the period analyzed, while many others remain relatively flat. It is notable that many of these approaches relate to the constellation of pedagogical techniques known as ‘active learning’ (Bonwell and Eison 1991; Michael 2006; Murphy 2017; Kitchen 2021). While we cannot judge authorial intent from a review of trends in the literature, it would seem plausible that topics like simulations, games, and service learning programs may be more easily recognized as potential article topics, as a new example could be framed as a discrete study for a teaching and learning research project. Instructor reflection on the utility and/or ease of implementing a novel simulation, comparing performance on exams between courses with game-based learning and without, or student feedback on their experiences of participating in a service learning program are all examples of intuitively SoTL projects (Baranowski

¹² As a reviewer noted, the growth in SoTL submission to *JPSE* may be partially explained by its transition from being a section journal to a main APSA publication. We thank the anonymous reviewer for this speculation.

¹³ When comparing the page budgets for the first two and last two years for each journal, three saw an increase (*JPSE*, *EPS*, *Pol*), *ISP* remained relatively unchanged, and *PS* slightly decreased.

¹⁴ As noted in our methodology, these categories emerged from a preliminary review rather than being drawn from existing literature. There is a trade-off between fidelity to the corpus of texts analyzed and similitude with prior works; in an effort to faithfully represent the literature, we have opted for the former.

¹⁵ As a reviewer noted, the increase in articles on simulations/games being submitted to *JPSE* could potentially be partially attributed to Victor Asal’s editorship of the journal. We thank the anonymous reviewer for this speculation.



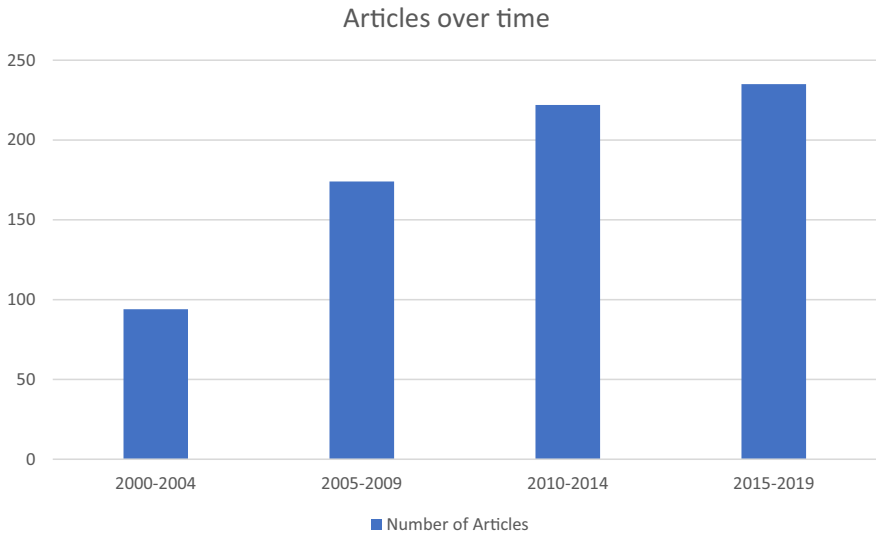


Fig. 1 Articles over time

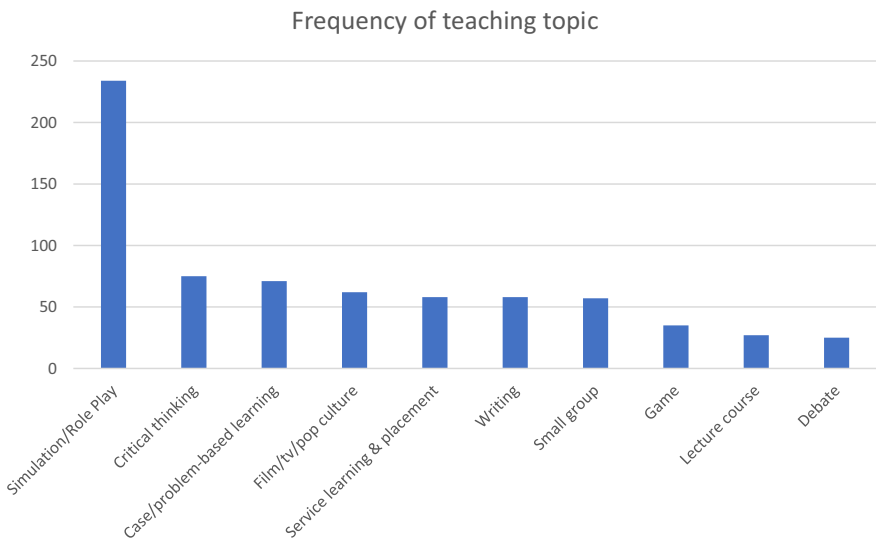


Fig. 2 Frequency of teaching topic

and Weir 2015; Craig 2014). Such teaching techniques translate clearly to research projects, and from there to articles. Just as graduate students undergo a process of learning about academic publishing (Arsenault et al. 2021), initiates into the world of SoTL similarly must recognize what ‘counts’ or ‘works’ as a SoTL project, and the recognizability of discrete interventions provides a plausible explanation of the continued attention paid to these topics.



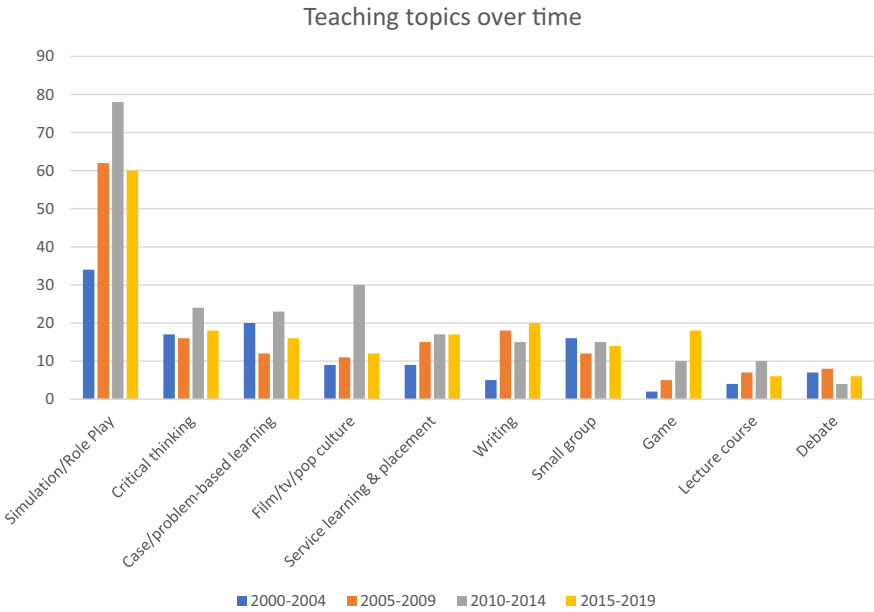


Fig. 3 Teaching topics over time

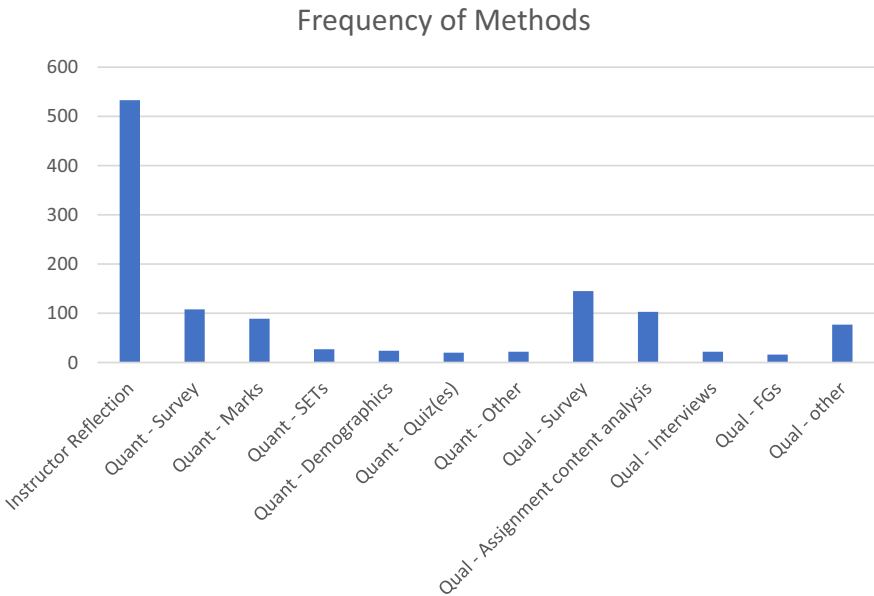


Fig. 4 Frequency of methods

Turning to methods of inquiry in the SoTL ecosystem, we find that instructor reflections on practice are by far the dominant mode of investigating pedagogical



practice in the disciplines. This project is far from the first to point to the predominance of instructor reflection as method (e.g., Baranowski and Weir 2015; Hefferman et al. 2022), but the significance of this methodological imbalance is greatly clarified in Fig. 4. Part of this can be explained through the practice of instructors authoring¹⁶ SoTL articles relating to pedagogical innovations and interventions used in their own classrooms. While triangulating instructor reflections may offer a more comprehensive view of a case, it would seem that including an instructor reflection element would make an article more readily applicable in new classroom contexts—if the reader hears what it was like to undertake a particular activity in class, innovators' anxiety may be eased. Articles providing readily 'actionable' teaching innovations can be particularly attractive to readers who turn to journals publishing disciplinary SoTL work for inspiration for their own teaching practice. Practical concerns related to methodological and ethical barriers to participation in the scholarship of teaching and learning also promote instructor reflection as an approach. The clearly hierarchical power relations of student and instructor means that all research engaging students or student work will require ethics board review and sometimes requires a choice to bring on a project collaborator independent of the course context to protect students' right to informed consent and/or delay data collection and analysis until course marks are finalized.¹⁷

However, to rely only on a single-course case study limits the kind of investigation that can be undertaken. For example, Baranowski and Weir (2015) argue that analyses 'that solely rely on grades, course evaluations, or impressionistic debriefings' do not 'provide much in the way of strong empirical evidence' and advocate for increased use of pre- and post-assessments compared to control groups to measure the impact of a pedagogical intervention (395). Conversely, they also note that quantitative measures of success are not the only way to evaluate the effect of a particular intervention on teaching and learning. Indeed, questions relating to motivation, confidence, student experience, and perception would likely receive a much more detailed treatment in qualitative terms. Issues of generalizability also arise from the small-N treatment of single-course case studies employing instructor reflection.

A temporal disaggregation of the most frequently appearing methods over time shows general growth patterns in four of the most frequently appearing methodological approaches. In line with the broader growth of the field, the number of instructor reflection articles continues to increase. Because of the vital link that instructor reflection plays in guiding the implementation of pedagogical innovations, we do not expect this trend to subside materially. The increasing frequency at which instructors are adopting qualitative survey feedback from students as a method of evaluating pedagogical technique is a promising sign, as it offers a window into student perception. While qualitative surveys may create opportunities for student feedback, Fig. 4 demonstrates that methodological approaches that would offer further opportunities for the free expression of student voice and provide in-depth understanding

¹⁶ Or co-written: see Hamann et al (2009) for more on the prevalence of co-authored studies in SoTL.

¹⁷ The former point can be practically difficult to address without funding, and the latter can limit the quality of data collected or motivation to participate among students.



of students' perspectives, such as interviews and focus groups, may have been overlooked by SoTL scholars.¹⁸ The growing prevalence of qualitative analysis of student work is a positive indicator as well, as this methodology helps to draw a link between pedagogical innovations and student products (e.g., term papers, reading responses, presentations). Further, the increase in research that uses student marks to evaluate the efficacy of pedagogical techniques highlights researcher interest in the impact of pedagogical innovations on student performance.

In line with transdisciplinary trends in the SoTL literature (Hubball and Clarke 2010), scholars employ both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Figure 5 shows that both traditions appear to be growing somewhat, although still lagging the prevalence of instructor reflection. Although the broader transdisciplinary conversation has faced criticisms of marginalizing qualitative and especially humanistic analysis (e.g., McKinney and Chick 2010), this gap does not appear in the disciplinary SoTL literature reviewed.¹⁹ We could imagine the incentive structures of the academy playing a major role here: a suggestion that X strategy will likely increase student satisfaction or performance may offer a more actionable incentive to precariously employed instructors compared to a theoretically informed exercise that promotes the transformative experience of 'troublesome knowledge'²⁰ in less visible ways. There is an opportunity for further methodological pluralization, where Jeffrey Bernstein's (2018) call to a dinner table conversation between different voices sharing a desire to improve teaching and learning offers a provocative and promising model for the future of disciplinary SoTL.²¹

A final portion of our analysis examined the impact of SoTL research across different methodological approaches. The first striking result is the high level of citation across the body of literature. Table 1 provides insights on citation figures, including a count and percentage of high-impact articles (cited over 10, 50, and 100 times). Highest levels of citation were found in survey-based articles, with interview-based works being markedly lower.²² While some of this may be understood as

¹⁸ Semi-structured or open-ended focus groups and interviews may be especially useful methods for amplifying student voice because these discussions permit students greater leeway in introducing concepts unanticipated by the instructor. As noted above, these methodological approaches will require ethics approval and may require the arrangement of independent data collection. We recognize that research ethics board processes are inequitable, and that review timelines may make it prohibitive for precariously-employed SoTLers to propose research projects.

¹⁹ However, as noted above, conceptual or theoretical works dealing with philosophy of education are largely absent from the disciplinary SoTL debates, although other disciplines have witnessed strong arguments in favour of including these perspectives (Chick 2015; Potter & Wutherick 2015).

²⁰ See the 'threshold concept' literature for more on troublesome knowledge (e.g., Meyer & Land 2006).

²¹ Recalling the specialized conversations that form around journals, it is worth remembering that other conversations may be underway at other 'tables'—for example, in political scientists' contributions to the *International Journal of Students as Partners* (e.g., Rouse et al. 2017; Kelher et al. 2017) or pedagogically-focused pieces in the *International Feminist Journal of Politics* (e.g., Parisi et al 2013; Palmieri & MacLean 2021).

²² The methods noted in the table are instructor reflection (self-study, drawing on instructor perception), quantitative analysis of survey results, quantitative analysis of course marks, quantitative analysis of student evaluations of teaching, qualitative analysis of survey results, qualitative content analysis of course assignments, and qualitative analysis of interviews.



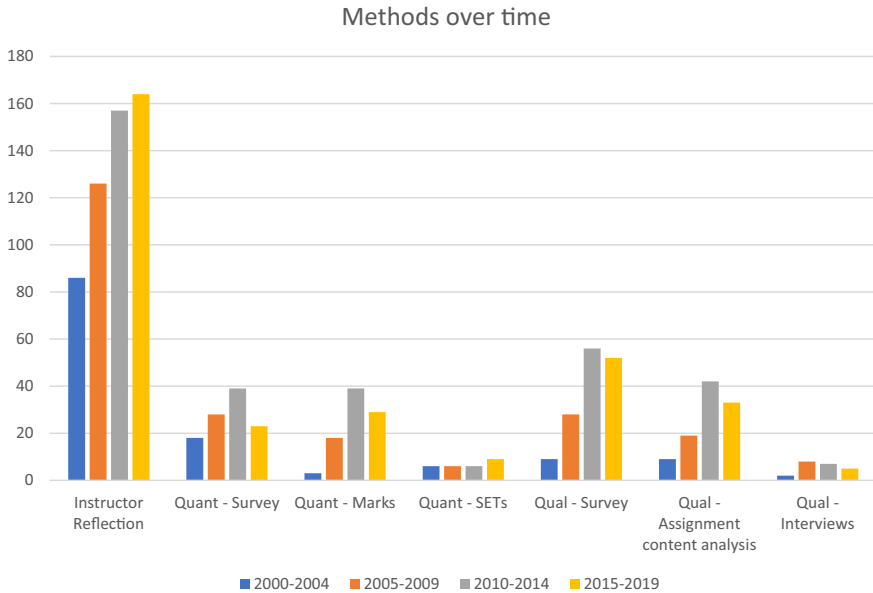


Fig. 5 Methods over time

a compounding of the higher rates of quantitative rather than qualitative research in the earlier years of our sample, this may also indicate greater levels of citation from sources beyond disciplinary SoTL. As mentioned above, quantitative approaches are far more common in transdisciplinary debates (McKinney and Chick 2010), so it may be that there is a greater likelihood of extra-disciplinary citation for quantitative research papers. Further bibliometric analysis is required to explore the specific mechanisms producing higher rates of citation.

Conclusion and future research directions

As the SoTL institutions of political science and International Relations have continued to develop, the teaching and learning ecosystem has become a more vibrant and innovative pedagogical environment. Journals play an important role in this ecosystem, as markers of privilege and prestige within the ecosystem that structure ongoing debate and dialogue. By way of conclusion, we would like to discuss two research directions that we believe require further attention, as revealed through our comprehensive review of the literature. First, given the dominance of instructor voices and reflections, there is an important opportunity to provide greater opportunities for student voice and student knowledge-sharing in the disciplinary SoTL literature. Second, SoTL articles are often siloed and written about specific courses, innovations, or ideas, in ways that limit the generalizability, applicability, and depth of findings. While we recognize the practical constraints of multi-course research designs and also that these studies do not necessarily entail a collaborative effort



Table 1 Citation metrics

	Total items	Average citation count	Standard deviation	Over 10 citations	Over 50 citations	Over 100 citations
Instructor reflection	533	21.1	30.3	278 (52%)	47 (9%)	17 (3%)
Quant-Survey	108	35	40.0	87 (81%)	17 (16%)	7 (6%)
Quant-Marks	89	23.2	25.1	58 (65%)	6 (7%)	3 (3%)
Quant-SETs	27	24.7	28.8	16 (59%)	2 (7%)	2 (7%)
Qual-Survey	145	28.5	37.6	99 (68%)	18 (12%)	6 (4%)
Qual-Assignment content analysis	103	18.4	21.4	53 (51%)	7 (7%)	1 (1%)
Qual-Interviews	22	12.6	8.2	12 (55%)	0	0

between two or more scholars, the SoTL literature in political science and International Relations would greatly benefit from greater collaborative research projects, including multi-course and multi-institution projects that may also incorporate research methods that capture student voices.

The need to integrate and foreground student voices is not a new criticism of the SoTL literature, although the problem has not received substantial treatment within the formal SoTL institutions of our disciplines. While we might note that Boyer's 'scholarship of teaching' already left out the 'learning' part of the equation, many have noted that educational research at the higher education level has continued to be an overwhelmingly instructor-focused endeavor. Indeed, the prioritization of instructor experiences persists (Manarin et al. 2021), despite ample research that has demonstrated the importance of student-centered learning and advocacy for students to be recognized as partners in teaching and learning (Felten et al. 2014; Mercer-Mapstone et al. 2017). Scholars conducting research on teaching and learning practices can center student voices both by adopting methods that allow for open response and reflection from student participants and by engaging students in opportunities for co-authorship and collaboration. For example, Martel et al.'s (2021) analysis of remote simulations conducted throughout the COVID-19 pandemic uses co-authorship to feature both instructor and student insights. By embracing student voice through co-authorship, Martel et al. (2021) provide practical advice for those looking to integrate remote simulations into their pedagogical practice while simultaneously providing a deeper exploration of students' responses to active eLearning. While the specific approach of 'students as partners' may not complement all classrooms at all institutions, we can draw from this literature an important lesson that the integration of student voice can be powerful when it moves beyond 'add students and stir.'²³ Methodologically, the limits of the instructor's perspective can be

²³ For work on students-as-partners including political science and International Relations (in the pages of venues beyond the boundaries of the discipline's formal SoTL institutions), see e.g., Verwoord & Smith (2020), Kehler et al (2017).



difficult to overcome without integration of student voice, and open-ended interview and focus group opportunities can help to create space for students to share their perspective on issues throughout the entire teaching and learning process, from course planning to assignment development, grading, feedback, and conducting research. For example, Strachan (2008) combines a survey experiment with direct quotes from targeted focus groups to highlight students' experiences with on-campus extracurricular activities meant to encourage civic engagement. As social science disciplines with rich traditions of rigorous qualitative, interpretivist, and critical methodologies (e.g., Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2013; Salter et al. 2023), scholars of political science and International Relations can apply familiar methodologies in search of student voice. These approaches have a lot to offer in terms of both research design and actual engagement and collaboration with student voices. Moreover, they also encourage opportunities for engaging reflexively with SoTL research, offering guidance for reflecting on one's position as an instructor, a student, or both. The authors of this paper have been both instructors and graduate students in recent years and this has allowed us to see the value of different positionalities and diverse viewpoints on teaching and learning knowledge.

Student-centered teaching and learning, as well as an increased voice for students in research and publication, can also serve an important function for decolonizing the classroom and promoting diversity in SoTL.²⁴ Students increasingly stem from diverse backgrounds based upon ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic standing, gender and sexual orientation, and ability. By engaging with this diversity and integrating it into SoTL research, scholars can develop classroom approaches that adapt to diverse student learning needs, rather than seeking to mold students to existing teaching methods and approaches (Ettinger 2020). These are goals that much SoTL research already seeks to accomplish, but without adequately including student voices, success will be hard to attain. At the same time, we also recognize the significance of ethics in student voice projects—both in terms of protecting students and in the addition of potentially substantial barriers to accessing research for precariously employed faculty or instructors without research support. From both perspectives, increased reflection on positionality and roles as students or instructors is important.

Beyond the inclusion of student voices, our review highlights the importance of promoting collaborative research between SoTL scholars. We are certainly not the first scholars to call for a collaborative approach to SoTL, given the associated opportunities for the sharing of practical teaching knowledge, the development of novel methodologies, and the identification of inter-campus trends (Strachan and Bennion 2017, 2016). Indeed, Strachan and Bennion co-founded the Consortium for Inter-Campus SoTL Research (CISR) to 'facilitate research projects requiring collaborative, cross-campus data collection to assess the effectiveness of civic engagement and political science learning initiatives' (Strachan and Bennion 2017, 293). By collecting data across a number of academic institutions, these

²⁴ We are not the first to notice a lack of student voice in this literature; however, while Blair (2015) identifies this to be the case for articles published in 2012, we establish that the problem has persisted. Further, we highlight particular methodological solutions and clarify the political stakes of this absence.



initiatives can expand data availability, promote large-N studies, and expand case selection (Strachan and Bennion 2017, 319). Given the overwhelming dominance of instructor reflection as well as other studies that only look at a single course, we concur with Strachan and Bennion that it is important to continue building on those and developing studies that capture a bigger picture. This is not to say that larger N studies or particular types of research are more valuable than others, but rather that it is high time to begin building upon the insights of instructor reflections through different types of studies and collaboration between instructors. This can be through review studies, meta-analyses, quantitative analyses, or qualitative analyses. This will allow for investigation and discussion of techniques, activities, and tools to be expanded to different contexts, across different types of instructors and student populations. With thoughtful design of the appropriate controls to recognize unique institutional realities, collaborative projects can similarly be designed to solve the difficulty of including control groups, which are important to make comparative arguments about teaching interventions (e.g., Glazier 2016, 2021). Moreover, as scholars work together to compare, contrast, and synthesize ideas, teaching and learning practices can be effectively shared and evolve together, thereby contributing to a broader cumulation of knowledge (Lantis et al. 2010). Lastly, collaboration between scholars of teaching and learning can allow for different SoTL research methods to be combined effectively and enhance access to data, especially when it comes to student voices. Bringing together multiple classes of students on a particular topic or technique can allow for expanded survey data, larger focus groups, more interview subjects, and more research capacity to use more than one method. Collaborative research projects may, furthermore, aid in ensuring ethical research practices by disentangling the collection of data from the student/instructor relationship. While this review focused specifically on the fields of political science and International Relations, SoTL scholar, a comparative piece analyzing political science and other fields would be an interesting future project, albeit outside the scopes of this current study.

As we noted at the outset, it is hardly a revolutionary claim to say that teaching is an important function of the university. Institutionally, teaching may sometimes be seen as impactful only (or primarily) because it is what ‘pays the bills,’ but we also recognize that—in a powerful way—teaching is also important at the individual level of analysis. While some scholars of political science and International Relations provide policy-relevant advice to governments, think tanks, social movements, or community organizations, the vast majority of academics leave their largest legacy through their influence on generations of students. Whether courses are primarily theoretical or applied in nature (Guzzini 2001), they present important opportunities to help students to build their own understandings of the world. It is precisely this impact that Aaron Ettinger recognizes in stating that ‘Today’s students are the scholars and practitioners of tomorrow, and sparking curiosity in students, especially undergraduates, has the potential to rejuvenate the field from within’ (2020, 348). By foregrounding the student experience in our contributions to the SoTL ecosystem, we can build a more student-centered discipline.



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