Illuminating the Generative Role of "the Personal Why" in SOTL Research

Linda Shadiow, Northern Arizona University
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12:00 noon-1:30 p.m.
Wells Library, E174

In Toni Morrison’s Nobel Prize Lecture delivered following her being named the 1994 Laureate in Literature, she writes: “Narrative is radical, creating us at the very moment it is being created.” What can be gained from considering her point as it applies to the ways we pursue and share our SOTL research? What is the range of influence our personal stories have as we undertake SOTL projects? When the implicit role of our educational biographies, referred to as the “personal why”, becomes more explicit, what possibilities open up for our work? In this interactive session, we will explore a continuum of directions for considering the generative role of our own “personal why?” in three possible areas:(1) recognizing its influence in our SOTL inquiry, (2) including its presence as we make our SOTL work public, and (3) using its focus for our SOTL inquiry. And, when it is a part of (rather than apart from) SOTL research in the work we do and our colleagues do, what criteria can it be assessed?

Linda Shadiow was the director of the Faulty Professional Development Program at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff from 2004-2013. She joined NAU in 1985 with a joint professorial appointment in English and Education, and was named as Associate Executive Director of the newly established Center for Excellence in Education. Prior to her move to NAU, she was an assistant professor of English at Montana State University in Bozeman. When she retired from NAU in May 2013, the Linda K. Shadiow Award for Transformation was established in her name. Her recent book, *What Our Stories Teach Us: A Guide to Critical Reflection for College Faculty* was published in April by Jossey-Bass.