

INTRODUCTION

- ISSOTL Grand Challenge 5: cultures that devalue teaching are the greatest barrier to SoTL's practice, use, and growth
- SoTL becomes “above and beyond” work, and people isolate
- Hiding failure from each other is what isolation is built from

RESEARCH QUESTION

Can a Community of Care make failure speakable, and turn it into resistance and care, not just coping?

THE PEOPLE FRAMEWORK

- P** Public invitation
Any rank, any series, any discipline
- E** Engaged peers and mentors
Trustful, cross-disciplinary relationships
- O** Ongoing center leadership
Guidance with faculty, never to them
- P** Purposeful conversations
Thoughtful, intentional curriculum
- L** Learning community
Faculty-centered, collaborative partnerships
- E** Engagement in dissemination
Findings shared publicly

METHODS

- Who:** SoTL Faculty Fellows cohort (n = 12) from natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, arts, and professional schools
- What:** a year with failure as the explicit curriculum (two-day conference, reflection prompts, monthly gatherings, weekly Write-In-Place)
- Data:** written reflections; pre/post self-assessments (1-10 scale)
- Analysis:** inductive and deductive thematic coding

“Having those connections makes it possible to do this work, and to stay motivated.”

SoTL Faculty Fellow

RESULTS

100%

of fellows named reframing failure as the program’s most transformative element

PUNITIVE
concealment, shame, isolation



GENERATIVE
learning, curiosity, connection

Epistemological

Failure recast as data and as a growth state

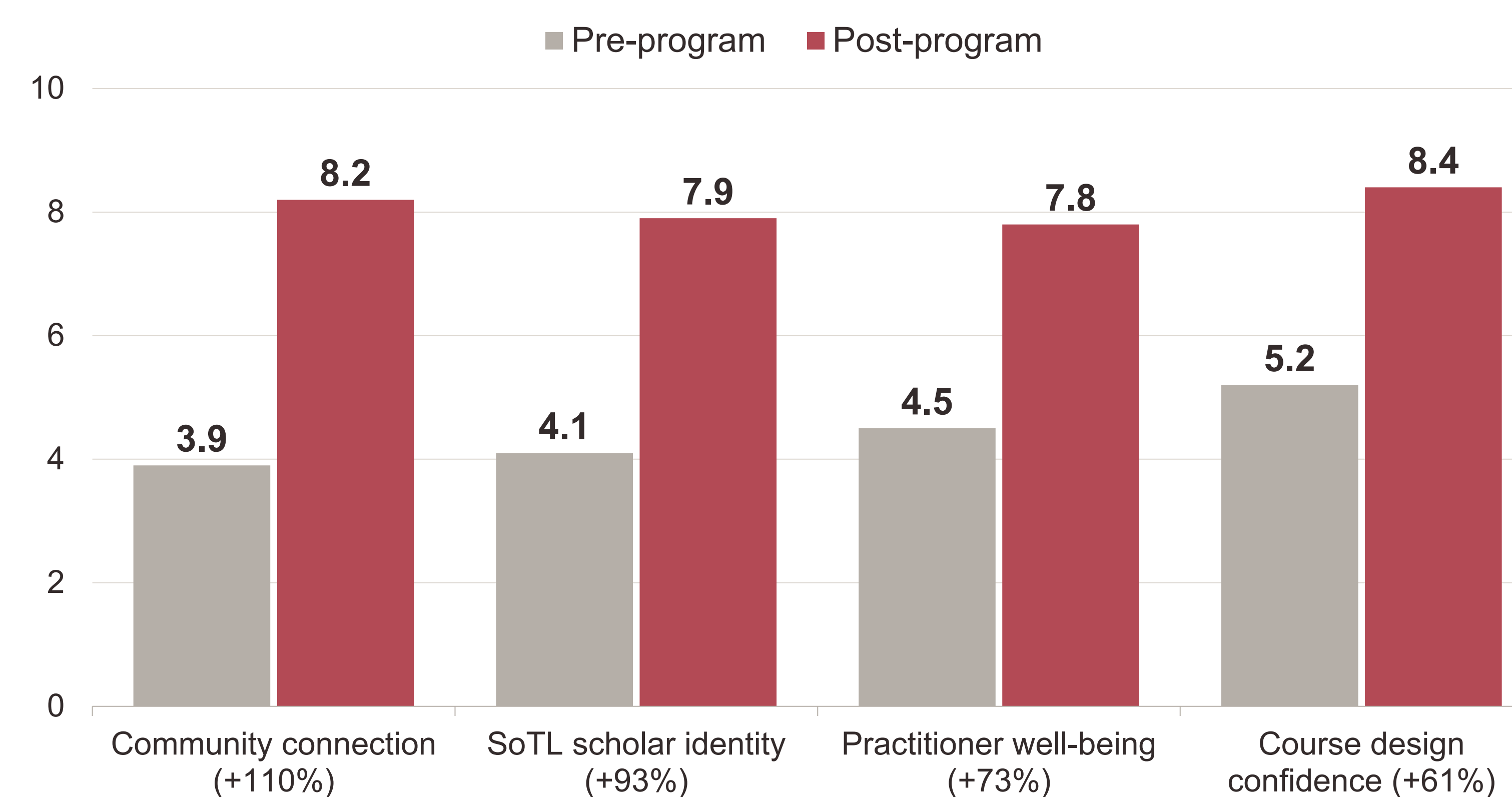
Emotional

From shame to curiosity

Pedagogical

Failure frameworks made explicit in teaching and syllabi

Growth on every dimension (self-assessed, 1-10 scale)



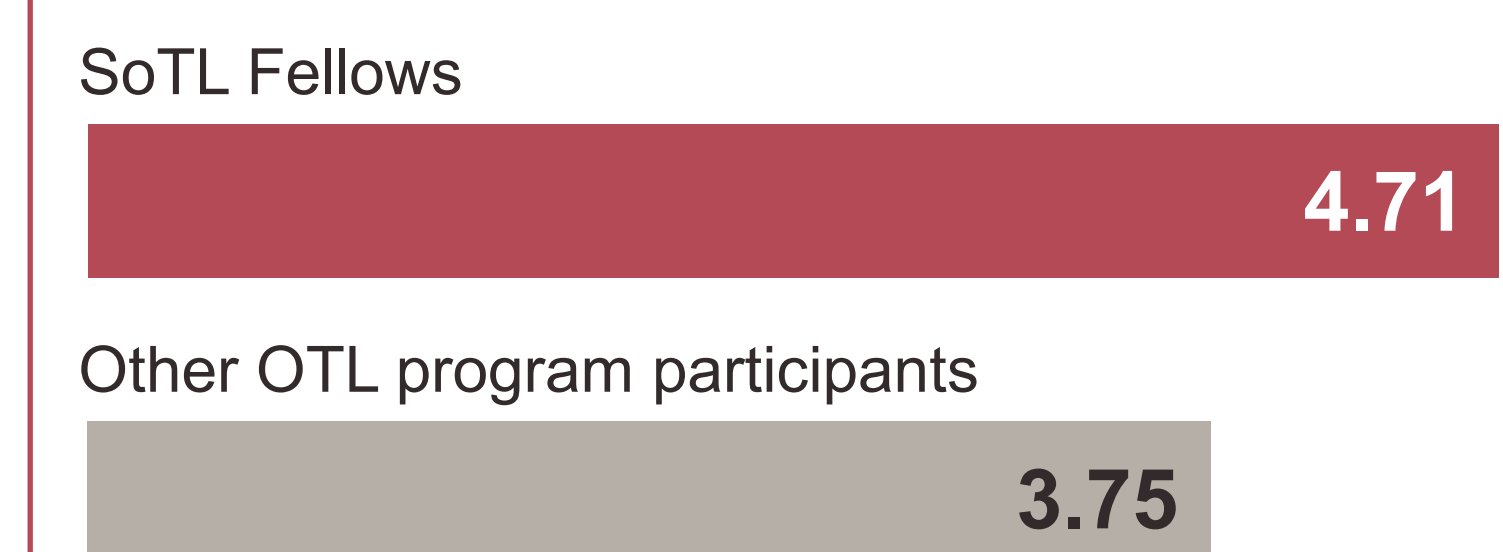
+60%

SoTL methods competence

+48%

facilitating deeper student learning

Commitment to the teacher-scholar model (out of 5)



89% said the program increased their commitment

Not all failure is the same

External

The system says no
Often mobilizing: sparks resistance and agency

Internal

The voice inside sets the bar
Often immobilizing: perfectionism, exhaustion

Metaphors enable different actions

DATA

Analyze it

BOULDER

Climb over it

GROWTH STATE

Move through it

PATHWAY

Follow it

No one reframed failure alone: five functions of community

Permission-granting

Leaders share failure first

Normalization

Failure is universal

Witnessing

Seen, not fixed

Co-regulation

Borrowing others' calm

Collective intelligence

A shared vocabulary

Fellows took it straight into their teaching

Multiple attempts, no penalty

Low-stakes, failure-safe zones

Failure frameworks in the syllabus

Modeled vulnerability

Grades as information, not identity

CONCLUSIONS

- Well-being is foundational to sustained SoTL engagement, not supplementary
- Reframing failure takes deliberate design; it does not emerge on its own
- Community care is how Grand Challenge 5 moves from theory to practice
- PEOPLE is replicable across institutions and resource levels

**No safety, no risk.
No risk, no growth.**

SIX MOVES TO TRY

- Go first: share your own failure
- Determine before you respond
- Offer multiple metaphors
- Center the margins
- Structure it, and keep it going
- Make failure public scholarship

YOUR TURN

Which kind of failure drags you more?

Add a sticker

EXTERNAL

INTERNAL

What is your metaphor for failure?

Add a sticky note

REFERENCES

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