

What willingness is there in institutions to incorporate a teaching and learning course into Ph.D. programs? Is such a course planned and delivered by teaching award winners and/or widely recognized teachers?

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In 1997, three eminent Canadian historians, David Bercuson, Robert Bothwell and J.L. Granatstein, produced a book entitled, "Petrified Campus: The Crisis in Canadian Universities." From the title of the book it is obvious that the authors have many issues that they claim impede the development of Canadian universities as institutions of higher learning. Among these is the issue of tenure. The authors believe that a rational system for deciding tenure in Canadian universities would have been obtained by declaring some universities as "research" institutions and others as "boutique" or teaching universities. The latter would reward good teachers; the former would tenure its best researchers. Instead, universities in Canada, like provinces, are treated as if they are all equal, hence the awarding of tenure is conducted through the three-track system—research, teaching and service; an inclusiveness that the authors claim produces a fundamentally dishonest system.

"The three tracks... are held up as sacred writ in deciding tenure, and, recently, thanks to attacks in the legislatures and to a tendency to give too much weight to student opinion, the assessment of teaching has increasingly come to be pronounced the most important component of the road that leads to tenure. We do not think this tendency makes sense; indeed that if it proceeds further, it will weaken Canadian universities even more, ensure that they become truly mediocre and brain dead, and likely drive out the best researching faculty, the only ones with international and national reputations." (Bercuson, et al, 1997, p.132)

In the context of quality teaching the authors maintain that no great teaching can occur if a professor is not immersed in research. "A university is not a continuation of high school; it is a research institution dedicated to the advancement of knowledge, and those who do not contribute to this end ought not to be employed there." (ibid. p. 131) In their chapter on the selection of a university, students are given several criteria to consider none of which is related to quality of teaching. If professors are doing "worthwhile research" and applying new knowledge gained through research directly into the classroom, the criterion for selection will be satisfied, and, presumably, quality teaching will magically emerge. In the realm of university teaching, a topic that is largely peripheral to their interests, the authors are concerned that student judgments of teaching sometimes praise showmanship more than intellectual content of a course. They do maintain that since the first year of university is the one that filters out most of those who will not complete their degrees, it is arguably the most important for students and, consequently, should have the best teachers instructing. The authors do not appear to be concerned how the "best teachers" are to be developed in their system. Indeed at one point in their argument they state, "... the way material is taught is properly a matter of individual concern." (ibid. p. 140)

Their apparent dismissal of a need to develop quality teaching through some form of training reflects the attitudes of many colleagues. Perhaps it follows that if one is immersed in research, good teaching will axiomatically take place. When this outlook prevails, responsibility for the development of a positive approach to scholarly teaching can fall upon the program of graduate studies and its linkage to instructional development centres. To illustrate this, we can approach the issue briefly through the arguments, pro and con, on faculty mentor programs.

Faculty Mentoring

Those who endorse the benefits of mentoring new members of faculty maintain that faculty productivity is enhanced, a sense of collegiality is fostered and faculty retention is advanced. Some researchers claim that mentored colleagues tend to feel more self-assured professionally, are more confident in their teaching and express higher career and job satisfaction than those who were not mentored. (Lucas & Murray, 2002, p. 24) Members of the university community who do not support the concept of faculty mentoring often state that, "...the literature on mentoring new faculty is scattered, little-known, and largely conjectural." Its lack of verification allows the programs to be targeted as "a fad." (ibid. p.26) There is the risk that such programs will be associated with "remediation", a possible indicator of professional deficiency, and, therefore, something that will impede a future career. It will be perceived that the recipient lacks the initiative to seek out senior colleagues for advice and guidance as needed. Selby and Calhoun (1998) believe the years of training and developments that new members of faculty have received are sufficient to prepare them as members of an academic community that is dedicated to research and teaching. They should arrive with a clear notion of what will be required to participate effectively in that community. They state, "If colleges and universities are now systematically producing faculty who are not ready to take their place as fully functioning colleagues, then perhaps what is needed is not the formalized paternalism of mentoring programs, ... attention should be focused instead on strengthening graduate training." (Selby & Calhoun, p. 211) While one may reject the broadside against mentoring programs, if graduate training is to produce "fully functioning colleagues" it may be argued that the scholarship of teaching should be an element in that training.

Training of Graduate Students

In her research into the training of graduate students as the future professoriate, Ann Austin (2002) and her colleagues at Michigan State University stressed the significance of the socialization process.

Socialization is a process through which an individual becomes part of a group, organization or community ... it involves learning about the culture of a group including its values, attitudes and expectations. (Austin, p. 95)

The author maintains that this process in graduate schools must change substantially if new faculty members are to work effectively in the world of higher education. As part of this change, the role of the teaching assistant must be structured to ensure a high quality learning experience rather than a means to serve only the needs of the institution or the faculty, a situation she believes is now prevalent.

Among the skills that need to be developed through the socialization process of graduate students are those associated with the scholarship of teaching. For example, the future professoriate must understand the pressure from what the author refers to as "external constituencies" to strengthen undergraduate education by shifting from an emphasis on teaching to an emphasis on learning. To this end it becomes essential to develop knowledge of teaching strategies.

Focusing on the learner, rather than the teacher, leads to new expectations for how faculty will enact their roles. New faculty members are likely to need to know how to support and advise students, and how to facilitate learning through discussion, utilize a range of collaborative and other innovative learning processes, and link classroom learning with life experiences and service in the community. (Austin, p. 98)

Often the use of teaching assistants in universities responds to departmental needs to cover a course or sections of a course, not to the development of future professors. Regular feedback from faculty about teaching practices is often not planned into the schedules of teaching assistants. More commonly senior members of faculty have not had training in the scholarship of teaching, or believe that teaching is not an important component in the life of a university professor. There may be those among the university faculty who believe the term is an oxymoron. The situation is also encountered where public statements are made by institutional leaders about the importance of teaching, but are then contradicted by institutional policies and faculty behaviours that emphasize research. When this occurs, untenured

faculty members will devote most of their time and energies to publishing and to the preparation of research grant proposals. Graduate students may observe this and develop their attitudes toward the professoriate life accordingly.

Instructional Development Centres (IDC)

The unevenness of training in the scholarship of teaching among graduate students through the socialization process places an important responsibility upon instructional development centres in universities. In addition to the important work that these centres do to assist new members of faculty to recognize and develop the scholarship of teaching, time is also being devoted in some universities to similar programs for graduate students most of whom are teaching assistants. It is these centres that will provide the best opportunity for new members of faculty and for graduate students to gain an understanding of and an appreciation for the scholarship of teaching.

Individual university departments may contact their centres to arrange tailored sessions on teaching to be presented to their teaching assistants. If such services are to function well IDCs must have permanent members as well as academic associates who are teaching award winners or are recognized as outstanding teachers. The work of the centres must be openly endorsed by university administrators who, in turn, are prepared to devote sufficient resources. Equally important will be the support received from Deans of Graduate Studies. The latter are well situated to provide a counterweight against institutional policies that emphasize only research as their *raison d'être*. If resistance against courses on teaching strategies is encountered within the offices of graduate studies, it is often formed as time taken from a graduate student's research and degree completion.

Although time to degree might increase when students take teaching internships ... the testimonies of those who have had such opportunities suggest that the additional months of experience are a valuable option as preparation for faculty roles. (Austin, 2002, p.118)

Initiatives in Canada for teaching internships in graduate programs must be left to individual provinces, and within these to individual institutions. Schonwetter, et al (2004) surveyed the 41 English institutions in Canada and found that currently 23 (56%) offer graduate students at least one option for a certificate or course credit in teaching in higher education. Twelve of these institutions offer additional options that are related to teaching preparation for graduate students. Thus, only 29% of all English universities in Canada offer more than one option toward teaching preparation in higher education. An example of the range of teaching preparation programs that are available among this minority group may be taken from The University of Western Ontario where its instructional development centre (Teaching Support Centre) has been in operation for ten years.

Teaching Assistant Programs at the University of Western Ontario in 2005

1. TA Day

This is a full day of concurrent workshops on teaching offered each September to all new Teaching Assistants (TAs). Some of the themes offered are: "Critical Incidents in the Life of a Teaching Assistant"; "The First Class"; "Time management for TAs"; "Facilitating Discussions to Support Student Learning"; "Dealing With Difficult Students" and "Entering the Academic Profession". In September 2004, 270 graduate students enrolled for this day. (There were 1,500 teaching assistants at UWO in 2004/05.)

2. International TA Day

This is a half-day workshop offered annually to international graduate students who will be TAs. It is designed to introduce international TAs to the duties of a TA, campus support services, and the culture of the Canadian classroom. There were 30 graduate students enrolled in 2004/05.

3. Teaching Assistant Training Program (TATP)

A two and a half-day program of intensive training for new TAs that includes workshops on grading practices, diversity in the classroom, lecturing, using audio-visual aids and giving students feedback on written work.. The program addresses discipline-related teaching needs and offers workshops such as preparing and delivering pre-lab demonstrations and using small group discussion methods in the classroom.

Students are offered hands-on teaching experience in unique micro teaching sessions, where they practice their teaching skills and experiment with new techniques in front of a small group of peers from whom they receive feedback. This program is offered 8 – 10 times per year. In 2004/05, 220 graduate students participated in the program, including 130 international TAs.

4. CS 500 (The Theory and Practice of University Teaching)

This is a 10-week graduate level course offered annually. There are two major objectives: a) To familiarize students with background research and theory relevant to university teaching, and b) to provide preliminary training in some of the practical skills needed for competence in university teaching. Enrolment is limited to 25 students.

5. Future Professor: Paths to Teaching Excellence

These are professional development workshops for TAs at Western that are presented 18 times during the academic year. The course consists of three separate workshop series:

- the advanced TA series
- the series “Teaching Across Cultures”
- a teaching and technology series.

There were 243 students enrolled in this course for 2004/05.

ITATP (International TA Training Program)

The program involves a two-hour pre-session to the existing TATP Program. It is designed to introduce international graduate students to Canadian academic culture, to the roles of the TA at Western and to prepare them for the following two and a half day training program. The ITATP is offered six times a year. Forty-three students participated in this program in 2004/05.

TA Mentoring

This is new in the spring of 2005. It involves mentoring and individual feedback to new TAs from instructors of the TATP program. Experienced TAs observe the class of new TAs and provide feedback, helpful advice and suggestions. Experienced TAs also facilitate the formation of TA consulting groups in their home departments and faculties. TA consulting groups meet bi-weekly to share ideas and discuss discipline-specific teaching strategies. To date, 5 students have participated in this program.

There are currently 1,500 TAs at Western with 1000 participants in all programs listed above with some repeats among this number. Of this total, 580 are TAs whose mother tongue is other than English. While individual departments do some preparation for their TAs, their sessions tend to focus on content rather than process. It should be noted that the administration in the Faculty of Graduate Studies informs the graduate students of the courses offered by the Teaching Support Centre, they do not encourage the students, as a matter of policy, to take these courses. There is obviously some distance to travel before the preparation of the future professoriate becomes an entrenched policy in the Faculty of Graduate Studies at Western, and as a policy to be embraced by 70% of the English universities in Canada that do not offer more than one option in teacher training. There is much to be done to convince some

colleagues, such as Bercuson, et al, that this training is worthwhile among the future professoriate to avoid the perception among future students that the campus is indeed a petrified place.

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