Preparing a Teaching Professorate: Emphasizing the Scholarship of Teaching to Graduate Students

By: Shaun R. Harper

This paper discusses and examines existing literature on the scholarship of teaching in higher education. It focuses on the preparation and socialization of graduate students to roles as teaching scholars and facilitators of learning. The competing interests of teaching and research; importance of student learning; and rewards of effective teaching are all discussed. Finally, implications and recommendations for institutions of higher education, particularly those responsible for graduate education, are presented.

The scholarly work of those who are likely to occupy professorial roles on college and university faculties will be tremendously impacted by the values they acquire as graduate students. During the time when students are immersed in post-baccalaureate learning activities—enrolling in graduate courses, developing research agendas, preparing for qualifying exams, and composing dissertations—a set of philosophies and values regarding their future careers as educators in academe are developed. These values are greatly influenced by the scholars currently occupying the positions that graduate students someday hope to fill. That is, pre-professorial attitudes and behaviors are shaped by the ways in which graduate students see the faculty in their graduate departments approach the traditional duties of teaching, research, and service. Furthermore, the experiences and formal training afforded to graduate students will undoubtedly influence the manner in which they prioritize their values as faculty scholars.

Given that today's graduate students will ultimately make up a sizable proportion of the intellectual elite in this country, more attention must be paid to their socialization and training experiences. Hence, they must be taught to become well-rounded scholars, who can effectively engage in a variety of scholarly activities that contribute to the advancement of their academic disciplines and society at large. At most

institutions of higher education the tasks of scholarly inquiry and research, undergraduate teaching, and service to the university and to one's profession encompass the faculty portfolio of scholarly activities. A great deal of literature suggests a substantial neglect in one of these areas. Katz & Hartnett (1976), Boyer (1990), and Lambert & Tice (1993) all contend that graduate students are inadequately prepared for the teaching portion of their faculty careers and are often socialized to treat teaching as the stepchild of collegiate scholarship.

In his 1990 report from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching *Scholarship Reconsidered*, Ernest Boyer argues for a perception of scholarship that encompasses not only research but a range of activities, including teaching; he maintains that teaching is and should be considered a scholarly activity. According to Katz & Hartnett, "...evidence indicates that many students would like to teach. Many of them start out with such a desire and have it 'socialized' out of them during their graduate years" (p. 273). Therefore, greater attention must be devoted to the manner by which the values of the scholarship of teaching are imparted to graduate students. The purpose of this paper is to examine existing literature regarding the scholarship of teaching and the dilemmas confronting it, and to demonstrate the need to make known the value of collegiate teaching for those seeking professorships at institutions of higher education.

The first section addresses the competing interests of teaching and research. Its focus then shifts to emphasizing student learning in collegiate teaching. Next, some rewards of good, effective teaching are identified. Finally, implications and recommendations for institutions of higher education, particularly those responsible for graduate education, are presented. The overall goal of this paper is to demonstrate a need for a future generation of collegiate instructors who have been trained to teach well and value teaching as a scholarly, meaningful, and rewarding activity. Although most of the recommendations in this paper are posed for faculties at research universities with large representations of doctoral students, the suggestions may also apply to other types of institutions with graduate programs.

Competition Between Teaching and Research

"[Graduate] students are socialized to think and feel that the only life worth living is that of research" (Katz & Hartnett, 1976). This perception is often validated before students even begin their graduate education. For example, competitions for financially handsome graduate research fellowships and assistantships are often extremely competitive and are used to attract the brightest graduate students to certain institutions; decisions regarding these awards are typically made several months in advance. Teaching assistantships, on the other hand, can be given on the eve of the first day of class or even during the first week of the fall semester and usually do not carry the same amount of prestige, compensation, or faculty supervision as research-based awards. Therefore, new graduate students are afforded an early glimpse at the priorities of their departments, schools, and ultimately the academy.

These values are also reflected in faculty recruiting and incentive structures. "Research, not teaching, is valued more today than in the past, especially by individuals who make decisions involving personnel" (Tack & Patitu, 1992, p. 10). Gist (1996) contends that a mediocre teaching record coupled with excellence in research is more favorably accepted than a poor research record coupled with excellent teaching. In other words, it is tolerable for faculty to be a disservice to the students they teach; however, being an ineffective contributors to their academic disciplines is an intolerable disgrace. Terenzini & Pascarella (1994) posit:

> One of the most frequent criticisms of undergraduate education today is that faculty spend too much time on research at the expense of good teaching. The typical defense against this charge is that faculty members must do research in order to be good teachers. Faculty members who are researchers, so the argument goes, are more likely to be 'on the cutting edge' in their disciplines; they pass their enthusiasm for learning on to their students (p. 30).

To dispel this myth, Feldman (1987) concluded after reviewing approximately 40 studies on the relationship between faculty productivity and teaching effectiveness (as defined by students), that the two areas of scholarship are virtually independent and unrelated. In his study, he

found that nearly 98 percent of the variability measures of instructional effectiveness are due to something other than research productivity.

In spite of these findings, graduate students are still socialized to model their scholarly agendas after those on the faculty in their departments. On many campuses, especially large, research universities, doctoral students are exposed to faculty who are tenured, promoted, and rewarded for excellence in research. Very little attention is paid to the teaching effectiveness of these "scholars". Many graduate students recognize early on that teaching simply does not count at some institutions. It is research that faculty and institutions care most about, research that brings in external money to the university, research that brings about reputational rankings, and research that is rewarded in tenure and promotion decisions.

It is not unusual for stellar research faculty to abandon undergraduate teaching altogether. That is, they only teach graduate-level classes and work tirelessly on grant-supported research projects. That doctoral students are exposed to faculty with active research agendas and subordinate teaching obligations is potentially destructive. Sometimes these faculty members will take doctoral students under their wings and invite them to collaborate on research projects. In this regard, faculty members serve as role models and research mentors. Graduate students partnered with excellent teachers to learn how to become better instructors less often. In result, many students matriculate through graduate programs without the proper training to effectively facilitate learning for the undergraduates they will teach as faculty members upon completion of their doctoral programs (Lambert & Tice, 1993).

With a Focus on Student Learning

Due to the disproportionate emphasis placed on research in graduate school, many students earn their doctorates having had only one course in pedagogy—that's if they are lucky (Katz & Hartnett, 1976). Throughout their 90+ hours of doctoral study, many graduate students are required to take a wide-range of research methodology courses—quantitative, qualitative, historical, etc. Plus, they are typically allowed to devote 12-20 of those credit hours to writing the research

thesis or doctoral dissertation. The remainder of one's program of study is devoted to content in her/his academic discipline and minor areas of study. Very rarely is a wide range of courses offered to train students to become effective collegiate teachers. Although courses may be taught here and there throughout the university, the breadth of courses on teaching is oftentimes pitiful when compared to number concentrating on research methodology. As a result, some future faculty members remain unclear about the learning styles, pet theories and naive misconceptions, cultural needs and biases, and motivational requirements of contemporary undergraduates.

One study (Pollio, 1984) found that professors in a typical university classroom spent about 80 percent of their time lecturing to students who were attentive to what was being said only about 50 percent of the time. This evidence does not suggest that the traditional lecture mode of information delivery is entirely ineffective; but rather, other pedagogical methods are needed to garner the attention and stimulate learning among undergraduate students. It is somewhat inconceivable that graduate students would know how to employ such strategies without the proper training and exposure to theories on student learning. In addition to using inappropriate and ineffective instructional techniques, new faculty members may also struggle with making the distinction between teaching and learning. Quite often there is a myth that "to know one's subject is to be able to teach it well". Even in the few cases where this is true, a distinction is still warranted on how well information is taught and how well students learn.

Barr & Tagg (1995) advocate a paradigmatic shift from teaching to learning. That is, universities should no longer strive to provide instruction, but should exist to produce learning. The authors contend that the instructional paradigm, under which the traditional 50-minute lecture exists, is no longer effective or appropriate for undergraduate education. They recommend that universities and its faculties redirect their energies toward a learning paradigm by which environments and experiences are created to assist undergraduate students in discovering and constructing knowledge for themselves, thus making them members of the communities of learners who make discoveries and solve problems. In short, under the learning paradigm,

less emphasis is placed on the traditional modes of teaching, while the greatest attention is devoted to how much students learn and how active they are in the discovery and construction of their own knowledge. Mastering the skill of learning facilitation instead of teaching—along with several other factors—could make collegiate teaching rewarding and enjoyable for aspiring professors.

The Rewards of Teaching

In a study conducted by Wissman (1981) (cited in Tack & Patitu, 1992), when faculty members were asked from where they received the greatest satisfaction in their work, an overwhelming majority said teaching. In spite of the lack of compensation and recognition for effective teaching, imparting knowledge and facilitating learning opportunities for undergraduate students is still enjoyed by many who are engaged in the scholarship of teaching. As mentioned earlier, many graduate students are socialized against their teaching orientations early on in their graduate careers. Given this, it is somewhat surprising that the majority still enjoys and receives greater satisfaction from teaching than anything else. At research universities, most junior faculty are actively engaged and completely immersed in research because they have to be for tenure-earning purposes (Gist, 1996). Therefore, they are among the least likely to derive complete fulfillment from teaching.

Given the "baby steps" taken by the academy and individual institutions to uniformly develop standards to recognize and applaud good teaching, faculty in graduate programs must enact efforts to expose graduate students to the rewards of pedagogy. For several collegiate instructors, student interaction and development is usually at the heart of their work. According to Wilson, Woods, and Gaff (1974) (cited in Tack & Patitu, 1992), "faculty-student interaction is important for faculty members; 'faculty who have more contact with students also are more likely to be very satisfied with the stimulation they receive from students'" (p. 13). Also, Diener (1984) (as cited in Tack & Patitu, 1992) found that eight out of ten faculty members identified interaction with students and having the opportunity to have some impact on their lives as their principle joy.

Witnessing undergraduates demonstrate a comprehension of information; apply knowledge and concepts properly; and excel in careers are also among the joys of teaching. Additionally, being responsible for the intellectual preparation of a learned citizenry is an exciting task for any teacher on any level of instruction—primary, secondary, or post-secondary. Student transition from college to careers and graduate school serve as affirmations of the impact collegiate instructors have made. Almost unanimously throughout society, everyone can recall and identify at least one teacher who has been extremely influential in their lives; only this type of influence can be exerted through teaching. Graduate programs should afford opportunities for graduate students to witness and enjoy these rewards.

Implications and Recommendations

The discussions throughout this paper, coupled with the literature reviewed and cited, suggest the need to restructure the socialization and preparation of graduate students for careers on college and university faculties. First, academic schools and departments must sincerely communicate their commitment to the scholarship of teaching when recruiting students to attend their institutions. An equal amount to seriousness, competitiveness and luster should be given to teaching and research fellowships assistantships. That is, teaching assistants should be attracted in the same manner as the "bright" students who are channeled into research assistantships; "bright" students can also be good teachers. Although research award packages are typically funded through external research grants, institutions with graduate programs must find similar ways to support teaching assistants.

Another way in which professorial preparation may be strengthened is through the nurturing, mentoring, and modeling attitudes and behaviors of current faculty scholars. Just as students pick up on good research techniques from faculty who are good researchers, they will acquire good teaching techniques from good teachers. Aspiring and junior faculty normally replicate what they see senior scholars do and measure their success by those who have achieved their marks in the academy. If faculties exclusively emphasize research instead of teaching, chances are that graduate students will pattern their approaches to

scholarship in a similar manner. Likewise, if faculty are always discussing, demonstrating, and promoting good teaching, it is highly likely that graduate students will perceive teaching to be as important or even more scholarly than research. Doctoral advisors, along with other graduate faculty, should emphasize gaining both pedagogical and research methodological skills in their conversations with graduate students. Furthermore, faculty should expect graduate students to somehow demonstrate an understanding of, and passion for teaching; especially those students who intend to pursue careers in academia upon completion of the doctorate. However, faculty members cannot expect such enthusiasm about teaching if they are not enthusiastic themselves.

A commitment to the scholarship of teaching also needs to be reflected in the curricula of graduate programs. Although discipline-specific content classes and research methodological courses are essential to graduate education, courses focusing on strengthening the pedagogical talents of future faculty should also be required components of any graduate program curriculum. No longer is it appropriate or even accurate to assume that students who are good researchers and knowledgeable in their content areas will automatically become effective facilitators of learning. Furthermore, it is also unsafe to posit that one course on "how to teach this subject" will give graduate students the necessary skills to effectively teach undergraduates. Hence, a variety of pedagogical courses are needed to teach professorial potentials how to organize, chunk, and anchor information; identify and employ strategies that respond to diverse learning styles; confront classroom incivility; motivate uninspired and under-prepared learners; and respond to the demographic diversity of today's undergraduates, just to name a few. Just as it is implausible that a little fairy will wave the wand of information on content and research methodology, it is also unrealistic to expect graduate students to stumble across a bag of magic teaching tricks. Courses must be offered to afford these students the opportunity to develop their own philosophies of collegiate teaching; engage in meaningful dialogue with others regarding the scholarship of teaching; and improve their pedagogy through practice and in-class micro-teaching experiences.

One final recommendation applies to faculty members,

administrators, and policy makers in higher education—applaud, encourage, demand, and reward good teaching! Those who will occupy positions on college and university faculties in the future will be better because of it. The rewards of teaching should be vocalized as frequently as possible. Graduate students should be trained to think that teaching is exciting, worthwhile, and appreciated. Awards should be given to stellar graduate students who serve as teaching assistants or instructors—for example, an Assistant Instructor of the Year Award or departmental-specific Graduate Student Instructor of the Year Awards. Likewise, graduate students should see that current faculty members are justly compensated and awarded for effective teaching. As many opportunities as possible should be facilitated for these students to discover first-hand how they may permanently impact the lives of hundreds of undergraduate students through good teaching.

Conclusion

Just as the attitudes and behaviors of a child are shaped during the few months of its life, so are the values and perceptions of graduate students regarding the scholarship of teaching. In many regards, these students are newborns to their careers as scholars in academe; therefore, they must inherit and acquire the skills and training that will make them productive, effective, and handsomely compensated adults in their professions. They must grow up knowing that teaching is as important and scholarly as research. They must be taught how to walk the path of an effective learning facilitator. Most importantly—they must mature to a level where their scholarship, in all its forms, leaves a permanent impact on people's lives, the academy, and society.

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Shaun R. Harper is a doctoral student in Higher Education Administration at Indiana University-Bloomington, where he serves as the Assistant Director of MBA Admissions for the Kelley School of Business and a course instructor for the School of Education. Correspondence regarding this article may be sent to: vaharper@indiana.edu