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This article is about student learning, faculty development, and curricular transformation issues that will shape the agendas of faculty meetings into the 21st century. Chairpersons have the unique opportunity to set a course for their departments in ways that expand traditional, parochial definitions of student outcomes and the academic program of study.

Navigating the Academic Department into the 21st Century

In a 1994 speech delivered at the Association of American Colleges annual meeting, Ernest Boyer described the "New American College" as:

" . . .an institution that celebrates teaching and selectively supports research, while also taking special pride in its capacity to connect thought to action, theory to practice. This New American College would organize cross-disciplinary institutes around pressing social issues. Undergraduates at the college would participate in field projects, relating ideas to real life. Classrooms would be extended to include health clinics, youth centers, schools, and government offices. Faculty members would build partnerships with practitioners who would, in turn, come to campus as lecturers and student advisers."

This "new college" reflects an ethos already established at metropolitan universities in the post-World War II period. All of the elements that Boyer lists, I encountered as an undergraduate at Fordham University in New York City in the late 1960s, as a faculty member and department chair at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond from the late 1970s through the 1980s, and now helping to build a brand new, 21st century campus at Arizona State University West.

The purpose of this article is to reflect on my experiences at these three metropolitan universities (Fordham, VCU, and ASU West) and to suggest issues for a chairperson to consider in navigating the department into the 21st century.

My biases should be stated at the outset. First, I believe that being a department chair is the best administrative job in the academy. Leadership can focus on the essential players in higher education — faculty and students — and not on the multiple other audiences which occupy the time of deans, vice presidents, and presidents. Second, my past work has been in departments of psychology and I have written elsewhere about similar issues from that disciplinary perspective. Third, I now chair an interdisciplinary arts and sciences department with full-time tenure track faculty from astronomy, business and environmental ethics, history and philosophy of science, mathematics, psychology, and philosophy. Our faculty's multicultural heritages include African American, Asian American, Argentinean, Rumanian, and Spanish, along with a native Californian and a New Yorker. All our colleagues in the other arts and sciences programs at ASU West use multiple hyphens to list their academic specializations and they too reflect the gender and ethnic mix of the broader society. Thus, the themes about which I write are topics of daily conversations on our new campus.

My comments will be organized around three intellectual priorities for most chairs — students, faculty, and the undergraduate curriculum. I will not talk about economic issues (either struggling with scarcity or developing fund-raising initiatives), management issues (TQM or all of its alphabetical antecedents), or graduate education. Leadership in these areas is too often a matter of steering between Scylla and Charybdis with little sense of control, much less satisfaction. My premise is that the audience for this article is invested more in reflection and affirmation of their thinking than in reading about someone else's problem solving techniques for their particular environment.

What Do We Know About How Students Learn in College?

In their book, *How College Affects Students* (Jossey-Bass, 1991), Pascarella & Terenzini synthesized the research on how a college education affects students. They show that the findings are consistent across almost 30 years. By going to college, students: (a) think more critically, complexly, and reflectively; (b) increase their cultural and artistic interests; (c) develop personal identities and healthy self-concepts; (d) extend their intellectual interests, personal autonomy, interpersonal horizons, and overall psychological maturity. Going to college, not simply maturing with age, positively affects students' intellectual, moral, and career development.

A major limitation of this past research is its lack of attention to individual differences. The research findings are about overall effects. Those that are attributable to "non-traditional" student status — age, ethnic minority status, part-time or re-entry enrollment patterns — need to be investigated and understood. Such research is especially needed for metropolitan university students because such characteristics are their "traditional" demographics. Pascarella and Terenzini noted also that "similarities in between-college effects would appear to vastly outweigh the differences" (p. 590). The power of college is directly related to how intensely involved students become with their faculty, programs, peers, and with opportunities that arise on campus. In a conclusion applicable to any chairperson's priority list, these authors suggested:

". . . there is some evidence to suggest that departmental environment, whatever the department, may be more important than the characteristics of the discipline in shaping psychosocial and attitudinal changes among students. The interpersonal climate and value homogeneity and consensus within a department appear to be

particularly important" (p. 614).

What is the specific role of the chair in addressing these empirically based student learning issues? First, the chair can organize all data collection and assessment activities in order to identify for the department student descriptors, such as age, ethnic-minority status, and registration patterns, so that this can be used to examine the effectiveness of departmental programs for sub-groups as well as for the whole student body. Second, the chair needs to be attentive to environment-building activities that free faculty to become more involved with their students in their intellectual work. In setting priorities for faculty recruitment and in guiding curriculum development, this translates into focusing faculty expertise and curricular choices rather than covering the panorama of any disciplinary or professional area's specializations. The chair must also be able to communicate clear signals to faculty *and* to students about balancing their scholarly pursuits and instructional responsibilities. This third aspect of what Pascarella and Terenzini label "interpersonal climate and value homogeneity" will be covered in a later section of this paper on faculty development.

How Can We Foster Student Learning More Effectively?

The research on college effects and the recommendations from several higher education task forces indicate that the quality of student learning is directly related to the quality of students' involvement in their education. Astin's talent development model was an early catalyst for this perspective. Departmental environments in which (a) clear and high expectations are stated, (b) concerted faculty effort fosters active learning in every course or out-of-class activity, and (c) systematic assessment and feedback are provided — these are places where students and faculty thrive. The capacity to build these environments is not necessarily related to institutional resources or prestige. It depends more on shared values in which administrators, faculty, and students recognize and reward quality effort on behalf of undergraduate learning.

Heterogeneity, not homogeneity, in the student population will be a defining quality of departments into the next century. The proportions of women and men students in particular majors will change. Students will have uneven preparation in basic skills such as literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking, and even wider differences in levels of cognitive development and in 21st century skills such as information literacy and language / global / multicultural knowledge and sensitivities. Common expectations for learning among all the different students who take undergraduate courses will require sensitivity by faculty, expanding their roles as teachers and providers of university and community service. To achieve a common excellence in learning will require particular attention by faculty as scholars, to measure the differential effects of the major for a variety of undergraduate student characteristics. This research and evaluation effort should be synthesized with assessment mandates already expected for departments. Department chairs can provide leadership on these issues in order to enhance the ability of faculty to motivate broader spectrums of students? They can organize faculty meetings and colloquia can be organized around the topic of how students learn. Sessions can concentrate on the different ways of knowing, or the power of feminist pedagogies.

Teaching peoples of color will challenge departments to extend themselves beyond institutional boundaries and levels of education. In 1991, 55.2 percent of American Indians, 40.2 percent of Asian Americans, 43.3 percent of African Ameri-

cans, and 55.8 percent of Hispanic Americans in all higher education were enrolled in public, two-year institutions. If departments of metropolitan universities are to recruit more people of color into their ranks, as students and as future faculty members, partnerships must be initiated with the public, community colleges. In the latter half of the 1990s, overall college enrollments are projected to increase, but state expenditures for higher education and federally funded financial aid programs will not keep pace with student needs. Community colleges will maintain their role as a principal entry point into higher education for minority students burdened by academic or economic constraints.

Because of this, the chair must become an articulate and sensitive spokesperson to multiple audiences on and off campus. Intellectual alliances of all types developed with middle schools, high schools, and community colleges can best be initiated by the chair. In metropolitan universities, student "pipelines" originate locally and public school administrators and faculty will respond favorably to sincere efforts at building bridges across the levels of education, especially right within one's own neighborhood! Third, bringing selective faculty on these ventures into the community broadens the sensitivity and knowledge of the department and will have direct pay-offs in higher quality advising and faculty's capacity to evaluate nontraditional students' work.

What Will Stimulate Faculty Development?

Most faculty, regardless of institutional type, experience periodic feelings of isolation and hope for some sense of academic community. Studies on the professoriate attest to a national sense of malaise *and* hope among current faculty, but suggest that differences may be based on institutional settings and academic disciplines as well. Rice's article in one of the first issues of this journal on "the new American scholar" is a thought-provoking piece about contemporary faculty values and the sense of community. Rice's title comes from Ralph Waldo Emerson's address to the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Harvard in 1837 in which he articulated an American definition of academic scholarship, distinguishing us from our European ancestry. At the heart of Emerson's and Rice's argument is the almost 200-year-old struggle to define what is a distinctively American university.

Gray, Froh, and Diamond's findings of different levels of satisfaction reported by faculty in different academic specialties attest to this ongoing struggle. They described the tensions in faculty values at research universities. These tensions result from perceived differences among faculty and administrators about how faculty spend their time and how they should be rewarded, especially in finding an appropriate balance between time spent on research and on undergraduate teaching. They concluded that narrowly defined reward systems on many campuses not only stress research over undergraduate teaching, but emphasize the quantity rather than the quality of research and scholarly work.

These authors received over 23,000 surveys, representing a 50 percent response rate, from faculty, unit heads, deans, and central administrators at 33 public and 14 private universities. The authors' analyses revealed that: (a) there was more variability within each of the three largest groups (faculty, unit heads, deans) than among them; (b) each level perceived the group above as more biased toward research over teaching than the higher level reported for themselves; (c) older (i.e. longer appointed) faculty and unit heads advocated more emphasis on teaching.

Do These National Studies Suggest Faculty Development Priorities for the Coming Decade?

Faculty's intellectual development, often manifested in traditional forms of research activity but always required for effective teaching regardless of institutional setting, is paramount. New definitions of scholarly activity must be discussed at departmental meetings in all settings. The chair, having been promoted as a faculty member in a single culture, must now interpret that culture as one of many academic disciplines and professional specializations, and must moderate departmental values in response to constantly evolving, broader institutional cultures.

A good starting point for the discussion is Rice's synthesis of different ways of knowing with the four forms of scholarship, discovery, integration, practice, and teaching, introduced to the public debate in 1990 by Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered*. Rice states that

". . .what is being proposed challenges a hierarchical arrangement of monumental proportions – a status system that is firmly fixed in the consciousness of the present faculty and the academy's organizational policies and practices. What is being called for is a broader, more open field, where these different forms of scholarship can interact, inform, and enrich one another, and faculty can follow their interests, build on their strengths, and be rewarded for what they spend their scholarly energy doing. All faculty ought to be scholars in this broader sense, deepening their preferred approaches to knowing but constantly pressing, and being pressed by peers, to enlarge their scholarly capacities and encompass other – often contrary ways – of knowing" (pp. 15-16).

In the coming decade, faculty in metropolitan universities, as in other institutions, will experience continued pressure and role confusion. As enrollments increase, there will be more administrative and external demands to shift institutional missions toward more teaching and community service. Without a concomitant redefinition of the relation between the forms of scholarship, or a redefinition of roles and rewards, faculty will struggle without clear signals about priorities and without a sense of support for their own intellectual development which renders good teaching all but impossible.

The chair's leadership responsibilities in the area of faculty development are among the most important in a complex job description. First, chairs must foster an intellectual and systematic discussion of these issues at faculty meetings. Second, in the recruitment of new faculty and the annual evaluations of continuing faculty, chairs must have a clear vision for balancing teaching and other scholarly pursuits. Moreover, they can effectively respond to differing faculty needs at different stages of academic careers. Must all tenured faculty members contribute the exact same mix of teaching, scholarship, and service activities every year of their career? The chair is in the best position to facilitate not only the discussion of creative alternatives but the fair (albeit difficult) implementation of an agreed upon faculty policy.

Curricular Transformations

The first issue of *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, a journal of the American Psychological Society, appeared in February 1992. The editors' plan was to cover the breadth of scientific psychology as ambitiously as authors of cur-

rent, introductory psychology textbooks. I was struck by the primary authors' departmental affiliations for the 10 articles in this first issue. Three were from departments of psychology. The remaining seven used a variety of interdisciplinary addresses (e.g. Center for the Study of Child and Adolescent Development; Institute for Social Research; Institute of Cognitive and Decision Sciences; Center for Neural Science).

Most discussions of the curriculum begin with faculty arguing about the essential knowledge base of the discipline. The interdisciplinary, yet specialized research interests epitomized by the authors mentioned above will be a challenge for many departments to incorporate into their undergraduate curricula in the coming decade. What is the content of the field which bears the academic department's name? What curriculum covers that field?

Department chairs may be aided by having an historical perspective about the evolution of disciplines and professions when they lead these discussions. After reviewing college catalogues of a number of institutions for the years 1890, 1900, 1910, and 1920, I was amazed at the similarity between curricular transformations in psychology that took place at the turn of the last century and those that are taking place now. The 1990s department of "psychology" may be similar to the 1890s department of "philosophy" as a broad descriptor of many emerging specialties. "Cognitive and Decision Sciences" parallels the 1890s "Experimental Psychology" as faculty research and undergraduate study become shaped by theoretical perspectives and more sophisticated methodologies. And in the midst of trying to reconcile new definitions of the field and its consequent curriculum, chairs might also remind faculty of the 1884 label I found at the University of Arkansas: that institutions had a Department of Psychology, Ethics, Sociology, and Evidence of Christianity. A 1990s version could make for good conversation!

Faculty discussion about curricular change will continue to be influenced by the breadth versus depth theme that has characterized debate for the entire twentieth century. Faculty proponents of depth will advocate curricular requirements that are linear, sequential, and modeled on those of the sciences. For faculty in research universities, such a position is easy to advocate as the undergraduate equivalent of specialized graduate study. Faculty of like mind, but in institutions without the staff expertise to offer such a specialized course of study leading to a new baccalaureate, will advocate tracks or minors that mirror some of these new content areas. Assessment of student learning outcomes will be easiest in such programs because of the narrow content focus.

For those interested in moving beyond specialization, there is a new focus on coherence and synthesis that is being reflected in recent reviews of undergraduate curricula. A three-volume work was sponsored by the Association of American Colleges in collaboration with faculty representatives from 10 arts and sciences disciplines, interdisciplinary studies, and women's studies. A few years earlier, Stark and Lowther reviewed the common ground of arts and sciences outcomes and those of professional school majors as well. These reports should become required reading for department chairs who want to broaden their faculty's discussions beyond the parochial interests of one disciplinary or professional specialization area.

In coming decades, the renewed questioning of curricular objectives stimulated by these national groups, coupled with the transformation of disciplinary fields and their curricula by new knowledge, will prompt new definitions of university "general education" and the "major." The B.A. in Integrative Studies at ASU West is one example of this transformation of the traditional major. It is especially attrac-

tive to metropolitan university students re-entering higher education after some years in the work force.

Multidisciplinary, upper division courses with titles such as "Moral Dilemmas" and "Evolution of Ideas" require our students to synthesize disparate forms of knowledge and inquiry. For example, in "Moral Dilemmas" students examine individualistic versus communitarian forms of ethics; problems are analyzed from historical, political, psychological, and philosophical perspectives. In "Evolution of Ideas," faculty and students explore paradigms and paradigm shifts in astronomy, genetics, and the arts. Across these required, major field courses, our faculty focus their teaching on outcomes such as scientific and information literacy, critical thinking, effective communication in multiple media, and multicultural understanding. It has been particularly rewarding to chair a department where student learning, faculty development, and curricular planning has been so integrated from its very inception.

Conclusion

In a 1985 commencement address, Timothy Healy S.J., then President of Georgetown University, reminded faculty and students at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond that big cities and universities go together and always have. As a department chair, I find the following passage as inspirational today as I did, dressed in academic regalia, hearing it for the first time. It places daily events in perspective.

"The city never lets its universities escape the most priceless lesson, the correctives of facts and pain. Walk off campus and you meet the 'strained, time-ridden faces, distracted from distraction by distraction' that fill any city streets. A walk around any city can douse the ebullience of youth and curb the arrogance of learning. In all our streets we meet the myriad masks of God, but we find also in all of them God's antidote against mistaking the generosity of the young for understanding, or the theoretical skill of the old for fact."

Being a chair in a metropolitan university demands an admixture of ebullience, arrogance, generosity, understanding, theory, and fact. Becoming an effective chair requires orchestrating these qualities into a coherent agenda for student learning, for faculty development, and for curricular transformation.

Suggested Readings

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