

**Chair Academy's 22nd Annual International Conference, Sustainability Through
Leadership (April 4-7, 2013)**

**PROFILE OF QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: THE CHAIR'S ROLE IN
LEADING FACULTY TO PD OPPORTUNITIES**

Authors: Penny Lorenzo, JD, Assistant Dean of Faculty & Gurmit Kaur, JD, Academic
Department Chair, Kaplan University, 550 W. Van Buren, Chicago, Illinois, 60907

PROFILE OF QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: THE CHAIR'S ROLE IN LEADING FACULTY TO PD OPPORTUNITIES

Ernest Boyer (1997) proposed the following definition of “scholarship” within the professorate based on four functions that underlie the *Profile of a Quality Faculty Member: discovery, integration, application, and teaching*. Within this framework, all forms of scholarship should be recognized and rewarded, and this will lead to more personalized and flexible criteria for gaining tenure. It will also lead to more personal satisfaction and growth.

Too often faculty members wrestle with conflicting obligations that leave little time to focus on their teaching role. Boyer proposes using “creativity contracts” that emphasize quality teaching and individualized professional development. He recommends that this model be based upon the life patterns of individuals and their passions. Boyer argued that if universities are to continue advancing forward, a new vision of scholarship is required. Research alone will not secure the future of higher education nor the country at large. In essence, individuals should choose professional development activities based on their interests. For example, faculty who teach a legal subject might take a CLE in that field of law or they might take a workshop on incorporating social media aspects into the class that would stimulate discussion of the topic outside of the classroom. Both activities promote better teaching practices but if the faculty member has an interest in the topic, it is more likely to “stick” for longer-lasting teaching practices.

The first element of Boyer’s model, discovery, is the one most closely aligned with traditional research. Discovery contributes not only to the stock of human knowledge but also to the intellectual climate of a college or university. Discovery or research is at the heart of academic life and it needs to be celebrated. Research contributes to the intellectual climate of the university. Research is a creative process that is crucial if scholarship is to be advanced. The outcomes of research potentially can enhance the meaning and efforts of the institution itself. New research contributions are critical to the vitality of the academic environment, and this model does not diminish the value of discovery scholarship. While important, alone, it does not secure the future for higher education. The better proposition is for faculty to conduct research but then implement some new initiative that furthers the research and perhaps lends to new discoveries. The key to the model is that there is no perfect way to implement research but rather it is the acting upon research, and combining it with other professional development activities that promote new contributions to the academic environment.

The second element, integration, focuses on making connections across disciplines. Integration or synthesis is the process of making connections within and across disciplines.

The process is closely related to the scholarship of discovery. It involves fitting one's own research with that of others into a larger intellectual pattern. It is serious disciplined work that seeks to interpret and bring new insight to original research. One interprets the research so that it is useful beyond one's own disciplinary boundaries and can be integrated into a larger body of knowledge. The rapid pace of societal change within a global economy has elevated the importance of this form of scholarship. With the ease and ability to reach across the globe to another faculty member conducting similar research provides the great opportunity to collaborate and possibly learn more than one can alone. It can also provide an opportunity to determine common denominators or gaps in learning that can be addressed in the curriculum.

The third element, application, focuses on using research findings and innovations to remedy societal problems. Included in this category are service activities that are specifically tied to one's field of knowledge and professional activities. Beneficiaries of these activities include commercial entities, non-profit organizations, and professional associations.

Service, in a variety of forms, is a requirement of faculty at most universities. The scholarship application or practice looks at service from the perspective of engagement. Information is first discovered and then applied. The scholar may ask the question, "How can knowledge be responsibly applied to consequential issues?" When theory and practice come together, then engagement becomes scholarly. For example, in the School of Legal Studies, a faculty member might volunteer at a student legal clinic to help provide guidance, which can lead to determining ways they can better instruct in the classroom. They might find organic questions that can be addressed in the class so that students are better prepared for the field.

Finally, Boyer considers teaching as a central element of scholarship. Too often teaching is viewed as a routine function and is often not the focus of professional development. As I have mentioned above, each professional activity can lead to better teaching practices and areas of opportunity to improve student learning.

The academic community continues to emphasize and assign high value to faculty members' involvement in activities other than teaching (Royeen, 1999). It is up to us as academic administrators to show how each of these elements of scholarship can and do interact and especially, how they contribute to better teaching.

Faculty members can feel isolated in their scholarly pursuits and how they connect to the university community (Massey, Wilger, and Colbeck, 2000). Once again, it is up to us to provide faculty with professional development opportunities within our universities as well as opportunities with a larger audience such as world teaching conferences. We must not only require professional development but explain the importance and tie it to the classroom. What a faculty member learns from an activity can have a great impact on their students' learning.

Further, teaching will be enriched by building on what they learn in exchanges with students. Reciprocal benefits can emerge. For example, allowing students to take the lead on a virtual discussion board or lead a lesson in the class cannot only reinforce their mastery of the materials, the instructor might find a unique way of introducing the materials in the future or it might prompt a new area of research and discovery. Afterall, scholarly teaching entices future scholars.

Balanced focus on all forms of scholarship is necessary to meet the demands of the information and technology age as well as escalating expectations of institutional stakeholders. Often this is distorted by a perception that the scholarship of discovery and research offers the best opportunity to generate new funding sources and prestige.

Celebrating and rewarding all forms of scholarship on an equal playing field needs to be a top priority of anyone in a leadership position in higher education, from presidents, chancellors, and boards who set policy and allocate resources, to senior faculty who model explicit and implicit expectations associated with their job descriptions.

Boyer argued that academia should reward faculty in all four areas of scholarship. There must be a more inclusive perspective of what it means to be a scholar. Scholarly recognition should be given for research, synthesis, practice, and teaching.

References

- Boyer, E. L. (1997). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Edgerton, R. (2000). The re-examination of faculty priorities. In D. DeZure (Ed.), *Learning from Change: Landmarks in teaching and learning from Change magazine 1969-1999* (pp. 19-22). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Massey, W., Wilger, A., & Colbeck, C. (2000). Overcoming “hollowed” collegiality: Departmental cultures and teaching quality. In D. DeZure (Ed.), *Learning from Change: Landmarks in teaching and learning from Change magazine 1969-1999* (pp. 28-32). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Royeen, C. B. (1999). Scholarship revisited: Expanding horizons and guidelines for evaluation of the scholarship of teaching. In P. A. Crist (Ed.), *Innovations in Occupational Therapy Education*. Bethesda, MD: American Occupational Therapy Association.