

The Perils of Pedagogy

"Good teachers possess certain virtues whose acquisition is a practical matter"

Christopher Winch, 2004

Pedagogy - "a cloistered and unsung virtue"

Yorke, 2000

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Background

DfES (2003) - strategy to deliver teaching excellence in HE.

National Teaching Fellowships - seek to reward teaching excellence and raise the profile of teaching and learning in HE.

Background

HEA web-site - "Our vision is for students in UK higher education to enjoy the highest quality learning experience in the world".

The National Student Survey - "to facilitate best practice and enhance the student learning experience" ; "to make informed choices of where and what to study".

Higher Education Academy: NTFS Criteria

Criterion 1

Individual excellence: evidence of promoting and enhancing the student learning experience.

Criterion 2

Raising the profile of excellence: evidence of supporting colleagues and influencing support for student learning in (and, if appropriate, beyond) the nominee's institution, through demonstrating impact and engagement beyond the nominee's immediate academic or professional role.

Criterion 3

Developing excellence: the nominee's commitment to her/his ongoing professional development with regard to teaching and learning and/or learning support.

So here *we* are.....

seeking ways to enhance the student learning experience by *specialising* in the pedagogical aspects of our jobs.

This may be a potentially problematic transition for some of us.

Skelton, 2004

The background of the slide is a soft, light green color. It features faint, stylized illustrations of green leaves and white flowers, particularly visible on the right side and bottom. The text is overlaid on this background.

Peril Number 1

"Home Alone": Losing touch with one's discipline

Divergence in work force between "teachers" and "researchers".

Time devoted to pedagogy means less time for discipline-specific research.

Sense of isolation from colleagues.

Negative impact on career progression especially in research-intensive universities.

Peril Number 2

“Enter the Dragon”: Entry into a new discipline

Not being familiar with the vast array of research already done in the field of education.

Non-specialists may do work not validated by current educational research.

Switch from quantitative to qualitative research methods - a challenge to us logical positivists.

Peril Number 3

"Great Expectations": Being stretched

Being perceived by colleagues and students as an expert in teaching (but not in your discipline any more...)

But also on the other hand....

Advising more senior, experienced professionals on what good teaching practice is.

Spending time on studying education might paradoxically mean less time spent on students!

Emphasis on students means lots of hard, messy work - we are a limited resource in a pool of infinite need.

Possibilities:

“The Incredibles”: Interdisciplinarity

We may have varying levels of expertise in; our academic disciplines and the teaching of that discipline (and educational theories?).

We may be able to forge a unifying expertise of pedagogy in our discipline and develop:

“new forms of integration in the face of complexity”

Rowland, 2002

Possibilities:

The potential new drivers which might enhance the status of pedagogical research are:

Research Informed Teaching funding

"the expectation that teaching is informed by research activity" -
HEFCE, 2009

Promotion through Pedagogy?

Ramsden and Martin, 1996 - promotion the best way to reward and promote good teaching and not teaching "awards".

Thus we need.....

“to increase the circumstances in which teaching and research have occasion to meet, and to provide rewards not only for better teaching or for better research but for demonstrations of the *integration* of teaching and research”.
(my italics)

Hattie and Marsh, 1996

This was 13 years ago!!!

It's a Wonderful Life?

or

Groundhog Day?