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Professional Development of Higher Education Teachers, Can Distance Education Make A Difference?

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ABSTRACT

The paper reviews some of the classical indicators of academic professionalism, and illuminates a historical epoche when research and teaching became separate dimensions of professionalism in higher education. The paper argues that this separation has gone too far and that a new sense of professionalism needs to be invoked in the area of teaching in higher education. It is claimed that this area is challenged by the demands that professors must take part in distance education activities involving the use of information technologies. The particular organisation at any given higher education institution for open and distance education activities have a particular responsibility to develop this professional dimension. Therefore, it has to participate in more profound organisational developmental work together with academics and administration to promote reflection on their teaching, and surpass "ad-hocracy" and "loose-couplings" to become part of a learning organisation.

Keywords: professionalism, distance education, dual mode institutions, higher education

INTRODUCTION

A fairly new dimension of teaching in academic institutions has been to adapt to distance education and on-line education. The changes in academic work following this development have caused strong resistance as well as enthusiasm (Noble 2001, Burbules and Callister jr. 2000). However, teaching at the university has in general had a weak position in relation to the other activities of the professor. Changing the methods and contexts of teaching will have repercussions for this position. My claim in this article is that it might further the status of teaching in the academic profession. First I will explore the usefulness of terms like scholarship and professionalism in this context and make a short historical test of their significance. Thereafter I will use the terminology developed for professionalism in teaching, generally and argue for the need for improving teaching as a professional virtue of the academic profession.

PROFESSIONALISM AND ACADEMIC WORK

Professional development of academics has gained a lot of interest over the last two decades. The focus of this article is professionalisation of the role – or function – of the academic in higher education institutions – as teachers. One, often referred concept in this context are the four areas of "scholarship", stemming from the very influential book by E.L.Boyer in 1990. The project reported in the book was about the need to develop a more diverse scholarship within the tradition of the American professoriate (Boyer 1990). According to the US history only one way of knowing was fully recognised and honoured. Scholarship was narrowly defined as the advancement of knowledge in terms of discovery and articulation of new knowledge in the specialized research areas. The researchers at the Carnegie Foundation formulated a broader vision of what it meant to be a scholar, and suggested there were four scholarships - those of *discovery, integration, application and teaching* (1990). This implies that extending the discovery of the knowledge to

integration, application and teaching are complimentary elements in a holistic conception of academic scholarship. These four concepts have been widely accepted and have been prevalent in the discussion about a new professionalism of the teachers of higher education.

The standard literature on professions suggests that their members acquire their professional status during a long-lasting education, over which the profession has a strong control and influence for designing. The professions have further developed ethical and quality standards for the performance of the profession, which they exercise by autonomous institutions within their own organisations. Using professionalisation about the academic role is not unproblematic in it self. First of all, most of the academics, which is also demonstrated in Boyer's book, hold the view that the conduct and publication of research is considered as the employment *par excellence* for academics. Subsequently their professional allegiance first of all is given to the subject specific and disciplinary research. The specializing of disciplines has lead to discipline isolation, and the academics therefore first of all construct their professional self-image within the highly specialized "tribes" of their disciplines (Becher 1989, O'Neill & Lyn Meek 1994). What transpires as common values and norms is difficult to condense, but can be spotted when –trans-tribal interests occur for purporting mutual self-interest. In practice, what identifies professional interests is often identified by what these alliances are against, rather than what they are for (O'Neill & Lyn Meek 1994, p.97). Following this line of thinking, professionalism is entirely connected to the disciplines, and not to the broader academic function. But even if this is true, there will be specific division between the areas of professional engagement into research and teaching.

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN "KNOWING HOW" AND "SHOWING HOW" - A BRIEF HISTORICAL VIEW

The conflict between research and teaching in higher education has a long history, at least going back to the Renaissance (Nordkvelle 2002, Vandermeersch 1996). In an analysis of how the term "method" gained its importance in science, primarily related to "method of research" today, but in late Renaissance also strongly associated with "method of teaching", Gilbert (1960) delineated the deep conflict between the humanists and the traditionalists in the academic institutions of the 16th century. The problem with the humanist tradition of method was that their aim was to present ideas clearly and simply to promote the understanding of the students. The traditionalists, however:

> **"...repudiated the criterion of communicability or ease of teaching and emphasised instead the scientific, or science-producing, character of their method, which was not intended to make it easy for the pupil, or to improve the rhetorical persuasion of a teacher's presentation: it was aimed exclusively at producing "science" or knowledge, as opposed to rhetorical persuasion and probable opinion, theirs, in a phrase which was only beginning to gain currency during the late Renaissance, was the methodus scientificus (Gilbert 1960, p.222).**

The scholarship of discovery is a modern reflection of the Renaissance position of the traditionalist, or a more or less unbroken line of development of a distinct position. The ideas of integration, application and teaching has never disappeared, but has struggled to keep the influence. Professor Petrus Ramus (1515-1572) of University of Paris, who strongly articulated the need for practical relevance of knowledge, and the need for good teaching made a great impact on the formulation of an "art of teaching" (Ong 1958). Another late humanist, Giambattista Vico (1688-1744), Rector of the University of Naples, likewise developed a critique of the scientism that developed from the "traditionalist view" and the work of Descartes. His ideas of training students in critical thinking, development of creativity and poetical expression was a precursor to Wilhelm von Humboldt and the neo-humanist ideas of "Bildung" developed in German universities in the 18th and 19th centuries. In the Renaissance the discrepancy between what a university professor produced as a researcher and what he said and did in the lecture theatre as a

teacher was very small. Researching was synonymous with his preparation for classes, his collection of notes and his writing was all done for his teaching[1]. The split between a "method for teaching" and a "method for doing research", can historically be placed in this division that arose in the late 16th and early 17th century, particularly in academia in northern parts of France and Switzerland, and Germany generally. The call for a "method for teaching" or "art of teaching" did not spark off an academic tradition, but developed as practical, for the most, knowledge. Even if Jan Amos Comenius was one of the most significant intellectuals in Europe of the 17th century, his "Great Didactics" had little impact on academic teaching.

It can be argued that Francis Bacon (1561-1626) carried significant influences from Ramus's thinking and similarly that Ramism had significant influences on the development of the English Enligthenment philosophy, as well as on the institutional development of higher education institutions, such as Cambridge, and later, Harvard (Gilbert 1960, Dickson 1992). But it was not until teacher education was more formally established that the "art of teaching" – or Didactics - was reconceptualised within the wider term of "Pädagogik"[2]. This took place with the establishment of a professoriate in "Pädagogik" at the University of Halle in 1779.

It was not coincidental that the Universities of Halle, Göttingen and Berlin took a lead in the development of the reformed universities in Germany. The idea of forming the students as persons and renewing the society by its education was essential to the German Enlightenment, and was most explicitly expressed by the founder of the University of Berlin, Wilhelm von Humboldt. The heritage from the Humboldtian idea of the university pronounces there should be intimate links between the university's duty to produce knowledge as well as teaching the knowledge to students.

They became models for the development of universities in the Nordic countries, in Great Britain, USA and elsewhere because they had taken up new academic subjects relevant to the productive life, government administration and business, and managed to teach these subjects in meaningful ways (Clark 1989, Leventhal 1986). Interpreted by Boyer's terminology, this growth of popularity and success of these universities was a reward of their abilities to align the scholarships of teaching, application and relevance with the scholarship of discovery. In the UK the established English universities were unwilling to respond to this challenge of relevance and application, which led to a "Binary Policy" of Higher Education (Pratt 1992).

PROFESSIONALISM AT THE UNIVERSITY

A significant dimension of the university professor of Göttingen was that the administrators sought to recruit wealthy students and employ good teachers. The idea of a modern university was closely associated with the establishment of a relatively aristocratic university. The links to Pietist Protestantism was toned down and thereby attracting the "liberal thinker" – the "libertas philosophandi".

In addition, the university administrator G.A. von Münchhausen, sought famous teachers, paid them more than other universities would, and encouraged the development of the seminar as the teaching model Gøttingen was the first German university that had to rely on student fees for its maintenance, which made it dependant on attracting wealthy students. The reformed education was a success because it responded to the perceived interests of state and society, and combined this with a degree of academic freedom few other institutions could adhere to (McClelland 1980). The importance of being a good teacher for becoming a professor in Halle is described by McClelland in this way: "the most important question asked would be whether he had good Applaus, that is, was a good and popular lecturer" McClelland 1980, p. 82). And, further: "Good teaching and such collegial values as popularity of in the university or what we could call "service" were obviously just as important as scholarship if one looks at *all* the professors" (ibid. p. 84., Vandermeersch 1996, p.216). Several successful universities of the time, like

Edinburgh, Leiden and Padua were characterized by the same features. They were known to "have chosen their professors with care, looking at the fame of the scholars, their attainment in the discipline and their pedagogical skills.." (Vandermeersch 1996, p. 229).

Much of the success of the reform of Göttingen has been ascribed its reform of teaching and its adoption of the seminar in its teaching practices. The seminar was an invention of the University of Halle, and was originally an aid for poor students to become teachers, a forum in which to discuss teaching of various subjects and to develop good practices.

At Göttingen the seminar was organised under the faculty of arts and sciences and thereby given a broader function, but also as a fairly independent institution within the university, and functioned soon as a model for later copies at other German universities (Clark 1989, Brockliss 1996). Eventually the seminars took the shape of students practicing the research and its teaching with supervision from their professors: "the seminarian played the role of the teacher" (Clark 1989, p.131). This successful engagement of able students conferencing with their teachers led to significant developments of the subjects dealt with, and "clearly pointed the way to the new research- oriented universities of the nineteenth century" (Brockliss 1996, p. 568).

On the other hand, the less popular universities were under heavy criticism. Poor salaries and low status was driving professors into more lucrative businesses, leaving the lecture halls unattended and the students were neglected. Some universities prohibited out of universities work for that reason, but this could only partially solve the problem. The fierce critic of the universities, J.H.Campe wrote: "Who should educate them [our students]? Certainly not the professors. Who could require that of them? They have not studied the theories of education" (quoted from Vandermeersch 1996, p. 250).

What this historical account suggests is that the pedagogical qualifications of the teachers were an important dimension of the successful rise of the reformed German universities. A frequently held view is that good researchers also perform good teaching (Breen & Jenkins 2002). The historical evidence presented above suggests the relation might be the other way round: good teachers become good researchers when they engage in teaching, include students in discussions and challenge the established views.

By engaging they blend their abilities to integrate, to apply knowledge so that they gain new insights from teaching, challenged by students who demand to know and understand. It is an important message by Leventhal (1986) that the philological seminar of Göttingen was at the heart of the development that made that university "an academic center that sought to integrate all the various spheres of inquiry by stressing the humanistic, educational function of cultural and scientific scholarship "(p. 244). What came out of it was "hermeneutics" – the dominant idea of how science and human understanding developed, which literally revolutionized not only the humanities, but the basis for evolutionary thinking in, basically, all scientific areas.

GOOD RESEARCHERS ARE GOOD TEACHERS–OR?

Whether this is a truthful or problematic idea can be viewed by a quote from Brew & Boud (1995):

> **Investigations of the link between teaching and research, of which there has been a large number, have failed to establish the nature of the connection between the two, or indeed, whether there is one (p.261).**

However, based on a qualitative study of students' opinions of their teachers, Lindsay, Breen and Jenkins (2002) argues that lecturers who also perform research motivate their students better, demonstrate more competence in supervision, spread enthusiasm and make more convincing relations to knowledge currency and credibility than lecturers who don't do research. A more complex question would be as to what type of research

activities – or professional virtues of the researchers that make the researcher a better teacher. The evidence from the case of Göttingen might suggest that researchers that take part in seminars, discussing with colleagues and students alike, develop and rely on discoursive competencies that qualifies them as communicators and teachers. Research professionalism is often regarded as solely relying on peer evaluation in publication, conference presentation etc. However, this criteria alone does not necessarily invoke communicative skills. Brew and Boud (1995) suggests that we might view research as learning processes on behalf of the researchers:

> **"Both research and learning are informed by the tradition and forms of inquiry characteristic of the discipline and the literature of what constitutes evidence in the literature. They both involve processes of exploration of existing knowledge, yet both seek to go beyond it. Both involve the human act of making meaning, making sense of phenomena in the world (p.267).**

The sociology of science supports this explanation: scientific discovery relies on the participation in negotiation, arguments, debates and discourses about what signifies observation, regularities, theory and experiments. Discovery depends on communication, not only within the narrow research community, but within the wider society. In numerous case studies of how the inventions and discovery takes place, it has been demonstrated how situated the "scholarship of discovery" itself is embedded in communicative practices (Mulkay 1979). Using the language, arguing by use of metaphors, images and parallels, applying rhetoric and relating to group dynamics are fundamental communication skills used to give discoveries meaning and significance, e.g. in manners Brew and Boyd describe as learning.

The discrepancy between the specialized research areas and undergraduate teaching in the same subject can be overwhelming and arguing with peers to convince them in seminars are not necessarily connected with their ability to communicate to many listeners in the lecture theatre. Nevertheless, it might be worth pursuing as a research idea that researchers that communicate extensively and successfully in their research also succeed better as teachers and supervisors for exactly the same reasons.

The research on the professionalisation process of teachers displays what constitutes the distinct features of teaching. A rather general trend in the research is the focus on teacher's knowledge base, ethics, on reflection and self-evaluation of teaching (by groups or individually). The expert knowledge and competency the teacher displays in his/her practical teaching, and to which extent he/she exerts expert practices in a variety of contexts to promote the core business of the organisation can be termed "teaching professionalism" (Stormbom 1993, Laursen 1993, Nicholls 2001). This side of professionalisation can also be termed "moral professionalisation" (Goodson 2000, p. 185). The tradition after Donald Schön's work on "the reflected practitioner" has guided the development of creative and practical work regarding the actual implementation of strategies to make teachers teach better. Goodson says:

> **But what matter throughout this literature are the emphasis that all teachers reflect in some way; that they can articulate and share their reflections more explicitly; that reflection is at the heart of what it means to be professional; and that teacher education, supervision and development should be constructed in ways that make such explicit reflection more feasible and more thorough (2000, p. 185)**

Some principles of professionalism may be laid down as fundamental to all types of teacher professionalism, as suggested by Goodson (Goodson 2000, p. 187). These principles demand that teachers take on:

- **engagement with moral, social purpose and value of what teachers teach**
- **responsibility for making judgements concerning teaching, curriculum and care that affect students**

- ☐ commitment to working with colleagues in collaborative cultures
- ☐ occupational heteronomy: ability to work authoritatively, yet openly and collaboratively with other partners in the wider community
- ☐ a commitment to active care for students, not only cognitively, but also emotionally and socially
- ☐ searching for continuous learning to develop one's expertise

TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM IN HIGHER EDUCATION

This split in professionalism between teaching and researching is evident in figures from Boyer's research. Professors at the so-called "research universities" are valuing teaching much lower than professors in the other categories (Boyer 1990, p. 45). While awarding of grants, prices, promotion and tenuring is strongly tied to the research outcome, teaching is consistently less appreciated. To move upwards in social position, status and salary the safest track goes through doing research – a tendency reported in most Western countries (Nylehn 1996, p. 167). Attempts have been made to elevate the teaching professionalism among university faculty on a national level (Bridges 2000). But in general, little stimulates the professional identity of university teachers as teachers, nor to develop their teaching expertise (Coate et al 2001). The number of professional journals, networks and conventions are only a small fraction of those for research. Lee Shulman suggests three factors that should motivate what he calls a scholarship of teaching and learning. He elaborates on the two dimensions of scholarships regarding teaching: scholarly teaching and scholarship *of* teaching. The first is the more obvious: the foundations the teacher finds in sources and resources, the designed strategies of ideas, development, transmission, interaction and assessment etc. But the next dimension goes further:

> **We develop a scholarship of teaching when our work as teachers become public, peer-reviewed and critiqued, and exchanged with other members of our professional communities so they, in turn, can build on our work. These are the qualities of all scholarship. (Shulman 2000, p.50)**

Gill Nicholls(2001) elaborates further that such attempts require:

- ☐ a redefinition of what counts as research
- ☐ that teaching relationship should be put first
- ☐ professional development should be seen as professional self-development
- ☐ that collegiality should be essential
- ☐ disciplinary differences should be recognized

Nicholls suggest the scholarships offered by Boyer as a fundamental point of departure, and she emphasises that the scholarship of teaching is "deeply embedded in the other three forms" (p.94). This embeddedness is due to the need of the academic teacher to prove relevance and connections of the issue dealt with, with what one knows about learning. professor Gill Nicholls investigates the conditions for fostering pedagogical professionalism in higher education (2001). The programme for professional development Gill Nicholls forwards is based on some fundamental conditions for change: the need for supporting structures, the need to see the connection between the development of experienced as well as new staff, the need for visits and observations of other learning environments and discussions and evaluations based upon them, and last, an organization that allows academics to reflect on their thinking and action (Nicholls 2001, p.112). The initial moves could be from a "perturbance" caused by external or internal conditions meaning that the academic has to realise that her current practice might have some weaknesses or could, at least, be improved. This should in turn lead to a commitment to participate in activities that leads to innovation in teaching, an activity which is profoundly based in the discipline one is based. The scholarship of discovery, which every academic choose as their preferred way of learning, is obviously at the heart of students' learning as well, and should be catered for similarly in their teaching.

TEACHING PROFESSIONALISM IN THE OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING-ORGANISATION

The present situation of higher education in many countries is a situation of more or less "permanent perturbation". Many critics focus on the changes involving accountability, quality control, managerialism, and commercialisation of higher education (Aronowitz 2000, Kogan 2000), and the trend to make the teaching of the university available for more students through on-line education or distance-education (Brabazon 2001, Noble 2001). This development has issued the "convergence" hypothesis, suggesting that the use of ICT will open opportunities for distance education to become more like on-campus-teaching, and that on-campus teaching will adopt methods and technology formerly used solely by distance educators (Curran 1997), which again opens new pedagogical problems (Brabazon 2001, Tanno 2003).

Generally it is argued that the ODL-organisation enhances teacher professionalism, because teaching and tutoring is at the heart of the activity of the ODL-organisation. The ODL-organisation competes to a much higher degree in a market, and the teaching is generally much more predictable, due to the pre-production of teaching material (Nylehn 1996, p. 165-171). For single-mode universities like Open University, one should expect much emphasis on quality teaching, which is also supported by some research. The devotion to good teaching for the benefit of the disadvantaged learner is a strongly held conviction of the members of Open University, according to an organisational analysis by Neil Costello (1993). In this study the diversity of cultures within the OU, the loyalty to the founding principles of the OU is described to be strong and stable. Apparently, the subcultures are able to communicate internally within the organisation, probably because the shared values of the organisation are strong and cherished is spite of all differences. In a profound way this contributes to interdependence instead of loose couplings, and a common interest in promoting good teaching. Costello writes:

> **The teaching of colleagues matters considerably, because judgements about the work of one teacher in a course text have professional implications for the ways in which other's teaching is viewed. All academics have a vested interest therefore in the excellence of their colleagues' work (Costello 1993, p. 10)**

This is a signal that some prerequisites of teacher professionalism are in place within the OU, at least. The problem is how teacher professionalism can be developed within the ODL-organisation in the dual-mode university. However, distance education is also considered to be a low status activity in many higher education institutions. A professor engaging in this field runs the risk of loosing status and reputation. In other words – in dual mode-universities – with an overall neglect of teaching professionalism – how can the ODL-organisation promote what the rest of the organisation neglects? If "becoming a professional teacher" implies that teaching takes place in an organisational climate that caters for openness, interdependence and collaboration in a collegial context, devotion to student learning, caring for the whole person how can the ODL-organisation become a cradle for "teaching professionalism"?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING IN DUAL-MODE INSTITUTIONS, WHAT CAN BE THE ROLE OF THE ODL-ORGANISATION?

Costello (1993) observed within the Open University projects that involved academics to develop such experiences and practices that promotes reflective learning. Costello briefly describes how ODL-activities promote openness on the basis of collegiality. When preparing teaching for ODL, substantial learning material is produced. The planning of this activity is not usually an extensive part of the job in traditional teaching at HE institutions and certainly not in collaborative contexts. In ODL this takes up large parts of the total workload. The scrutiny and reflection in a mutual sense between peers is usually catered for, but this depends on many factors. These features adhere to the principles outlined by Peter Senge and the quest for the academic institution to become a learning

organization (2000). David Garvin's definition of a learning organisation sounds: "an organization skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behaviour to reflect new knowledge and insights" (1993, s.80). The shift from being a "knowing institution" to become a "learning organization demands a development of what Peter Senge calls *core learning capabilities* (Senge 2000, s.276). Garvin translates this to judge the quality of learnability according to how it develops knowledge, how it is pread, how it is interpreted, and – remembered. An organization well prepared for learning practices problem solutions based on a will to scrutinize and improve the organizational processes, develops the capacity to learn from self induced – as well from other organization's experiences, who are willing to experiment, who enables to make complex organizations communicate internally about their learning, and develops indicators to support the sustainability of their learnability (Garvin 1993). A study of innovative higher education institutions, indicate these factors as instrumental (Dill 1999).

The challenge is obviously that the ODL-organization in dual-mode higher education institutions needs to develop a learning organization that can foster pedagogical professionalism both within its own realm and together with the academics and the teaching organisation of the campus. Second, it needs to face the promises of ICT, and respond to it.

THE SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING, ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY IN DUAL MODE UNIVERSITIES

Political statements embrace educational technologies – as well as the virtue of good teaching. According to English and Australian studies of the working conditions of University teachers, changing technologies constitute the strongest (UK) and second strongest (Aus) factors behind changes in the academic work (McInnis 1999, p. 38). The demand for compliant university teachers willing to adopt new technologies for teaching, does not necessarily result in obedience. Reports from Canada (Noble 2001), France (Tessier 2001), and Australia (Brabazon 2002) give evidence that significant resistance towards engagement in distance education, and even use of Learning Management Systems (such as WebCT, Blackboard, Virtual U) still must be expected, and for good reasons. Adoption of new technologies is most often understood as tools for more efficient production, particularly by the administrators. As Cuban has demonstrated, "Making fundamental changes in long-lived institutions is, to restate the obvious, a rare event" (1999, p. 199). Introducing new instruction technologies has been tantamount to a threat towards the autonomy of the faculty. Simmons (2001) argues even stronger that the educational technology presently introduced threatens the very concept of Academic Freedom. In spite of a century long effort to upgrade teaching, research seem to survive as the most prestigious activity in U.S. universities. In the UK, a recent research reported by Coate, Barnett & Williams (2001) only confirms that this is a strong tradition also in Europe. In addition, the tendency is strong towards deeper polarization between research and teaching positions. Also, a rapid growth in the employment of part-time non-tenured teachers in the US poses a significant challenge towards the traditional structure of employment. About one half of the faculty members in the U.S. are now part-time (Rice, Finkelstein, Hall & Schuster 2004).

The professionalisation literature does not comment on educational technology in any particular sense. It seems therefore necessary to put technology more into the picture of the scholarship of learning and teaching.

Again, the call for scholarship and professionalism appeals to the wider interpretation of the role of the critical intellectual. Edward Said elaborates on this particular role in his Reith-lectures (1996), notably the demand to ask the critical questions that concerns ethics, distribution of power and benefits, and the intellectual acts on the broader issues in academic life. This demand is more precisely related to the issue of educational technology. Douglas Kellner, writes:

> **I now want to argue that in the contemporary high tech societies there is emerging a significant expansion and redefinition of the public sphere and that these developments, connected primarily with media and computer technologies, require a reformulation and expansion of the concept of critical or committed intellectual. (http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/courses/ed253a/dk/INT.htm)**

Nicholas Burbules has coined the expression: "The risky promises and the promising risks of IT". He argues very convincingly that there are many reasons for employing educational technology in the process of developing the scholarship of teaching. First, the high quality face-to-face interaction between teacher and students have been history already for a long time, and if still alive, at very elite institutions.

Recognising that exciting possibilities exist for increased student interaction and pedagogical experimentation and variety using educational technology, the alternative for the higher education institutions is that ".. other institutions, more baldly commercial in nature, will step into the vacuum and offer the courses and degree programmes online that students are demanding" (Burbules & Callister jr. 2000, p. 3).

The students on campus are relatively privileged and employing educational technology makes access for non-traditional students easier. On the other hand, many on-campus students prefer online courses and programs, and claim that off-campus students are privileged to have first access to take these opportunities. Computers and Internet have become so dominant elements of popular culture, that students simply expect teaching in higher education to be exploiting these media.

On the other hand higher education needs to become involved and set standards for what critical and reflective use of educational technology can be. Again, if we don't, others will, and only the most prestigious universities can survive in such a competition. Subsequently, Burbules and Callister jr. anticipates,

> **"Colleges and universities will change because of pressures from the outside as well as conscious decisions made from the inside, and technologies will be incorporated, in some ways and to some degree, in everything that colleges and universities try to do." (ibid. p. 7)**

One of these profound changes will be that formerly separate departments for distance and continuing education will be more integrated with the standard curriculum, and the relation between the ODL-organisation and faculty will change character. The advantages that the ODL-department has developed through advanced use of educational technology will sift into the broad organisation. Supporting what Nigel Blake has pointed out, he summarises four good reasons to think that the incorporation of new technologies in college and university instruction will benefit the organisation:

(1) could have the effect of democratising higher learning, attracting more, and more varied, students to the opportunities universities offer;
(2) could proliferate the number programs available to learners;
(3) could allow for the greater customization of programs to particular student needs and interests; and
(4) could promote increased quantity and quality of student-student interaction and cooperative learning (Burbules & Callister jr. 2000, p.9).

And yet, there is this need to scrutinize new technologies according to what is learned through the scholarship of teaching and learning, asking: which technology for which students, learning which subject and for which purposes, for the benefit of whom? In a slightly different context Burbules and Callister jr. writes:

> **For all of these reasons, we believe, reflections upon new information and communication must proceed with a profound modesty and caution. They are, literally, dangerous. Yet they are dangerous precisely because they hold such tremendous potential – a potential that goes beyond our capacity to imagine it fully. (Burbules and Callister jr. 1999, p. 5)**

Feenberg (1999) subscribes to the critical enthusiasm, of Burbules and Callister, acknowledging that the commercial and technocratic interests on behalf of governments and administrations are very strong. Proposing pedagogical professionalisation as the cure to counteract naive technocratic dreams and yet promote reflective teaching and learning using educational technology is not unproblematic. Ever since the Renaissance, anyone in the university suggesting that pedagogical considerations could be in place have taken risks of being neglected, ridiculed and defined out.

Even if there are a good number of reasons why there should take place a revitalisation of the scholarship of teaching and learning, and that educational technology should be a vital part of that development, there will remain strong resistance to this type of change. In Burbules and Callister jr.'s account there is a distinct negative picture of threats and problems, and little emphasis on the positive and joyful dimensions of pedagogical professionalism.

The creativity and fun everyone who has engaged in educational change, at least in ODL-activities, is in my set of ideas a very important motivation to carry on seeking these "risky promises and promising risks". The rewards one can get from students that learn substantial and important new stuff working within a context of discovery, constructing their knowledge along with their peers and others are no less than the ones that is occasionally experienced when your research is appreciated in one way or other.

In this process *didactics* is the tool and the technology by which to change what causes the problems, in the same way as *sociology* politicizes the "liberated". Reflecting on teaching and learning and taking actions to improving the teaching is therefore an act of employing a technology, which is quite different from the one inculcated in the "Technocratic Dream", in order to "let students learn" for the benefit of their vision of the future.

CONCLUSIONS

The challenges following the path to a professional development of academics in the direction of improved teaching for the benefit of students is an important development for the future of higher education. The emerging debate of what constitutes a "scholarship of teaching and learning", and what constitutes "didactical reflection" can contribute to the activities that promote that type of professionalisation within higher education. Historically, it can be argued that collectives of peers working together in problem-solving activities have proved to be fruitful constellations for the purposes of both teaching and research. Peer involvement and critique is necessary for improving both teaching and researching. While most academic institutions have facilities for promotion of academic professionalisations, they seem to lack similar facilities for the "scholarship of teaching and learning". It has been argued that departments for Open and Distance learning can function as this, or stimulate to it. A study of the Open University in the UK suggests this is the case here, as it might be in other "single-mode" institutions. The opportunity for ODL-departments of "dual-mode" institutions is to become an agent of professionalisation of teaching in dual-mode institutions, if only the technocratic dreams of educational technology can be substantially moderated and put into the context of a "scholarship of teaching and learning". It therefore has to participate in more profound organisational developmental work together with academics and administration to promote "didactical reflection", and surpass "ad-hocracy and "loose-couplings" to become part of a learning organisation.

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[1] The humanist reform was driven, to a great extent, by an uproar against terrible teaching by inconsiderate, violent teachers, flogging and pestering their students on a regular basis (Durkheim 1977, Ong 1980). Much of the reason for this enormous use of violence was student protest against incomprehensible teaching. Considering how to teach as something different from his own learning process was not custom. This process of "pedagogising" the childhood took place through the late Medieval and Renaissance. From then a sophisticated system of organising groups of children of the same age in a "class" developed, and the universities gradually took a role of teaching advanced students fed in from private preparatory schools and gymnasia (Aries 1982).

[2] The relationship between "Didaktik" and "Pädagogik" was unstable in the 17th and 18th century, meaning similar things, but by the early 19th century, "Didaktik" was more or less established as "the art of teaching" within "Pädagogik" as the broader conception of learning and socialisation (Martial-von Knecht 1985). Etymologically "teaching" stems from the same linguistic background as the German *zeigen*, meaning "to point or show", or "to reveal" (Thomson 2001, p.258), or in Greek: *didaskein*, which was transformed and described as a *techne*, and reformulated as in German "Didaktik" (Nordkvelle 2002).