Preparing Future Faculty at the Indiana Cluster

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Reassessments of Graduate Education

The Preparing Future Faculty programs organized within the American Political Science Association are best understood as part of a larger effort to attempt to enhance doctoral professional training. Other initiatives include, but are by no means limited to, "Rostering" in APSA, the "Re-envisioning the Ph.D." project funded by Pew; the "Responsive Ph.D." initiative of the Woodrow Wilson Association; the "Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate;" and complementary "Preparing Future Faculty" programs at Emory, Syracuse and elsewhere. These efforts are based on a number of often implicit propositions which I shall briefly identify.

First, there is a mismatch between the structure of the academic job market and the type of graduate education students receive. Broadly stated, most Ph.D.s come from "R-1" universities where the faculty tend to aim to reproduce themselves. Yet more than 80% of new academic openings in Political Science are not at these "R-1" universities. Furthermore, these other institutions often view the components of a successful academic career differently. In his periodic surveys of Deans at the approximately 740 four-year, undergraduate liberal arts colleges, Peter Seldin (1998) finds that over 95% report that classroom teaching is a "major factor" in evaluating overall faculty performance; student advising is the next most frequently mentioned criterion; research is named by around 40% of the Deans. We have here a prima facie basis to consider broadening our conceptions of graduate student training.

Second, any such revision would likely be greeted positively by many graduate students. Data are not entirely sketchy; but it is fairly clear that a majority of current graduate students prefer *not* to teach at an R-1 university. The major challenge, then, is not to persuade students to adjust to market "realities." And as the student population becomes more diverse, the percentage seeking wider and different career opportunities is likely to grow. Women and minorities express a greater interest in jobs that reward good teaching, and indeed in less "traditional" academic careers in general. Defenders of the status quo tend, not surprisingly, to be white males. (See Finkelstein et al. 1998.)

Third, among academic leaders we are seeing a new or renewed concern for quality teaching no matter what the institutional setting. As the former President of Harvard, Derek Bok, (1992) writes, "Our institutions—particularly our leading universities—are not making the education of students a top priority. This is true especially for undergraduates within the Arts and Sciences faculties." Myles Brand, President of Indiana University, outlines part of the reason why this inattention can be a problem (2000): "The taxpaying public believes that teaching should be the primary job, even at research universities. Some might argue with this view, but no one can ignore it. We need, therefore, to structure academic work and rewards in a way that continues to place a high value on research, even as we make certain that the obligations to enhancing learning and providing expert professional service are met." And even setting these considerations aside, since a majority of us spend a plurality of our work time teaching, it surely is in our interests to make this time personally fulfilling. To see our teaching "load" as a heavy pack that we are obliged to carry as we hike up the academic mountain, is a dispiriting image unlikely to boost the morale of an increasingly tenured faculty.

Finally, the PFF and related initiatives should help underscore our understanding that "teaching" is not some inchoate rite, its mysteries being revealed only to a select few. Nor, as Brett O'Bannon argues later in this paper, is it a direct by-product of scholarship, with lectures, for example, being a type of research report that uses simpler words. Rather, teaching is a distinct project that, like most forms of human endeavor, can be improved with practice, reflection, and a consideration of what others are doing. On this last point, we can begin with the large literature on instructional techniques and student learning styles. We have a long way to go in integrating any of this into our graduate student training. As Nelson comments (1997), "most of us learn in graduate school how to organize content and present it in talks, seminars and lectures. But often when we leave graduate school, lecturing is the only teaching mode in which we are even semi-competent." Indeed, in my experience, graduate students tend to be even more conservative than their professors in their disinclination to experiment with different ways of teaching. This disinclination involves both the use of technology in the classroom and active learning techniques. Heather McDougall also discusses some of these issues. To lead graduate students to see interactions between how they teach and how students learn is a goal of all PFF programs.

To accept these propositions is to advance a major reform program for graduate education. In this context it is appropriate to emphasize that our PFF activities to date have been modest both programmatically and in terms of resources. They are perhaps best seen as "demonstration projects," efforts to see which practices seem to work and to engage in mutually profitable conversations about which next steps it might be useful to take. Our own program has four major features. First, we are establishing a coherent "PFF track" for interested students. We have created a "Professional Development" seminar required of all first year students. We are engaged in providing assistance and oversight for students teaching their own "Independent Sections." Starting this fall, we will have the assistance of a "PFF Associate Instructor" with a standard AI stipend and fee remission who will facilitate the organization of workshops, the coordination of activities with other PFF programs on campus, the organization of review sessions for students teaching Independent Sections, and the gathering and dissemination of instructional material.

Second, we are encouraging the "empowerment" of our graduate students both individually and collectively. Our aim is for students to see themselves as professionals, responsible for the organization of their lives. (In this connection, it seems to me that "Preparing Future Professionals" is a better description of our goal.) We assist this process in a number of ways, for examples: by supporting Indiana's Graduate Student PFF Conference; by providing travel money to conferences on teaching and on professional development; by helping underwrite summer professional opportunities; and by providing resources such as our web page on professional employment opportunities.

Third, we oversee our "externship" program which offers advanced students the opportunity to teach for a semester or a year at one of our partner PFF schools. This initiative predates our PFF-APSA designation. We have been able to add a number of liberal arts colleges to our linkages with other campuses in the Indiana University system. Our externship program now includes the IU Indianapolis and Fort Wayne campuses as well as DePauw University, Hanover College, and Wabash College. In his contribution Bill Blomquist describes the operations of the externship program in more detail. We also expanded our links within our cluster to include workshops and other activities involving faculty, graduate students from Bloomington, and undergraduates from our partner institutions.

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The final goal is probably the most important; it certainly is the most difficult to describe briefly. We intend to take seriously the prospect that the nature of academic work could change radically. Already we are witnessing a lessening of the distinction between academic and nonacademic employment; a movement toward team work in which individual contributions are not clearly demarcated; and a blurring of the boundary between "pure" and "applied" research. (On this last point, see Rothblatt 2001.) Of course, these trends mirror larger changes in the corporate economy. As DiMaggio (2001) concludes in his edited study on *The Twenty-First Century Firm*, "most of the authors agree that bureaucracy has been supplanted in business throughout the world by networks of various shapes and sizes…We are developing intuitions about the increasingly important role of 'networks' that are visible from the humblest precincts of management consulting to the loftiest aeries of social theory." To put the matter another way, the structure of "knowledge production" is changing in ways that could greatly alter academic life. (For an important contribution to the debate, see Kleinman and Vallas 2001.)

There are major implications for the way we envision graduate training as a whole. Here I will mention only aspects relating directly to the teaching mission. Specifically, what skills do we want our graduate students to help undergraduates develop? Most undergraduate courses still too often consist primarily of lectures in which it is hoped students will learn "facts," "concepts," "theories" well enough and long enough to write them down coherently on an examination. There might also be a paper assigned, which usually takes shape when the student consults some articles or web pages and then writes down his or her understanding of the issue. In this task students often are admonished *not* to consult other members of the class. If we are moving to networks as the basis of work, these solitary, independent skills could prove insufficient, and it is reasonable to suppose that tomorrow's teachers will be expected to broaden them.

I now provide reports on PFF experiences and expectations from four of our "stakeholders." Together, these contributions offer in my view a good overview of the benefits and challenges in implementing our, and, I would say, any PFF program. Heather McDougall is working on her Ph.D. in our department. In her spare time she is the director and lead instructor for the Vision Resource Centre's Global Leadership Program in Prague. Brett O'Bannon is an instructor in political science at DePauw and is completing his Ph.D. at Indiana. The next two contributors are colleagues at two of our "partner" institutions. Melissa Butler is professor of political science and chair of the Division of Social Science at Wabash College. Bill Blomquist is chair of the department of political science at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis. After these reports, I will offer a brief, guarded assessment of future progress.

Heather McDougall

The road from graduate student to professor appears daunting. Reports about the job market vacillate from promising to weak on almost a daily basis. When one is in the beginning or even middle stages of her graduate career, there is the temptation to defer concerns about a job for more immediate matters, such as courses or exams. As the market does become more difficult to traverse, however, it is these beginning years that are the most important. The steps one takes now will shape the final outcome. One must develop an active approach.

Serious research should obviously be a focus for any academic. Graduate programs are well attuned to training individuals to become successful researchers. Yet, at the same time, a faculty member is more than a researcher. She is a teacher also, and graduate schools are traditionally not structured to train as well in this capacity. Though she may be familiar with the most recent developments in research methodologies, she may be quite unfamiliar with the pedagogical requirements for that aspect of her job. The current trends can be identified as technological, international, and service-based. As technology continues to expand, universities are currently looking for professor who can effectively utilize multi-media, web-based and asynchronous delivery technologies. It is in the interest of any graduate student to not only learn about but also to start using these innovations now. In addition, pedagogical sophistication requires more than technological expertise; it requires an appreciation of the fact that, contrary to Tip O'Neil's dictum, all politics is global. The problems of individual countries, or even local communities, are interconnected in a far more complex manner than has been seen before. The successful professor will use technology to help students become informed global citizens; to develop an understanding of themselves as global actors; and to use this knowledge to make positive changes in their local communities and abroad.

In the confines of any one graduate program, the above tasks may seem overwhelming. Again, the immediate concerns of simply obtaining the degree take precedence for most. This is why Preparing Future Faculty is so important. Through financial assistance from our PFF, graduate students are able to attend conferences, workshops, and professional meetings where they can learn about the latest pedagogical innovations, resources, and issues; meet faculty from diverse backgrounds; and develop long-lasting connections. Such experiences are crucial for beginning graduate students as they develop their personal teaching styles. My own travels to Miami, Boston, Chicago, Prague and Murcia were invaluable opportunities. From attending workshops to one-on-one meetings with professors and university presidents, I learned how liberal arts, community colleges, and large research institutions operate both in the United States and abroad. Yes, universities actually want to know how to train students to become future leaders. They want professors who have experience working with local and international organizations—who seek to use their knowledge to make actual improvements in the community. The role of the professor is expanding, and graduate students must be aware of these changes.

In many ways one must become a type of 'responsible entrepreneur,' actively searching for new experiences. It is inevitably up to the initiative of graduate students to find these opportunities, but PFF allows students to take advantage of them. Most importantly, it provides a structure through which other graduate students can learn from these experiences—for example, through reports or debriefing sessions. The strength of PFF rests upon graduate students sharing their new knowledge with fellow graduate students and helping to create networks for the department as a whole. The benefits of PFF may begin with individuals, but certainly do no end there.

Brett O'Bannon

Being a good teacher no more naturally follows from doing good scholarship, than doing good scholarship is assured by studying with or under good scholars. The latter may be a necessary, but it is by no means a sufficient, basis for the former. This view often does not follow from what new faculty learned (or, more properly, failed to learn) during their time in graduate school, where the teaching aspect of our profession may have been ignored or openly denigrated. Ignorance of serious pedagogical pursuits is revealed early in the PFF process when the student attends her first teaching workshop or roundtable. A world of rich scholarly material is made available. Paradigm conflicts appear. Problem-based learning is addressed. Asynchronous delivery systems are evaluated. The new untenured faculty member may be as connected with serious research as at any point in his career. Yet he is unlikely to have any familiarity with these fundamental pedagogical concerns.

"Big" issues in pedagogy are not the only matters that PFF fellows engage. Other, more immediate but equally unanticipated concerns are addressed in friendly but frank forums. I, for example, confronted the problem of interpreting a grade distribution that placed me at the very bottom of the university. How does one confirm, or reject, that one's expectations are appropriate for undergraduates? After all, most, if not every, new faculty member was an exceptional undergraduate. In a matter of months, we went from being evaluated to being the evaluator. The internship period provided by the PFF Externship Program provides the new scholar with the experience to hit the ground running when she lands her full time position. That's a win-win situation. The hiring institution gains a new faculty member prepared to contribute to the teaching mission right away. The new faculty membe4r is less likely to get blindsided by the requirements of the classroom, and thus to make progress both in the classroom and in her research pursuits.

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Notable benefits for the classroom notwithstanding, the Preparing Future Faculty program is not solely in the business of preparing teachers. It's about preparing *faculty*. In particular, it is about preparing them for what is viewed, by all who have endured it, as the most stressful time in their years—the pre-tenure experience. A faculty member, even at a teaching-focused institution like DePauw University, is more than a teacher or a researcher. The new faculty member is a fresh scholar who also functions as a colleague, an advisor, a public resource, and a citizen in a marginally self-governing institution. These, not so tertiary, roles are new and strange as any he must perform in the classroom. And all these must be performed with an acumen that enables the young professor to avoid serious missteps that might alienate important colleagues.

My experience this year has been most instructive in this regard. Though I established solid teaching credentials during graduate school, and have been well trained in research methods, I was naïve about the life of a university professor. Perhaps more than anything else, I have experienced the enormous challenge of balancing research (most immediately, finishing the dissertation) and teaching (at a place that takes this very seriously). The balance, it turns out, is not simply a matter of time management. The balance is difficult to maintain because, as I indicated earlier, teaching and research are not identical intellectual activities. For example, the hypothetical-deductive method, common in our research, begins with abstraction and refutes with the concrete. Students, research indicates, prefer that we begin with the concrete and then ease them into the abstract. This year has convinced me that good research can inform good teaching. Many of the experiences from my fieldwork in West Africa will never make it into the dissertation. But some of the most effective moments in the classroom draw on these unreported data. As a teacher and scholar, I am afforded the opportunity to pursue the normative and theoretical dimensions of both the teaching and research aspects of our profession. But at an institution that takes *both* seriously, I can succeed only if I do them *both* well.

Melissa Butler

Wabash College is a very small institution (total enrollment 850 and a Political Science department of 4.5 FTE) that is representative of a small segment of the higher education universe. Small liberal arts colleges educate only a tiny fraction of college graduates, but they are an important part of the diversity of American higher education. They are, for example, the alma maters of a disproportionately high percentage of those who go on to obtain Ph.D.s and join the professoriate. Nevertheless, prestige within disciplines tends to do to those working at R-1 universities. Faculty at graduate schools frequently attempt to steer their best students toward such destinations and away from small liberal arts colleges. Furthermore, many graduate mentors who know exactly how to present their students to a hiring committee at a large university are much less knowledgeable when it comes to helping their students succeed with job searches and employment at other types of institutions.

For those of us at Wabash, PFF represented an opportunity to promote liberal arts colleges as desirable places to teach. We hoped to do our bit to improve the size and quality of the pool of applicants for teaching positions at our type of institution. PFF also offered us the opportunity to do some mentoring of graduate students in ways that could complement what they had learned from their graduate mentors.

Because of our small size, and because Wabash advertises itself as a place where undergraduates are taught by "real faculty," not graduate students, we generally avoid the use of adjuncts, and thus we could offer fairly little in the way of opportunities for Indiana University graduate students to gain teaching experience. (During an earlier round of PFF, with lots of lead time we were able to arrange for an advanced graduate student to offer an upper division elective course at Wabash.) Under the current grant, our participation took a different form. Wabash faculty attended two summer workshops. We hosted an on-campus meeting of PFF participants form cluster member institutions. Finally, we organized a day-long program for IU graduate students on our campus. Students had a chance to attend a teaching and learning session (on "Teaching Controversial Subjects"). Afterward, they went to dinner with some of the newer faculty from a variety of disciplines. The program concluded with a question and answer session, sponsored by our chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha, in which our visitors offered advice to political science majors thinking of graduate school.

The summer workshops were particularly valuable vehicles for sharing information among students and faculty of cluster members. Graduate students in attendance could pick up valuable tips about how to be successful in the hiring process. So the real question is, how to reach those not in attendance and extend the benefits a program like PFF has to offer?

More time. After participation in two waves of PFF each running for two years, it seems to me that a longer, continuous grant period is needed. Organizing activities at several institutions sometimes located outside of easy commuting distance from Bloomington (for example, Wabash is about 80 miles away) takes time. About the time efforts begin to get rolling, the grant period is over.

More money. Funding should be sufficient to ensure that PFF will be a significant part of the salary for a faculty member and/or staff member at the cluster leader. While those engaged in PFF were serious about the goals of the program, the best of intentions alone are not enough to prevent PFF from becoming one more add-on responsibility for already burdened faculty.

More players. To this point PFF has been built around graduate institutions as cluster leaders. This obviously makes sense as "future faculty" are, after all, their current graduate students. They are "the producers," so to speak. But perhaps there is a leadership role to be played by "consumers" as well—baccalaureate institutions, community colleges, comprehensive schools. For example, with funding from the Lilly Endowment, Wabash College has recently established the Center for Inquiry in the Liberal Arts <http://www.liberalarts.wabash.edu> to study and promote liberal arts education. The Center will also provide year-long positions for new Ph.D.s to get to know the liberal arts college environment. One might envision consortia of liberal arts colleges (e.g., Associated Colleges of the Midwest, Associated Colleges of the South, Great Lakes Colleges Association) engaging in similar efforts to promote teaching at these alternatives.

Bill Blomquist

When Indiana University launched its Future Faculty Teaching Fellows initiative four years ago, our department did not hesitate to join the program. The political science portion of the program at Indiana then became part of the nationwide Preparing Future Faculty program, and again we were pleased to become one of the participating departments. Our involvement so far has brought us several benefits we anticipated from the program, and allowed us to contribute to it.

In case you are unfamiliar with IUPUI, we are a comprehensive campus of both Indiana and Purdue universities located adjacent to downtown Indianapolis. Our 28,000 students are about evenly divided between traditional and nontraditional age groups, and just under half attend part-time. Nearly all are commuters. We knew, therefore, that teaching at IUPUI would give Ph.D. candidates from the Bloomington campus a valuable exposure to a campus environment and student body distinctly different from the traditional, residential setting of their graduate school experience. Moreover, it would expose them to the types of higher education institutions that are more likely to be recruiting and hiring new Ph.D.s over the foreseeable future in the U.S. As a Bloomington product myself, I had come to appreciate the differences between the campuses when I taught in both places as a graduate student more than a few years ago.

We knew what we had to offer the program. What did the program have to offer us? First and most practically, we anticipated benefiting from access to talented and motivated Ph.D. candidates who would help us staff undergraduate courses. Like most political science departments, we rely on associate (part-time) faculty to help us cover our undergraduate offerings. PFF offered the promise of helping us with teaching needs while giving a student an opportunity to teach in a different environment.

But there are other dimensions to hosting students in the PFF program. Part of our responsibility is to provide office space and some involvement with the department beyond merely teaching classes. In a small department such as ours (ten FTE), the departure of even one full-time colleague has

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large implications for course scheduling and staffing. I would encourage any department considering participation in such a program to think about these sorts of opportunities to combine fulfilling program responsibilities with meeting departmental needs.

Although we would not have needed much incentive to participate in such a program, given its obvious merit for students and advantages to us, I add nevertheless that Indiana University implemented the program in a way that provided a financial incentive to host departments. This was a very smart feature. With Bloomington using program funding to underwrite the students' participation, students in the PFF program were available to host departments such as ours at a slightly lower cost per course than we normally paid other part-time faculty, yet the students were actually receiving greater compensation than our part-time colleagues. And of course, the students themselves were an important benefit to us. In three years we have had three bright, talented Ph.D. candidates in our department—Nancy Quirk, Brett O'Bannon, and Charles Hoffman—whom we probably would not have known otherwise. Each contributed enthusiasm and excellence, and we have been pleased to see the first two off to full-time appointments elsewhere since their brief time with us.

Last but not least, participation in this program provided an opportunity to interact with colleagues at other political science departments in Indiana. It is surprisingly, even alarmingly, easy to be just a few dozen miles away from other political scientists for years and never meet them. The PFF program broke a couple of these barriers of distance and time, and brought us into contact with some of our colleagues at the Bloomington and Fort Wayne campuses of the Indiana University system, and at Wabash College and DePauw University.

The concept of PFF had obvious appeal—getting students off the traditional campuses of the Ph.D.-granting institutions and into classrooms and departments in diverse settings. But not every appealing concept in higher education is implemented in ways that come close to realizing its potential. From our point of view at least, PFF has managed to achieve that, and I expect our participation to continue as long as the program lasts.

Conclusion

I conclude with a brief look to the future. Melissa Butler is absolutely on target. PFF needs more time, more money, and more players. A reading of our aims and reports from stakeholders might lead some to infer that the continued presence of PFF is assured, and that the only issue that remains is how fast, and in which directions, it is likely to expand. Unfortunately, such a conclusion is unwarranted. That "graduate faculty and administrators have yet to grasp the reality that the present job market demands skills and experiences of new Ph.D.s that were not required twenty years ago" (Adams 2002) is not in the least surprising when we consider not what ideally "ought" to be done to make graduate education better, but structures of power and interests within departments and other relevant academic units. Most PFF constituents, graduate students, faculty at other institutions, have little influence on how or even whether PFF is to develop. Nor are there compelling exogenous pressures. Employers by and large declare themselves satisfied with the skills undergraduates now have (see "if it ain't broke:…" 2002.) And while legislators may complain about the lack of attention to undergraduate education at their state universities, actual interventions are disparate and fitful. Finally, as I pointed out earlier, university presidents and heads of educational associations do deplore what many see (correctly in my view) as inadequate commitments to quality teaching, and the assumption that this situation adversely affects the public standing of higher education also has great merit. But lowered public standing is not easily perceived in daily university life. And even if higher administrators insist that the issue be considered, they are constrained in effecting particular remedies. The major players are at the level of departments and colleges of arts and sciences. Here there are few incentives to promote change, and many entrenched interests are perfectly content with the status quo. From a senior colleague at another university, I recently even heard the old saw, "You can't teach teaching." I had thought that at least this type of ignorance had been dispelled, but apparently not. The lesson is that progress will be slow. It will require sustained pressure from stakeholders and interested faculty at R-1 universities. It will require much more attention and support from our professional associations. And it will require a major, long-term commitment in money and in ideas from educational foundations.

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