

*The professional development of the professor
cannot be equated with his self-assurance as
a teacher or his command of a discipline;
rather it is revealed in the complexity of his
personality and thought and his ability
to help students develop themselves.*

stages of faculty development

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The subject of faculty development clearly is gaining prominence in the field of higher education, as this volume attests, but its meaning is not so clear. Very often the term mirrors commonsense ideas of mental health and adjustment and thus refers to ways in which faculty can learn to function more effectively with minimum stress and tension. While this definition is useful for many purposes, it does not adequately touch one essential facet of the development of faculty members (or human beings at large, for that matter): the growth of increasingly complex ways of thinking and acting. To conceive of faculty development as less than increased *complexity*—and thus possibly increased tension and concern over one's role and responsibilities—will lead to inadequate programs for assisting faculty growth. These programs must be based on an understanding of personality development as a whole, not just on adapting to a professional role. Toward this end, this paper describes a scheme of stages of faculty development.

As is the case with any scientific construct, the origins of this developmental progression scheme were theoretical and empirical. Although the first conception of faculty as developing adults was formulated by my associates Robert Shukraft and J. Wesley Brown, my plan developed along somewhat different theoretical lines, using as a point of departure the work of such developmental theorists as Loevinger and Wessler (1970) and Perry (1970).

The unique aspect of their work is that they examine the form or structure of an individual's assumptions about social reality and how these change through life. Development means dealing with experience in increasingly sophisticated and complex ways and being able to integrate this complexity into stable structures. The focus here is not on the content of development—the specific issues that preoccupy an individual at a given time in life—but the structures he uses to generate that content. As Kohlberg and Gilligan note (1971), such theories look at *how* an individual thinks about such matters as good and bad, or truth and beauty, but not *what* he thinks about at any given time.

With this general point of view in mind I examined the protocols of the interviews that our research team had carried out with faculty members at one large state university. These interviews covered such matters as personal and educational background, views on teaching, students, and colleagues, and their professional goals. The questions were open-ended and faculty were encouraged to respond fully and freely.

With these data I ordered faculty along a continuum according to the complexity and generality of the assumptions which underlay the meaning they gave to their professional lives. I analyzed their views concerning the process of education, including their conception of the nature of knowledge and their philosophy of teaching; their notions of their roles as professors; their relation to their discipline; and their attitudes toward others, both colleagues and students.

The continuum portrays a progression from a position where faculty see knowledge as an unambiguous entity, and where teaching consists of simply presenting facts to students, to a position where they begin to see knowledge in more differentiated terms and recognize the need to use various strategies to help students gain understanding. Farther along the progression is a more problematic

notion of knowledge, accompanied by a view of teaching as helping the student develop frameworks for ordering unrelated facts, to impose order on chaos, as it were. The concept of professional role evolves from simple definitions of right and wrong actions, to an awareness of choice in roles and a sense of possible restrictions and limitations, and finally to a sense of style and tolerance within their choice of roles. In relations with others the progression goes from a view of people in moralistic terms of good and bad, to a more psychologically insightful notion of people that recognizes the origins of manipulation and inequality in human relations, and then to a sense of commitment in a context of tolerance and reciprocity.

After sorting faculty along this continuum I grouped them into five levels or stages. The five stages of the developmental scheme are as follows.

stage one

At this level the faculty member has a simple view of his role and the nature of his work. His professional reference group provides his role definition, and he enacts it in conventional fashion. Thus, in a large university he might see himself in terms of what is expected of a member of his academic discipline, while at a small college he might adopt local conventions. Similarly, he defines educational goals in accord with his reference group and may even believe that training new recruits for his profession is the sole aim of education. His goals are distinguished by their rather stereotyped form rather than their specific content. Knowledge is absolute and given; education consists of pouring facts into an empty vessel, the student, who assimilates a body of knowledge. His views of students, grading procedures, and the like are relatively undifferentiated. There are right and wrong procedures, and they may be easily catalogued. Grading reflects the degree to which students know right from wrong information. His opinions are rather dogmatic and are distinguished by their lack of complexity. Their presentation tends to preclude argument and alternative points of view. For this kind of professor the world is divided into areas of good and bad by some authority, usually his reference group. Conventionality, perhaps banality, dominates his professional life. He probably finds campus change very perplexing because he has not evolved suf-

ficiently complex cognitive schemata to cope with them. Sixteen percent of the sample were in Stage One.

stage two

The professor in this stage has a more complex notion of his role than does his Stage-One colleague. He may still define his role in relation to conventional reference groups, but he demonstrates increasing distance from them. Nonetheless, the certainty of right action as derived from authority is never in doubt. His view of knowledge is gaining in complexity. Although the aim continues to be the acquisition of facts by students, this faculty member is interested in helpful techniques. The nature and source of knowledge are clear, but one must find the right methods for presenting them. He still sees people in monolithic good and bad terms, but now he is willing to try to explain their behavior, usually in terms of simple causal relationships—for example, between behavior and social class or behavior and childhood experience. This professor has had some experience with diverse opinions, with views contrary to his own, and so his position is relatively articulate. Twenty-one percent of my sample were in Stage Two.

stage three

The faculty member is further distant from reference-group definitions of his role. He has a heightened consciousness of choice and is therefore aware of possible limitations of his freedom. He may display some anxiety as a result of trying to synthesize disparate elements in his role. This individual has considerable psychological insight into interpersonal relations: he can see students and colleagues in terms of inner motives and their relation to behavior. As an educator he seeks to create conditions in which students may learn, and he believes they can learn only by active effort. This faculty member adheres to a problematic idea of knowledge. At this stage his philosophy of education may appear to be permissive. His ability to think in psychological terms and his appreciation of human variousness contribute to a heightened sense of responsibility and conscientiousness. Although he is more open to choice and diversity than are his less-developed compatriots, he has not integrated these elements. Sixteen percent were in this stage.

stage four

The prototypic faculty member of Stage Four not only has a sense of freedom and relativity in social roles, he has evolved a personal style of functioning. He has mastered some role conflicts and has achieved partial synthesis. He is liberated from the excessive conscientiousness that at times characterizes the faculty member in Stage Three. He has a sense of reciprocity in human relations and education: he believes a faculty member should not only give but get. He enjoys people, in contrast to those in Stage Three, who seem preoccupied by the possibility of manipulation and inequality in human relationships. Learning is the ability to synthesize, not just soak up, diverse facts and information. Students must discover answers for themselves. At this stage the professor can readily see things from the students' side. The permissiveness which sometimes appeared in Stage Three has been replaced by a slightly more structured view which still values the autonomy of the student. Synthesis among diversity and complexity is stressed. Twenty-one percent of my sample fit in here.

stage five

At this stage the faculty member has a more clearly articulated position than does his colleague of Stage Four. For example, included in his philosophy of education is explicit concern with helping students develop a sense of values or character. He has a real appreciation of the student's situation and how material may best be learned. Not only has he realized the reciprocity of Stage Four, he is able to find satisfaction in relationships with students of whom he may be critical. This tolerance is a conscious or explicit construct; he is aware, that is, of having developed a sense of tolerance, an ability to live with diversity. Considerable cognitive complexity is evident at this stage. The prototypic faculty member is able to accept contradiction and ambivalence in human functioning and irony in social processes and to carry on effectively within such contexts. Individuals who reached this stage constitute 26 percent of my sample.

validation

In developing typologies, it is customary (and considered acceptable) to stop at the point we have now reached—the level of

theory generation. I believed, however, that we had to move beyond generation to validation. If the scheme was valid, there should be a high level of agreement among raters using the scheme. I therefore asked three psychologists to rate interviews of faculty members from a small state college. (This second sample, from a different type of institution, was used in order to provide the most powerful test of the scheme's generality.) The level of agreement for Kendall's coefficient of concordance (w) (Siegel, 1956) was .80, which was converted into an average Spearman rank correlation coefficient of .70 ($p < .001$). The level of agreement among the three raters was such that comparable results would occur by chance less than one time in a thousand.

further considerations and implications

Loevinger (1966) states that a developmental model has the following characteristics: (1) there is an invariable order of the stages of development; (2) no stage can be skipped; (3) each stage is more complex than the preceding one; and (4) each stage is based on the preceding one and prepares for the succeeding one. I believe the scheme I have presented is fully developmental in this sense, except for one limitation: faculty members may be located at stages higher than One or Two without having passed through them in their earlier professional careers. In some cases there is evidence that they passed through these first stages when they were graduate students or even undergraduates. For example, we found in several interviews retrospective accounts of faculty who had experienced development according to the scheme.

These stages do not encompass the whole of ego development as conceived by Loevinger and Wessler (1970). I am concerned with ego development only as it relates to a professor's professional development, as expressed in such aspects of his life as his career, his teaching, his views of students and colleagues, and his ideas about the nature of knowledge. One would expect, of course, some correlation between professional growth and ego development as more generally conceived, and in fact the modal ratings in my second (state-college) sample correlate .28 with the Loevinger Sentence Completion Test (Loevinger and Wessler, 1970), a measure of ego development.

In light of this developmental scheme, can we find out which

experiences have the most favorable impact on development? We should consider the point of Loevinger and Wessler: ego structures are relatively stable entities; they change only slowly. The professional development of professors, a facet of their ego development, is such a structure and is not easily modified. Development occurs when the individual is confronted with novel perspectives and events that he cannot account for with his usual assumptions. The integration of this new experience must occur slowly if the stability of the ego is to be maintained. If change is too rapid, this security is threatened. If nothing else, development is an intensely personal thing, and rightly so. The individual best knows the rate of growth consistent with his or her stability. Changing faculty in important ways is difficult, and the types of experiences that are likely to have an impact would have to be intense and yet carried out with care and sensitivity.*

It might seem natural to assume that the more developed a professor is, the better teacher he will be. In something as complex as student-teacher interaction, however, no simple global statement about what makes a good teacher is possible. We must ask "Good for what?" and "Good for whom?" before any broad statement can be made. There are many possible criteria for defining a good teacher. Is such a judgment to be made by student evaluations, by other faculty, by administrators, by measuring student gains in knowledge or ability to think critically, or by studies of the careers of former students? All of these are plausible means, yet each has limitations. It is interesting to note that when Gaff and Wilson (1971) compared faculty selected as outstanding teachers with a random sample they found "that nominated faculty did not differ from their nonnominated colleagues in a statistically significant way." One explanation offered for this finding was that no one trait accounts for good teaching—it rests on multiple sources.

What, then, is the significance of faculty development in the terms I have described? I believe that it provides a model which transcends the notion of faculty development as mere adjustment or acquiescence to roles with a minimum of stress. The model presents a course of growth that offers professors ever-greater choice

*Morimoto (1971) attempts to influence Harvard teaching fellows by means of groups that include both didactic and experiential elements. In these groups basic assumptions about people and instruction are examined in a spirit of free and nonthreatening inquiry.

and complexity in constructing their roles. Further, I believe that the greater the faculty member's development the greater his or her potential for helping students increase their own growth. In an age that seems to become increasingly turbulent and bewildering, more complex and humane ways of thinking and valuing are essential steps in a person's development.

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