

Values in Teaching and The Teaching of Values**

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Attention to the articulation and clarification of values has arisen with renewed vigor in college and university curricula. Perhaps not since the demise of the old senior course on values (often taught by an institution's president) has concern for values and the ethical issues that face both individuals and institutions been so fervent in higher education. Rare today is the statement about the core of a general or liberal education that does not contain a segment on values (AAC, 1985, pp. 20-21), be it the inculcation of a more or less broadly defined set of particular values, or at least the ability to clarify and understand the formative role implicit and explicit values play as individuals interact with each other and with institutions. Courses and even whole programs on the ethics of the professions--medicine, law, business, veterinary medicine--have come into being. Capstone courses within specific disciplines and concentrations that consider the broader social implications and responsibilities of many fields are more common than they have been in the recent past.

Exciting and worthwhile work is being done under these several initiatives. A concern for the articulation and clarification of values is clearly something that cuts across disciplinary lines. A course or two located in philosophy or religious studies will no longer meet current perceived needs in this area. Values as a perspective that cuts across disciplines bodes well to rival writing and even computing in staking out positions across the curriculum.

In the excitement we should not lose sight of nor fail to reflect on one striking aspect of all this effort. Attention to values in whatever form or setting within the academy is generally turned outward--to the values that inform other institutions in society and those that govern individual interactions with the world out there. Medical ethics, legal ethics, business ethics, all have sparked courses and programs of intense study; however, "academic ethics," attention to the values that shape the academy and the interactions of individuals with others within and with the academy, has not, with rare exceptions, established itself. Could it be that an urge to address the issues of "the real world" outside the academy has blinded us to the fact that for faculty, students, and administrators (as well as other staff and support personnel who play a role, in defining the culture of an institution) the classroom, the seminar, the lab and studio, the department meeting or meeting of a Faculty Senate, as well as a host of other "extracurricular" contexts, are also a real world. For both student and instructor, for example, the fifty or more minutes in a class, lab, seminar, or studio constitute as real a world as any. There are other and different worlds but none less real than this. To forget or deny that is to degrade instruction and even the academy.

Within what appear to be even the most regular or routine of matters--in the opting for a particular instructional strategy, in the type of tests given, in criteria used in grading, indeed, in the physical design of a classroom--lie a realm of values that are either implicit or explicit. And, of course, beyond the individual classroom, distinct values inform the interactions of faculty with colleagues and students. The proportion of one's efforts devoted to instruction, to research, and to sustaining an institutional context for these other activities is determined by particular values held if not always articulated. It is characteristic of life in the academy that the potential is always there to do more than time allows. Choices must be made by students and faculty, and these

academy that the potential is always there to do more than time allows. Choices must be made by students and faculty, and these choices betray one's values. Choices must also be made collectively in the design of curricula and programs of study, in the selection, retention, tenuring and promoting of faculty, and in the certification of students. Priorities must be established and defended. Actions must be assessed against words. When they are severely out of balance, the health as well as the integrity of an institution is severely compromised; and when individuals find their own values in tension or at odds with those of the context within which they must live their professional life, the damage can be telling.

Clearly, too much is at stake for the academy to concern itself solely with the values of others, to direct almost all its attention outside itself. The ethics of the academy, the values that mold colleges and universities, the ethos or culture of our own institutions and our personal perspectives as part of them, must be at the heart of our renewed engagement with values.

It is important that we recognize that ethical issues in the realm of teaching and learning do not arise only through abrasions. The few discussions of ethical issues related to teaching and learning that exist generally take up such matters as appropriate or inappropriate relations between instructor and student, plagiarism, cheating, misadvising, arbitrary changes in requirements, or failure to apply criteria fairly across distinct student groups. These are all very real problems that can poison an academic community if unattended. But they may also be only the most glaring symptoms of a more systemic disease nurtured through lack of attention to more basic and yet more routine value issues. When faculty are perceived, and allow themselves to be perceived, as police charged with constant vigilance in preventing cheating, students may thereby presume they are allowed to get by with whatever they can, and the setting for learning is defined in ways few would want to defend. That so much in the learning situation for students is competitive (especially as it is shaped by most grading practices) and that the teaching/learning context is defined by a marked disparity in power demand attention. A sustained and fundamental examination of academic values as they shape instruction is necessary.

It is not the case that broad efforts and activities in this regard are absent in colleges and universities. In fact, many institutional assessments have been undertaken, studies of mission and the congruence of mission with actions have been attempted. Efforts to clarify and reform the culture of an institution have been broadly initiated in many places. Issues related to research have been sharpened, and recent changes in sources of funding, as well as awareness of the impact of some forms of research, have highlighted a host of value questions that are being addressed. For example, issues regarding the rights of human and now more recently animal subjects in research or the balance between the public nature of scholarly inquiry and the needs in certain realms for secrecy are topics for discussion. Limited and specific initiatives have been undertaken. But from this has come little sustained inquiry into the broad values and ethical issues that shape academics across our various colleges and universities. No course of study in "academic ethics" has arisen the academy to rival, say, medical ethics. Diversity is a hallmark of higher education in this country, but diversity is not helter-skelter, and without attention to those commonalities that shape higher education, the enterprise loses all definition. Some have suggested, of course, that it has and that study of curricula and courses offered will simply demonstrate this (AAC, 1985).

Thus some sustained attention has been given to the values that shape the wider enterprise of higher education, but as we move from the institution as a whole to its most vital component, we find little overt attention has been given to the values that inform our particular courses and classes and that shape individual patterns of instruction. It is with just this that my essay concerns itself, for it is here, I wish to suggest, that we can best begin to attune both our students and ourselves to the larger values that shape the academy, as well as other institutions and settings.

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Most important, the individual classroom and course provides a real and concrete setting in which to hone our students' abilities to clarify their values and those of others and to reflect on the formative role values play in shaping all that we say or do. Here, above all, specific issues can be addressed that result in decisions which immediately affect their lives: the nature of the assignment they will face, what will transpire in class, the type of tests they will take and therefore how they will study for them, and the criteria they will have to meet as they are graded.

A concrete instance might serve at this point. Some time ago another instructor and I taught a course specifically designed to integrate entering freshmen into the University. Special attention was given to the history and nature of higher education, to what constitutes an academic course of study, to the development of writing, study, and problem-solving skills, to distinct modes of learning and inquiry, to the resources available on this campus to enhance academic programs, and to value issues. Early on we undertook a close look at different ways people teach and learn in specific types of classes. We began with an exercise. Each member of the class--instructors and students--selected from a long list of value terms that more or less applied to teaching and learning (I literally stole a page from Fuhrmann and Grasha, 1983) the three that they most treasured and the three they wished most to avoid as learners or teachers. Each was then asked to list for every term selected at least three concrete activities or strategies for teaching and learning that would illustrate or demonstrate that value.

There were two interesting results. First, students had difficulty coming up with three illustrative activities for each of their terms. The range of instructional strategies and experiences to which they had been exposed, or at least of which they were aware, was decidedly slim. Second, and overwhelmingly, they valued a passive and receptive (if dutiful) student and an authoritative, knowledgeable, and fair teacher. Instructors gave and students received. Related to this was a deep concern that requirements be stable, clear, and applied fairly. Students may not have clearly and consciously experienced a wide range of teaching and learning activities, but they were all too aware of instances of unfairness, of arbitrariness, of lack of clear criteria, and of failure to respect students as individuals.

By contrast, the values that were reflected in the selections and illustrations of the two instructors stressed much more active student participation in the course, a willingness to venture, to risk, to explore and take responsibility for one's learning. Clear, knowledgeable, and effective lectures were looked for by students; lively discussions and explorations that involved genuine testing of options and issues was the goal of the instructors. Clearly defined and delimited tasks that would be assessed with equity across the class was the ideal of the students; open-ended assignments that fostered individual exploration and definition of issues, with attention to the particular potential for growth and aptitudes of individual students was the emphasis of the teachers. Structure was desired on one side; flexibility on the other. While these are not extreme polar opposites, there emerged a clear distinction between the values of the students and those of the instructors; and these fundamentally affected the expectations and attitudes each brought to the class sessions and the assignments.

This experience raises several immediate questions:

I. What is the effect of this apparent disjunction between the values of students and instructors, especially when it is not clearly acknowledged or faced? I assume the disjunction is not unique to our experience. Many have experienced the unease that seems to grow gradually throughout the term as classes move from the high hopes and expectations of the beginning to wear down into a desperate drudgery that both students and instructors seem finally glad to get through. Could this be in part a result of this disparity in basic values? Could it be that too often students and instructors both come to a class with hopes and expectations and with good will, but with hopes and expectations that are not a full match for each other, that miss by some degree? Like a low-grade fever, this situation could slowly but inexorably wear everyone down without the cause ever becoming clear. Instructors

grade level, the situation could be very satisfactory. Near the end of the term, the class ever becoming clear, instructors look for more active and venturesome students and meet blank stares and puzzled looks along with a growing sullenness. Students look for clarity and structure and meet what must seem increasingly forced attempts at relevance and connections, an apparent lack of direction and structure, and, sometimes, a not too subtle hostility. Both groups slog through the last weeks of a term, making an effort to get by, but the excitement and high expectations of the opening weeks are lost.

While this rhythm is not everyone's experience every term, it seems to be that of too many students and instructors. It is not necessarily a natural rhythm; in fact, it would seem that quite the reverse should be the case. Intense effort should come to a climax as students find themselves more and more engaged by and versatile with course material and skills, and as instructors witness students who develop over the term and know they have been formative in facilitating that development. But this will not be the result if intense effort by students and instructors is expended toward goals that are if not wholly at crossed purposes at least not congruent.

2. We might also ask about the extent to which the instructor's stated values are really the values held. Two related issues arise:

a. Clearly the values and expectations of students are shaped by their past experience. They have, to a degree, come to value what time and again is actually expected of them in their courses. From their earliest years in school they have found themselves usually in a context defined by a fine-grained structure established and upheld by clear authorities. They were clearly shown bit by bit, step-by-step what they were to learn, how to were asked by teachers; students gave answers. Any values or expectations that are counter to these are going to have, at best, to prove themselves in deed as well as word.

b. In 1968 Benson Snyder wrote a book called *The Hidden Cumculum*. In sum, he asserts that what really counts academically on most campuses is not what is said to count by administrators and the faculty. This is true in many areas. One of the most fundamental is the classroom in which the instructor's fine rhetoric about active learning, the need to venture, taking risks, exploring, becoming responsible for one's own learning, meeting one's own standards, and so forth, is sometimes radically violated by the actual patterns of instruction selected, the nature of the assignments given, the types and methods of testing, the criteria for grading, as well as a host of more indirect indicators in word and deed. Actions in this context communicate much more than words. What and how we test and what we reward with high grades does more to determine what and how students learn than any other single implement in an instructor's arsenal (Milton, 1982; Milton, Pollio, Bison, 1986).

This is not to suggest that instructors are out-and-out hypocrites. After all, many of us are products of the same system and perhaps most of us model our teaching on our own teachers. We were unusually successful, as measured by the academic criteria set throughout our education system, yet a question remains concerning the extent to which the expectations and undergirding values of our students and institutions force us into patterns of testing, assessment, and evaluation that are not attuned to our own values and hopes for a class. But then we must again recognize that to a significant extent the values of our students are shaped by their experiences in other courses and classes. We seem to be caught in a spiral, one that becomes an invitation to join the academic game of pointing to others, college teachers to those in high school, high school teachers to those before them, and they to parents in an endless and fruitless regress. We might all even gang up on TV, as is now the fashion! We could also observe, however, that the difficulty our particular students had in drawing up even a partial list of different activities and experiences associated with teaching and learning is most likely a reflection of their limited and limiting experiences.

3. Can the problem be turned into an opportunity? Can we seize this situation, not only to bring disjunctions between values and expectations into the open, but along the way to develop student skills in the articulation and clarification of our own values and their values, and even to explore possibilities for the resolution of value conflict?

All this is to suggest that one place to begin a sustained and systematic consideration of "academic ethics" is in the one place in the academy that is at once both universal and yet as particular as every instructor and student: the individual course or class. Ideally,

one of the most "real" worlds confronting students and instructor is the individual class in which each spends significant time. To give sustain attention to the ethical issues and the values of some "real" world outside (appropriate enough for the academy to do) without as intense a consideration of value issues within the academy, and especially in its classrooms and courses, is a travesty. The place to begin to bring values into the course of study is with an examination of ourselves and what we are about in the academy, and what we are most fundamentally about is teaching and learning.

By design or by default, instructors select from a range of potential instructional strategies, techniques, modes of evaluation, and patterns of assessment. Selections are made in light of many factors: the size of a class, the nature of the subject matter, the objectives of the course, the personality and learning styles of the instructor, experience in the past of both student and instructors, space and facilities, time of day, and so forth. General attitudes about teaching and toward students, perceptions about the relative importance of teaching in relation to other demands on one's time and creative energy, and one's awareness of the distinct patterns of learning reflected by a particular group of students as well as those characteristics of instructor, also inform the design of a course and the patterns of instruction selected. Some of these factors are more under our control than others, of some we are more aware, and with some more concerned than with others. Hidden behind our awareness, concerns, and actions or reactions are a host of values held, rejected or ignored. As students encounter a course of particular design and struggle through distinct strategies of instruction, their response will be informed by implicit or explicit values that are influenced by a range of additional factors within their own experience. Each course, each class meeting, provides a case study in the way values shape contexts and in the way values in tension can influence perception of performance in that context. Each class is a potential case study in "academic ethics" one in which our students must actually live for a time, one that will immediately shape their lives.

Even the design of a classroom reflects a value set. Most undergraduate classes, even relatively small classes in which recitation if not discussion is an important factor, meet in rooms so designed that all the students are arranged in parallel rows facing an instructor who not only has his or her authority affirmed by a symbol such as a large desk, table, lectern, or raised platform, but who alone has ready access to chalk and the board, or to maps, charts, and such. Sometimes the seats are so cleverly designed as physically to punish anyone who refuses to sit oriented toward the stage; some have folding book rests that lock you into position. The message: Instruction in this room is an authoritative enterprise. Not a word need be said. The message is there as students enter the room for the first time. Just imagine how the power network of a classroom would change if a student moved to the blackboard unbidden, took the chalk and wrote out a point or question. But this does not happen. Students go to the board when instructed to do so and then only to engage in a form of written recitation.

I was once asked to work with some colleagues on modes of in-class discussion. I decided we might best discuss this and, as we did so, reflect on our discussions about discussions. I entered the assigned room to find a raised stage with a table and a lectern with all the instrumentation of a cockpit facing rows of banked seats firmly bolted to the floor. I got a clear message. The best lesson from this experience came as the group and I left the room, and finally the building, and commandeered a lounge where we could sit in a way that allowed people to talk seriously with each other about important matters. Literary study has long known and taught that form and content are bound together. Instruction involves both, and form is first determined by the physical setting in which we teach and learn. Collaborative experiences were not valued highly by those who designed our classrooms. Our discussion of discussions became a reflection on basic values.

Less concrete than the design of a room, but also perhaps less set in concrete, is the extent to which teachers and students value students not only as recipients of but contributors to learning, their own and others. Are teachers there to give and students to take, or, in certain cases anyway, is it more complex than this? A host of assumptions are too often left unchallenged and

questions begged in this regard. Glib assertions about the creative interaction between one's research and classroom teaching are made with little examination. Relationships between teaching and research exist but they are complex and multifaceted. They are also badly in need of clearer articulation. Some of us have come out of a class in which a student asked a telling question or refocused or nuanced one in a way that has shaped our research or scholarly work. Conversely we have from time to time tried out material on students. But these are not the regular experiences that much rhetoric about the relation of teaching and research would imply.

Yet there may be other ways in which one's research is informed by the experience in the classroom. For it is here, and especially at the undergraduate and even the introductory level, that connections between one's own interests and expertise can be made with other areas, other fields of interest, other experts, and also with human beings and the larger world in which they are living. If meaning is supplied by context and changes in context can change meaning, then the classroom, as a distinct set of contexts, might be tapped to an extent not generally recognized to offer meaningful perspectives on one's often very specialized and isolated research efforts.

At issue is the extent to which students are valued as facilitators of learning as well as learners, and this involves not only the perceived potential for faculty to learn from students but the perceptions of other students as well. How many students believe that they can learn from other students as well as from an instructor? How many are urged to? How many tune out comments by other students, especially if they are not direct responses to questions posed by the teachers, questions likely to reappear on the final? Students who believe that they can only learn from what a member of the faculty does or says in class will feel themselves in a wasteland in a successful discussion session in which the instructor essentially facilitates a process whereby most of the activity involves students. The common student frustration with discussion may not be simply rooted in some lack of skill on the part of the faculty member in facilitating them; it may be founded as well upon a basic devaluing by students of what other students can contribute to one's learning. Within this value-set, teaching and learning are seen as distinct activities engaged in by different persons; a fellow learner has little to teach.

Criteria for grading (on a curve, on individual improvement, against some absolute scale), and one's openness to "extrinsic" concerns (late work, margins, etc.) are based upon fundamental values and raise important ethical issues. It has been effectively argued that what and how we test is the most powerful force in determining what and how our students learn (Milton, 1982). This is because, all rhetoric and good intentions aside, our tests reveal to others what sorts of learning we value. All talk about higher levels of thinking--of analysis, synthesis, evaluation--will pale before an exam that demands no more than memorization and regurgitation. The real curriculum is often hidden in our tests, and test-wise students become adept at ferreting it out. But is this sort of game fair or to the point of learning? Beyond this, testing as usually done sets a basis for competition among students, a basis that is solidified by some grading methods and especially the use of grades to rank students. Individual effort is rewarded; in actuality, tests are taken alone. Room at the top is limited; there are only so many "A's" to be had. There is not only little encouragement for collaboration (and even less attention to the skills that enhance collaborative efforts) but the clear suggestion is that it could prove detrimental to one's academic record. This in spite of the fact that many creative efforts by most of our students through the rest of their lives take place in collaboration with others. Our strategies seem to value competition, and it is only fair that we support this through consideration with our students of the extent to which competition enriches the academic experience.

The facts of testing and grading also serve to underscore issues of power and the disparities and types of power in student-teacher relationships. These disparities are real and can be made to serve for both instructor and student needs that are questionable as well as needs that may be legitimate. How these issues are judged and what needs and uses of power are legitimate can come

only through careful and sustained consideration of essential values. As we assign a grade, for example, do we consider the several discrete contexts in which that grade will be provided with some specific meaning and the uses to which it will be put? The laundering of what may be at best symbols used in communication between teacher and student through the calculation of a GPA (carried no less to the second decimal) calls forth ethical questions rivaled only by the uses to which we then put that GPA in awarding honors, positions in graduate and professional schools, jobs, and even auto insurance rates. Grading may well stand unchallenged as the most ubiquitous yet unexamined practice in higher education (see Pollio, T-LI # 55, 1985; and Milton, Pollio, and Bison, 1986).

Clearly the nature, type, and extent of one's lecturing, the balance of discussion and lecture, the purpose for which discussions are attempted (to determine mastery of material, to provide exercise in the use of information, to explore open-ended issues), the nature and type of tests given, criteria used for grading and the communication of this, modes of grading, the nature and extent of outside encounters with students, these and a host of other activities and instructional strategies all have their roots in certain values that shape attitudes toward students, toward teachers, and toward teaching and learning. The point need not be labored. (See Fuhnnann and Grasha, 1983, Ch.2.)

Clearly significant values shape our designs and strategies for teaching, just as they shape the responses of students to the choices we make. We know that the conduct of our courses and our relationships with students involve a wide range of ethical issues. Clarity about just these issues is necessary if college and university teaching is to be the profession called for in the recent reports on baccalaureate study by the AAC, the NIE, and others. The more interesting observation is that we do so little about what we know, at least until the disjunction between the values of students and teachers becomes so marked, or the disparity between word and deed is so great, that serious conflict arises. We regularly do little in the conduct of courses to articulate, clarify, and help others understand our values as well as their own, and to seek resolution of value tensions that may never reach an explosive state but that can sap energy from the enterprise.

I mentioned earlier a simple technique to begin to draw out the values held by students and instructors regarding teaching and learning and the relation of these to specific activities. The rough indications provided by that technique offered the basis for some more sustained discussions. It allowed the faculty in that course not only to express their desire for explanation and active discussion in class, but to base that desire in the objectives they had for the course, the expectations they had of students, the perceptions they held of students, distinct ways of learning, indeed, what teaching and learning meant to them in that course with its particular subject matter. It allowed the instructors to point to sessions in which there would be lecture, to others given over to discussion, to those reserved for reports on student group initiatives, and to reflect on the reasons for each. It allowed a rationale to be articulated for students sometimes being teachers and the team efforts that would seem novel in light of most experiences in classes. A perception of all members of the class as potential teachers as well as learners was asserted as particularly appropriate in the light of the subject matter of this course and the objectives for this class. The occasion was made to relate the nature and type of assignments and tests to the perception of student potential and need as well as to course objectives. In sum, through the articulation of the values held by the instructors, they were able to provide a foundation for the sort of presentation that is usually rushed over in the first class session and too often misperceived by students.

But this was just a beginning. The next step was to facilitate student relation of their values to these activities, and especially to clarify points of value conflict, points, for example, where activities seemed incongruent with the values expressed by the students. In some cases there might even be negotiations between groups of students with different value orientations or between teacher and students regarding instructional strategies and modes of evaluation. Within limits, and clearly it is not within the values of most

teachers or students that faculty hand over all authority in the design of a course, this can lead to a deepened and a shared commitment to a course of study.

The responsibilities of both instructor and student can then be considered. Among other things, this provides a basis for evaluation of the course by both students and instructor, both as the term progresses as well as at the end; and, as important, it demands that both student and instructor reflect on the full range of activities available for the conduct of all aspects of a course. Simple replication by teachers of what we once experienced as students is not enough; simple repetition of past habits as students will not suffice. Agreement between instructors and students is not always possible or necessary. Nor need all instructors arrive at a common set of values. What is vital is open and systematic discussion of the values that shape the classroom.

For a long period in American higher education, an understanding of the mind as something to be exercised (the metaphor of the "mind as muscle" suggested rigorous training) sustained a rigid and very classical course of study dominated by recitation. Lectures and lab demonstrations came to dominate as new values and metaphors came to govern. Electives and wide student choice were supported by those whose perception of learning recognized individual differences and who maintained the ability and right of individuals to make serious choices regarding their learning. These are not matters to be left to those who deal in the philosophy or psychology of learning and education. They shape each of us as teachers and learners, as well as the contexts in which we teach, and perspectives on them must be shaped in turn by our awareness of different levels of instruction, the nature of our particular subject matters, and especially values we hold of individual instructors and students.

These are all issues of fundamental importance in teaching and learning. Whether articulated or not, whether conscious or not, our perceptions, values, and priorities do shape our instruction. As important and formative, they demand discussion, and not just when conflicts or disjunctions reach that flashpoint of intensity that forces them upon us. If in the attention to the values that shape our teaching and learning, instructors and students can become more skilled and sensitive in understanding and articulating the values implicit or explicit in other contexts, we will have brought into our instruction attention to what is itself an important value in the general or liberal education of all of us. We will have transformed the classroom into a "real life" case study in values.

* "Anxiety over plagiarism, however, should not inhibit students from discovering the zest for learning which comes with the give and take of discussion so at home in the world of the university" (Povlacs, 1986, p.2).

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