

R E P O R T R E S U M E S

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NEW DEGREES FOR COLLEGE TEACHERS.

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NOTING THAT TRADITIONAL PH.D PROGRAMS CANNOT MEET THE CURRENT NEED FOR COLLEGE TEACHERS, THIS ARTICLE BRIEFLY DISCUSSES PROPOSALS FOR TWO GENERAL TYPES OF INTERMEDIATE GRADUATE DEGREES--(1) THOSE DESIGNED TO IDENTIFY PROGRESS TOWARD THE PH.D AND (2) THOSE WHICH MARK THE TERMINATION OF A PROGRAM DISTINCT FROM THE PH.D. EXAMPLES OF BOTH TYPES OF DEGREES ARE INCLUDED. EMPHASIS IS GIVEN TO THE CURRENT ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH A NEW TERMINAL GRADUATE PROGRAM FOR THE PREPARATION OF COLLEGE TEACHERS. THIS ARTICLE APPEARED IN "CURRENT ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION, 1967--IN SEARCH OF LEADERS," PAGES 106-109. (BN)

CURRENT ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION 1967

In Search of Leaders

*New degrees for college
teachers*

STEPHEN H. SPURR

PART
III
CHAPTER
9

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THE TREE OF LEARNING HAS MANY BRANCHES. Each may be identified by the name of a degree. The need to define the zones of the tree of learning better has assumed urgency in recent years as academicians have come to realize that the traditional training program for the Ph.D. cannot possibly—and perhaps not even properly—fill the urgent need for college teachers in our overcrowded, complex institutions of higher learning. It is perhaps arrogant to speak of new degrees; rather, we should face the issue of what degrees, whether merely proposed sometime in the past or currently in use on a restricted scale, are relevant as comprehensive solutions to a widespread problem.

In speaking of new degrees for college teachers, therefore, we are not discussing a new terminology, but rather a new acceptance of existing proposals in the hope that a large number of graduate students will find a satisfactory objective both in terms of their academic pursuits and their subsequent careers. Such acceptance does not preclude the possibility of re-examining and tightening up the Ph.D. program itself. That is equally vital.

Proposals for intermediate degrees between the baccalaureate and the doctorate fall into two general categories: those designed to identify progress along the main trunk toward the Ph.D., and those designed to mark a terminus on a branch. The first record successful progress to a given node of those aspiring to the Ph.D.; the second, successful completion of a program by those who initially aspired to a lower but completely respectable goal. The concepts are compatible. Both have a place in the graduate school.

The concept of formal recognition of progress en route to the doctorate is exemplified by the Yale version of the Master of Philosophy degree, Fredson Bower's proposal of a Doctor of Liberal Arts degree, and the developments at Michigan, Northwestern, and Berkeley leading toward a candidate's degree or certificate. The principles are put succinctly in a statement recently prepared by the graduate deans of the CIC (Committee on Institutional Cooperation: i.e., the Big Ten plus Chicago):

A Candidate's Certificate, to be called Candidate in Philosophy, is proposed for the purpose of recognizing formally the successful attainment of that stage in the doctoral program marked by the passing of a comprehensive examination and the completion of essentially all requirements up to the doctoral dissertation. The certificate is intended to mark an intermediate point in the advance toward the doctorate at a level widely recognized in American graduate schools.

This recognition would designate, not those who are unsuccessful, but rather all those who have successfully completed this stage and who are considered to be qualified to prepare a dissertation regardless of whether or not they may actually do so. It affirms accomplishment to date. It regulates neither the duration of time nor the conditions under which a dissertation may subsequently be prepared. Its award does not confer with it candidacy for an indeterminate period at the awarding graduate school. Neither does the certificate lapse, since it is a statement of prior achievement, not of status in a program.

Since the term Candidate in Philosophy implies an intermediate status, it would be awarded only in those departments or fields authorized to confer the doctorate.

The concept of such recognition of intermediate accomplishment en route to the doctorate in no way conflicts with the development of terminal intermediate degrees designed to meet the needs of other students who aspire to career goals for which the Ph.D. would not be the appropriate academic degree.

To some, this proposal may seem insignificant in that it sets forth no new program or experimental and provocative requirement. To this criticism we can only reply that the rubrics of the A.B., the A.M., and Ph.D. themselves are equally broad; and if we are to insert a new universal degree between the master's and the doctor's, it must be on such a generalized plane that widespread acceptance and adoption is possible.

A word on nomenclature. One may properly identify this point of progress with an existing title such as Master or Doctor by adding a different modifier. I argue, however, that the point is clearly higher than that identified by the general concept of the Master and definitely lower than that named by Doctor. It should be given its own unique name, one that will acquire acceptance and status with time in its own right. I venture to suggest that the title Candidate in Philosophy, which adds a new dimension to an established European degree, will be that term.

The complementary solution to the main trunk intermediate degree involves the establishment of a terminal degree requiring two to three years of full-time study following the baccalaureate. Students specifically apply and are accepted for a program distinct from the Ph.D., and there is no implication that they will be allowed to continue on toward a doctorate following successful completion of their program.

The terminal two- to three-year graduate program is characteristic of professional training today. Degree titles may carry the word Doctor, Master, or yet another identifying term. Thus we have Doctor of Dental Surgery, Doctor of Pharmacy, Master of Business Administration, and Master of Social Work. In those areas where a master's connotes approximately a year's work and where ultimate achievement is marked by the Ph.D., however, the tendency has been to seek terms signifying achievement higher than a master's but lower than a doctor's. Thus, we have widespread acceptance of the professional Engineer and the Specialist in Education.

What we do not have, as yet, is an acceptable nationwide degree signifying subject matter competence above the A.M. or M.S., but below the Ph.D. in the sciences, humanities, and arts. A terminal program leading to such a degree could well attract to careers as college teachers many graduate stu-

dents who would not otherwise enroll in the main trunk program leading ultimately to the Ph.D.

Current efforts to establish such a terminal graduate program for the preparation of college teachers appear to be following two general lines: one involving a pure liberal arts approach, and the other adding a component of supervised college teaching and education course work.

The first variant is perhaps best characterized by the University of Toronto version of the English Master of Philosophy program. Here, the course of study involves two years of graduate work in a subject matter field and the preparation of a major essay or research paper representing independent scholarship, but not necessarily an original contribution to knowledge. At Toronto, the program is offered thus far in sixteen humanities and social science departments; but at Cambridge and at London it is also available in chemistry, electrical engineering, and some other sciences. Admission to the Phil.M. program is separate from that of the Ph.D., but an effort is made to ensure that accepted students are fully as strong in their earlier academic work as those accepted for the doctorate. All of the first eight candidates to receive the Phil.M. by the fall of 1966 at Toronto were employed by Canadian universities.

The second variant is under development at a number of American universities. At the University of Tennessee, for example, the degree Master of Arts in College Teaching has been established as a goal for a separately admitted group of students who will pursue a two-year program concentrating in a substantive field, but also electing work in education pertinent to college teaching, and who further are required to do supervised teaching at the college level. Demand for admission has been heavy.

The well-formed tree of learning will have both trunk and side branches. Although the different limbs may compete with one another for water and nutrients, for sunlight and carbon dioxide, yet the tree as a whole is healthier because of the multiplicity of parts.

There are clear needs for both types of new degrees. Jointly, they provide definitive academic goals for individuals who want to teach and who can develop a broad competence in a subject matter field, but whose professional interests may not be best satisfied by the type of scholarship required by the Ph.D. dissertation. Practically, the two together can materially increase the production of qualified college teachers, particularly at the underclass level.

The main trunk proposal, leading to the Candidate of Philosophy or a comparable degree, represents at least three years of work by students who originally aspired to the Doctor of Philosophy, and who were chosen as being qualified to work toward that degree by a graduate admissions committee. The possessors of such a mark of positive achievement should be well qualified to teach undergraduates, regardless of whether or not the teacher eventually completes his doctoral studies.

The side branch proposal, leading to the Master of Philosophy or a comparable degree (at least in the Cambridge, London, and Toronto sense) or

to the Master of Arts in College Teaching degree, represents at least two years of work by students selected for that specific program (as distinct from the doctoral program). The possessors should be well qualified to teach underclass students, whether in community colleges or in four-year institutions. Whether or not a holder of such a degree should be permitted to continue on for the doctorate will and should be determined by the individual's total academic record, and not by his choice of a degree program at one point in his career.

To some extent, the requirement for supervised teaching in the M.A.C.T. concept is a separate issue. Whether we like it or not, college teaching is a major goal in the Ph.D. program as well. Furthermore, many departments in our major graduate schools already require an exposure to college teaching by their doctoral students—although the academic worth of such a requirement is somewhat colored by its convenience with regard to federal income tax regulations. I suggest, therefore, that any department be allowed to require supervised college teaching in any of the degree programs—the Ph.D., the Candidate in Philosophy, and the Master of Philosophy. Such teaching should not be unique to or characteristic of any individual degree program.

In summary, there appears to be widespread recognition of the academic justification for and the practical need of new degree programs to train college teachers in the sciences, humanities, and arts.

One portion of this need may properly be met by the affirmative recognition of achievement to the stage in the doctoral program marked by the passing of a comprehensive examination and the completion of essentially all requirements up to the doctoral dissertation. The degree Candidate in Philosophy appropriately marks this level of intermediate achievement, typically requiring three years of full-time study by Ph.D. students.

Another portion of the need may be met by a two-year terminal program leading to the Master in Philosophy or comparable degree. Such a program may well stress breadth rather than depth. It would be offered to a population of students separately admitted and supervised from those studying for the doctorate. Its caliber will be determined by the standards the institution sets and enforces.

Both types of programs are needed. We may disagree as to how they should be named, but we should not disagree about their appropriateness for institutions that choose to offer them.

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