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ABSTRACT

This monograph contains a research report entitled, "Developing a Career in the Academy: New Professors in Education," by Gerald M. Mager and Betty Myers and two reactions to that report, "An Old Professor on New Professors: A Response to Mager and Myers," written by Gerald M. Reagan and "Commentary" by Roger G. Baldwin. An interest in what happens to beginning professors in the field of education was the motivation for the study, which was begun in 1979. The purpose of the study was to gain better understanding of new education professors' work. Three questions were investigated: (1) How do new professors spend their time with respect to their job-related work? (2) Are there some kinds of work new professors believe they should spend more time doing? and (3) What insights do new professors have about their jobs and themselves in the professoriate? The sample was selected from doctoral graduates of 14 highly ranked colleges of education. A six-item questionnaire was constructed to survey the new professors' uses of time and was filled out by 191 professors in 1979; the questionnaire was revised and readministered in 1981 and 1982 to members of the original group. Included in the report are conclusions based on questionnaire analysis, 14 tables, and a list of references. (JMK)

DEVELOPING A CAREER IN THE ACADEMY

By

GERALD M. MAGER AND BETTY MYERS

SPE MONOGRAPH SERIES 1983, AYERS BAGLEY, EDITOR

DEVELOPING A CAREER IN THE ACADEMY

New Professors in Education

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SPE Monograph Series 1983
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FOREWORD

Launching a career is generally presumed to be simply the realization of the opportunity to perform those tasks associated with one's chosen occupation. Entering a profession is generally regarded as simply putting into practice those skills and understandings which one has acquired after a long period of arduous cultivation, and which enable one to do that for which one has been prepared. Presumably, becoming a professor in the halls of academe entitles the novice to join, with other colleagues in higher education, in achieving the threefold mission of colleges and universities: teaching, research, and service.

These assumptions aside, what professors entering higher education actually do poses both an interesting and legitimate question for which there are virtually no answers. Moreover, how role expectations/aspirations of the professoriate relate to actual role performance raises an additional avenue of inquiry. In any case, one might presume that those in the professoriate whose performance does not meet "standards" sufficiently have "failed," that those whose performance sufficiently meet "expectations" are those who "survive."

Mager and Myers have studied "survivors," those who have persevered within the education professoriate--what they do, what they prefer to do, how their behavior changed since entering the profession. It would be interesting to speculate about those who did not "survive" and seek answers to that proverbial "why?" As with all things, however, there must be a beginning; and our authors have begun--providing an interesting and informative description of the life of new professors of education as they strive to find their niche within the academy.

--George V. Guy
Portland State University

DEVELOPING A CAREER IN THE ACADEMY

New Professors in Education

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and

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As the academic year begins, colleges open their doors and begin the work of education. A new class of freshmen arrive and are met with. The life of higher education is renewed. Also arriving on the scene is another class of newcomers. They receive less attention. But their presence is as important to the renewal of the university as the incoming students. They are the new professors.

Welcoming new professors into the college faculty is essential to the life of higher education and the continuance of its service to the larger society. New professors are both an instrument and an object of institutional renewal. Selecting new professors commands the time of faculty, deans and provosts. Sustaining new professors, some of them, in their careers conditions the future of colleges and universities. But who are sustained? And what is it that they actually do? The study reported here describes several new professors' careers as they were being created.

Defining the Work at Hand

Studies focusing on what happens to new professors as they embark on their careers have not very often been undertaken. Knowledge of new professors in a single field such as education is even more limited. It would seem that the initiating experience, like that in many careers, is forgotten by most; few professors look back on their rookie years for anything more than amusement, or as a yardstick to gauge "how far I've come." And which professor can recall with clarity those words of advice from a senior colleague given at the start of a career? Consider those given to S. Levin:

> Since talking with you I have confidence in your ability to do a good job. As I said, we're looking for people who can hold up their end of it and keep the department running smoothly. This is a fine place to start your college teaching, and if you're our type, it's

> a good place to stay. We don't pretend we're anything more than a typical American state college. The atmosphere is relaxed. There's no 'publish or perish' hanging over everybody's head. There are no geniuses around to make you uncomfortable. (Malamud, A New Life, 1961, p. 37)

Malamud notwithstanding, entry into the professoriate is largely an unstudied phenomenon.

Daniel Levinson (1978) wrote not about professors, but about adult male development. His attention to the early stages of a career is useful here. He uses the term "the Dream" to name one of the first major tasks of the early adult:

> In its primordial form, the Dream is a vague sense of self-in-adult-world. It has the quality of a vision, an imagined pssibility that generates excitement and vitality. At the start it is poorly articulated and only tenuously connected to reality.
>
> Whatever the nature of his Dream, a young man has the developmental task of giving it greater definition and finding ways to live it out. (p. 91)

By chance, the four case studies in Levinson's Seasons of a Man's Life include a university professor, but the early years are not described in detail in, "The Life Of John Barnes, Biologist." Barnes entered the professoriate after several years of graduate study with a prominent scientist who also acted as his mentor. The goals toward which he strove became markers in realizing his Dream.

> His career was marked by rapid growth and advancement. At 28, he was a relatively unformed novice, working in his mentor's laboratory. By 30, after a fellowship abroad, he found an exciting problem of his own on the frontier of his field and accepted an assistant professorship. . .
>
> Two years of painstaking, solitary experimentation led to an important discovery at 32, clearly a high point in his life. (p. 262)

A year later Barnes gained tenure, further forging a reality from his Dream and being graced for his efforts, at least in this formal way, with a collegial constituency.

Baldwin (1979) applied developmental theory to the life of a professor. He contrasts three theories--Levinson's of adult development, Super's, and Hall and Nougaim's of career development--and applies them to the career of a college professor. Again, in the earliest stage, which Baldwin limits to the first three years of full-time college teaching, the major tasks are the setting of initial goals/establishment of a Dream, and the location of a mentor who will help in the pursuit. Baldwin identifies four major types of critical events in the professorial career which follow in sequence: (1) formal study and professional socialization, (2) early professional employment, (3) opportunities for professional growth, and (4) status and role changes. The second set of critical events is particularly relevant here:

> (2) Early professional employment: Many faculty also believe that their initial college teaching position (locating a position, adapting to the demands of academic life) had a significant impact on their subsequent career direction. In other words, the problems and performance of novice faculty members influence their later occupational progress. (p. 17)

Early career development, then, may be crucial in setting a course for a career of scholarship and service. The experiences of the emerging professoriate may long afterwards influence the decisions of which paths to take.

An interest in what happens to beginning professors in the field of edu-

cation was the motivation for a study begun in 1979. The purpose of the study was to gain better understanding of their work. Because time is an organizer of experience that would seem to be held in common, and in other studies has been an important dimension for viewing academic life, it was selected as a central standard for describing their work. Specifically, three questions were investigated.

1. How do new professors spend their time with respect to their job-related work?

2. Are there some kinds of work new professors believe they should spend more time doing?

3. What insights do new professors have about their jobs and themselves in the professoriate?

Conduct of the First Survey

Limited resources for the study demanded some selectivity. The sample was selected from doctoral graduates of 14 highly ranked colleges of education identified by Ladd and Lipset (Fact-File, 1979). Using graduates of these schools not only narrowed the sample source but it also made the sample more describable. It could reasonably be expected that having graduated from institutions such as these, the new professors would have been prepared well for a wide range of academic tasks. The new professors sampled were completing their first, second, or third year when the study began in Spring, 1979.

Names of graduates were, generally, obtained from commencement programs for the academic years of 1975-1976, 1976-1977, and 1977-1978. For each institution, 150 names were randomly selected from the three-year lists. Two universities had fewer than 150 graduates within those three academic years; in these instances, all the graduates' names were used. The smallest total number of graduates was 85 and the largest was an estimated 635.

Deans of the colleges of education were contacted to explain the study and the need to obtain addresses for a sample of their graduates. All 14 colleges cooperated and addresses for the sampled graduates were provided. Unfortunately, addresses for all the graduates were not available. The study sample consisted of the graduates whose names were randomly selected and for whom addresses where available; these graduates numbered 1557.

Based on available data, a reasonable estimate of doctoral graduates in education from all institutions in the U.S. over this three-year period is approximately 22,000. (The "Fact-File," 1980, cites 7370 Ph.D.'s in education granted in 1978-79. This was used as an annual estimate and multiplied by 3 to obtain 22,000.) Approximately 70% (Grant and Lind, 1979) or 15,400 probably accepted positions in education upon graduation. Only a portion of these posts would have been in higher education. An estimated 4,500 doctorates were granted in education by the 14 institutions included in this study during the three-year period. The sample of 1557 represents over one-third of that population.

A six-item questionnaire was constructed to survey new professors' uses of time and was mailed in Spring and Summer, 1979. The rate of questionnaire returns varied from institution to institution. This was not surprising because of the inaccuracy of alumni addresses from some institutions. Of the 475 survey forms completed and returned, 269 respondents were not employed in higher education. Two hundred six were from "new professors," but only 191 of these were under full-time contracts. These 191 constituted the sample for the study. Table 1 presents descriptive information about the new professors.

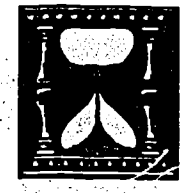


Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of Professors
First Survey

	Number	Percent
Sex		
Female	81	42.4
Male	110	57.6
Year of Graduation		
1975	26	13.6
1976	64	33.5
1977	63	33.0
1978	38	19.9

Note. Data were collected in 1979. N = 191.

The first question asked the respondents to estimate how many hours they spent in job-related work in a typical week. Deriving such an estimate might be difficult but professors tend to be sensitive to their uses of time because they create their own schedules. They are aware of spending time not only at work but also of doing work at home and in other settings. The estimates sought were not precise but categorical.

Two questions asked the professors to identify three kinds of job-related work they spent most of their time doing or should have spent more time doing. It was considered important not to assume that the traditional dimensions of academic work--teaching, research, and service--were the most useful descriptors of professors' experience. Rather, the questions made it possible for respondents to detail their experience in such a way that more complex descriptions of professorial life could be derived if warranted. For these two questions, most subjects gave three responses but several gave fewer or more. There were 692 responses to the first of these questions and 541 to the latter. The exact responses to these questions on approximately 60 of the questionnaires were written on index cards, one response per card. The researchers sorted the cards in a variety of ways, seeking meaningful categories which were yet parsimonious in number. This analysis resulted in identification of 21 categories which could be defined. Anticipating and providing that new professors might describe their work in more intricate detail than the traditional categories of teaching, research, and service permit seems to have been validated by the derivation of as many as 21 categories. All the responses to these two questions were classified in one of the categories. In this way, differences in the new professors' responses were honored and more complex descriptions of their academic lives could be developed.

Another question in the survey asked the professors to report a striking problem or insight about their work. These responses were studied and grouped thematically. Quantitative analysis of the data was not attempted.

Exhibits and Interpretations

New professors reported spending from fewer than 40 to more than 70 hours per week in their work. Table 2 displays the range and percentage of respondents in each time category.

Using the 21 categories which were developed through analysis of a selection of the data, all the professors'

responses were analyzed. Figure 1 shows the description of each category. The 21 categories were found to be usable in working with these open-ended data; the categories seemed to be inclusive of all responses, and some categories were related to others by the nature of the activity described. For example, categories 12 and 13 both involve working with individual students; only the level of the students differs. Although some of the professors had mentioned only one

Table 2
Hours per Week Spent Doing Job-Related Work
First Survey

Work Hours	Number of Professors	Percent
fewer than 40	15	8.1
40-49	33	17.1
50-59	67	36.0
60-69	49	26.3
70 or more	22	11.7
missing cases	5	

Note. N = 191.

1. carrying out administrative tasks which are part of my job
2. carrying out grants and other funded projects
3. providing service to both the community and the profession locally
4. providing service to my department, school, or university
5. completing administrative paperwork, correspondence and travel
6. carrying out the work of my assigned position which is chiefly a service role within the institution
7. doing research and the related, supporting activities
8. doing scholarly writing
9. meeting with colleagues to grow as a scholar
10. engaging in personal, professional development
11. enhancing my own skills and performance
12. working with individual graduate students
13. working with individual undergraduate students
14. maintaining contact with current and former students
15. advising and counseling undergraduates
16. conceptualizing, developing, implementing or evaluating new curricula or programs
17. planning new courses or revising old ones
18. preparing for teaching
19. teaching, in class
20. evaluating students' work
21. teaching (a general, inclusive category)

Figure 1. Categories of job-related work.

of these categories, others had named both. In an effort to create a set of parsimonious and meaningful groupings, the 21 categories were fairly easily collapsed into six clusters. The professors' own juxtapositioning of work tasks aided this decision. Figure 2 shows the description of the clusters. (Further analyses of these data, comparing the hours professors work with the kinds of work they do, are described in Myers and Mager, 1981.)

A somewhat different way of looking at the experience of new professors, not specifically tied to any particular task or role, was sought in asking the respondents to share an insight or problem they had come to. Nearly every respondent had some comment to make, though they were generally brief. These comments were studied to see what dimensions they could add to understanding the experience of the new professors. The comments attended to a great variety of realizations, satisfactions, and frustrations. No effort was made to quantify or categorize these statements; an effort was made to integrate them into a broader understanding of new professors' experience. Three themes seemed most potent: control of time, dealing with peers in the institution, and creating an intellectual life.

The control of time is a major problem for new professors. Corralling enough time, setting priorities, and balancing divergent demands are skills probably required in many professions. But the flexibility of schedule, the greatly and suddenly increased expectations and the ambiguity of success measures leave the person entering higher education at a particular disadvantage in solving the problems of time. For some new professors, their resolution includes inordinately long work hours. But this resolution does not solve a problem that persists throughout the professorial career. The experienced professor is likely to have managed some

Cluster A. Includes work on (1) administrative tasks which are part of the job of, for example, a program director; (2) obtaining grants and carrying out funded projects; (3) activities of service to both the community and the profession locally; (4) assignments of service to the department or the larger institution; (5) individual tasks of completing forms, reports, correspondence and regular travel related to work; and (6) the service activities which define this role in the institution.

Cluster B. Includes work on all phases and aspects of research and scholarly production.

Cluster C. Includes work (1) with colleagues to grow as a scholar and (2) personal professional development of knowledge and skills through study or practice.

Cluster D. Includes (1) supervision of the individual work of graduate and/or undergraduate students; (2) informal contact with students and student organizations; and (3) advising and counseling students.

Cluster E. Includes work to conceptualize, develop, implement, or evaluate new curricula and programs and to plan new courses or revise old ones.

Cluster F. Includes work related to preparing for teaching, teaching in class, and evaluating students.

Figure 2. Clusters of work categories.

resolutions: a predictable teaching load and schedule, a clearer view of what is important to do, and acknowledgment of sucess through promotion and tenure. If the new professor is ever to reach that stage, gaining control of time is a goal that must be reached.

Dealing with peers, finding a place in their institutions, and coming to grips with the created culture form a second theme. As a newcomer to the institution, the new professor may find the culture difficult to assimilate. What is valued may be misunderstood or perhaps understood all too clearly. The newcomer must learn how to read and respond to these values. The histories of the institution--how the culture developed--are privy only to those who have been there, and are contained in fragmented oral accounts. These anecdotes and tales might make present appearances more interpretable, if known by the new professor. But they remain submerged and largely untold. Administrators, knowing the histories and attuned to the values, might be expected to lead effectively; they might be expected to provide newcomers with insights that would clarify their experiences; they might be expected to work with all professors in such a way that their growth would be sustained over years. Typically, however, administrators do not provide this leadership. The institution and its values change as well bringing new expectations and events to bear on the work of higher education that even the experienced professor might not understand; to the new professor it may be all the more puzzling.

The third theme developed from the insights might best be termed creating a life of the mind. The rich stimulation of graduate study days is sometimes exchanged for intellectual barrenness when the graduate student moves from a collection of desks in a shared room to a private office as an assistant professor. The peer group is gone and new collegiality may be slow to form. Taking oneself seriously in matters of knowledge and ideation is the responsibility of a professor no matter how experienced. Being taken so by others is a sometimes surprising if infrequent experience for the newcomer. Finding others who will do so on a regular basis in exchange for treatment in kind is the challenge. Amidst the politics, the demands of schedule, the search for efficiency and quality, the new professor pursues, as well, a life of the mind. It is a pursuit which may set the course of the career. (These three themes are illustrated in Mager and Myers, 1982.)

Setting Priorities

The quality of an institution of higher education links to the quality of its professoriate--the men and women comprising its academic ranks. To their efforts we can attribute the success of development projects, the advancement of knowledge through research, the rendering of service in and out of the institution, and the conduct of effective teaching. Continued excellence in an institution depends on acquiring high quality faculty and sustaining their work, both substantively and in spirit, over a number of years.

> The faculty member is the one responsible for his/her own intellectual development, that when she/he is hired there is an implicit if not explicit agreement that she/he will continue to develop as a scholar. . . . If the faculty member is to be resonably expected to make of herself/himself a <u>better</u> academic resource, conditions to encourage this growth must be present. If the demands for quantitative production are too great, the faculty member may find little time or opportunity to improve as a scholar. (Reagan, 1982, p. 13)

Starting a professorial career challenges the individual on many fronts. But the challenge also issues to the institution, especially as the career needs sustenance.

Nearly two years after the survey of the emerging professoriate, a second survey of those same respondents was

conducted. As in the earlier survey, the purpose was to gain understanding of professors' work early in their careers, but after they had acquired some experience in this role. The questions of interest could now be addressed more directly. With the development of the six clusters of professorial work, the respondents could be asked not to identify a few tasks that consume much of their time but to apportion their work hours among the six kinds of work. These kinds of responses would provide fuller pictures of their work so that a search for work patterns could be undertaken. Along with the same three questions as were used in the first survey --time, work tasks, and insights--the professors were asked about their rank and tenure status.

Conduct of the Second Survey

All the respondents from the first survey were again sent questionnaires although, not unexpectedly, some never reached the professors. Several were returned as undeliverable; some sent to institutional addresses were forwarded, but others may not have been; a few of the new professors reportedly had left the professoriate, so perhaps others had also and were simply out of reach; a few indicated they did not have enough time to respond to questionnaires and it seems reasonable to project that some non-respondents felt the same way. Thus, questionnaires were sent to all the 206 respondents from the first survey with 118 being completed and returned. Table 3 presents descriptive information about these respondents.

The questionnaire used in this survey was a modification of the first one with the greatest difference being the two questions about the kinds of work the professors do and believe they should do. The first question again asked respondents to estimate how many hours they spent in job-related work in a

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics of Professors
Second Survey

	Number
Sex	
Female	43
Male	75
Year of Graduation	
1975	21
1976	39
1977	33
1978	25
Rank	
Assistant professor	74
Associate Professor	31
Professor	6
Other	6
Missing Data	1
Tenure Status	
Tenured	33
Untenured	83
Missing Data	2

Note. Data were collected in 1981. N = 118.

typical week. Then, the six clusters (Figure 2) were listed. The professors were asked to write the percentage of time on a line next to each cluster that represented their best estimate of their actual use of time over the period of an average week. Respondents were reminded to check that their estimates summed to 100% of their time. In a second set of the six clusters, the professors were asked to write the percentage of time they would prefer to give to each of the six clusters of work.

In another question the new professors were asked to report how they believed their current colleagues would order the traditional missions of research, service, and teaching. These responses allowed for eventual comparisons of the new professors' own work commitments and their perceptions of institutional priorities.

Exhibits and Interpretations

Responses to the different questions were analyzed using methods required by the nature of the data. It is useful to report the analysis here in the following four sections.

Work commitments. The hours per week spent doing job-related work reported by the respondents are displyed in Table 4. Comparing these figures with those in Table 2 for the first survey shows that the modal category of work hours still is 50-59, and the second and third ranking categories are the same also. Thus, overall, the group of professors' work hours has not increased or decreased discernibly.

The respondents displayed considerable variance in their commitments

Table 4

Hours per Week Spent Doing Job-Related Work
Second Survey

Work Hours	Number of Professors
fewer than 40	6
40-49	15
50-59	56
60-69	33
70 or more	6
missing data	2

Note. N = 118.

In a pair of questions, the respondents were asked to name any indicators they might have from themselves or their colleagues that made them either still feel or no longer feel like a new professor. Responses to these questions provide evidence for both subtle and overt changes in status and for institutional and personal views of career progress.

Again, as in the first questionnaire, professors were asked to share a current insight about their work.

of time to the various work clusters, and in Table 5 the means and ranges of responses for the entire group are given. The table indicates that, on the average, Clusters F and A garner most of the time professors give to their work. Table 5 also gives the means and ranges of preferred commitments. This is, it summarizes how the respondents would apportion their work time among the various work clusters if they had the opportunity to do so. Again, there is considerable variance and also a shift in emphasis, with Clusters F and B

attracting most emphasis. These generalized results obscured clear differences among individual professors, as could be seen simply by scanning the questionnaires. It seemed important to move from summarizing data toward handling the data in such a fashion that the keen differences could be honored. One way of doing so was to group the professors by patterns in their work loads. Some professors involve themselves on a fairly equal basis in each of the six clusters of professorial work. That is, they apportion enough of their work time to each cluster such that their work seems balanced. Other professors' work is not nearly so balanced. They commit major portions of their time to one or two of the work clusters and little to the remainder (a difference of more than 28%). To distinguish between these two types of patterns, the former were called "balanced" and the latter "unbalanced." Figure 3 illustrates these two patterns.

Comparing their actual apportionments to their preferred apportionments, it became evident that some professors are content with the present pattern while some would make modifications in the design (Table 6). Of the 25 professors reporting balanced patterns, 9

Table 5
The Means and Ranges of Work Hours Proportioned among Six Work Clusters
Second Survey

Work Clusters[a]	Actual Commitments		Preferred Commitments	
	Means of Percents	Range of Percents	Means of Percents	Range of Percents
A	28	0-85	16	0-75
B	15	0-75	25	0-80
C	8	0-30	12	0-55
D	13	0-55	12	0-40
E	7	0-30	8	0-25
F	30	0-85	27	0-85

Note. N = 118, with 7 respondents not indicating preferred commitments.

[a]The work clusters are described in Figure 2.

Work Clusters	Balanced Pattern (%)	Unbalanced Pattern (%)
A	10	15
B	20	10
C	10	5
D	30	5
E	10	0
F	20	65

Figure 3. Two patterns of proportions of time allocated to the six work clusters.

would prefer unbalanced patterns; of the 93 reporting actual unbalanced patterns, 26 would change to balanced. Taking another perspective, note that nearly two-thirds of the professors, regardless of their actual work pattern, would prefer to retain that pattern. This is especially noteworthy because the dominant actual work pattern is an unbalanced pattern.

It is not useful to report how professors within a given set would apportion their time to the six clusters, since the variances within the sets are still great, especially with the unbalanced patterns set, and may be made up quite different individual profiles. The fact of the disproportionate commitments versus relatively even commitments to the work clusters, regardless of which particular clusters were emphasized, was a more important vantage point for viewing the data.

Study of these work commitments shows clearly that work patterns differed among professors, sometimes markedly so. Questions might be raised about why such differences exist. Whether they are a function of individual preferences, institutional priorities, institutional demands, or other factors, is yet a puzzle. There is also a question about how persistent such patterns are over time.

Key patterns. To begin to answer some of these questions, the patterns were studied seeking trends in the other variables. When all those patterns which displayed balanced, actual workloads were contrasted with those displaying unbalanced, actual workloads, no specific trends were evident. When the same contrast was made with preferred workloads, an intriguing connection became apparent. Two key patterns became evident.

The first key includes all the patterns in which the preferred workload is balanced. This group consists of 38% of the preferred patterns. Most of the professors who express such a preference have actual unbalanced patterns and would maintain them. These are professors who wish to work at all the kinds of professorial tasks without immoderate emphasis on any one. This preference for a balanced work pattern was expressed even though these professors also reported their perception that the institution had priorities. It is perhaps striking that professors who recognize that their institution expresses clear priorities would not, in some fashion, account for these priorities in their own work commitments.

The second key includes those patterns in which the preferred work time is

Table 6
Actual and Preferred Work Patterns
Second Survey

Work Patterns	Actual	Preferred[a]
Balanced	25 → 16 → 42	
	9 → 69	
	26 → 42	
Unbalanced	93 → 60 → 69	
	7 → 7	
Missing Data	-	

Note. N = 118.

[a]Seven professors did not indicate a preferred pattern.

allocated unevenly among the six clusters. It is unbalanced. This group consists of 62% of preferred patterns. The great majority who express such a preference already have actual unbalanced patterns; a few in this group have actual balanced workloads. It was characteristic of the preferred unbalanced key that either Cluster B (research and scholarship) or Cluster F (teaching) took priority in the pattern. In contrast with the first key, these professors seem to have had a good sense of the relative priority of teaching and research in their institutions.

Institutional Priorities. The respondents prioritized the traditional professorial work categories and these are summarized in Table 7. Some of their responses suggested they were uncertain of the priorities, there was ambivalence in the institution about priorities, or there was fairly even value placed on two or even all three categories, resulting in no priority. These suggestions were conveyed by margin notes on the questionnaire or by listing the same kind of work for all three ranks.

Table 7

Faculty Perceptions of Teaching, Research or Service as Institutional Priorities[a] by Preferred Work Pattern[b]

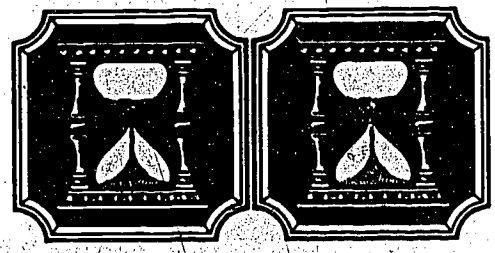
Second Survey

Work Pattern	Teaching	Research	Service
Those preferring balanced work patterns	21	17	2
Those preferring unbalanced work patterns	44	20	3

Note. N = 118.

[a]Four respondents did not indicate institutional priority.

[b]Seven respondents did not indicate preferred work patterns.



Achieving Goals

The new professors who were first surveyed in the Fall of 1979 had gained nearly three more years of experience when they were surveyed again in the Fall of 1982. They could not reasonably be called "new" professors any longer. Instead it seemed reasonable simply to consider them a part of the professoriate.

People at this stage in their career may have already dealt with one set of critical events which Baldwin grouped under "early professional employment," and may now be facing critical events in "opportunities for professional growth" and "status and role changes." He described each of these types of critical events (Baldwin, 1979, p. 18):

> (3) Opportunities for professional growth (e.g. seminars, sabbaticals, grants for study and research) also affected the careers of professors in this study. Faculty stated that potentially negative experiences like failures, disappointments, and value questions also had a major impact on their career direction and growth. This information concurs with the assumption that professional support and development efforts are beneficial to faculty careers.
>
> (4) Likewise, many respondents viewed their status and role changes as important career events. In addition to the achievement of traditional faculty ranks, professors described new roles and new interests which continued to evolve long after receipt of the final formal academic title (full professor). Adoption of administrative roles, participation in campus governance, and increased involvement in professional organizations all suggest that many faculty careers develop and diversify almost to the time of retirement.

The 1982 respondents had indeed spent a number of years at their institutions, were likely to have encountered the promotion and tenure process, and were likely to have become more comfortable with the idea of being a professor. It seems reasonable that the reports of their experiences at this time of their career would have changed noticeably from earlier reports.

Conduct of the Third Survey

As between the first and second surveys the number of subjects was reduced, so between the second and third surveys the sample again grew smaller. A number of the subjects were removed from further consideration after the second survey, because information they provided indicated they were no longer in higher education or no longer in a college, school or department of education, or their positions had changed from what might justifiably be considered a professorial role. Part-time faculty were also removed. The final sample included in the third survey is smaller and more clearly defined than the earlier samples (Table 8).

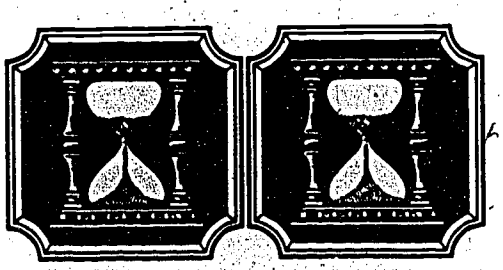
The responses from the second survey were used to revise several questions from that instrument. In addition, anticipating that the professors would now have had experiences not addressed in the earlier questionnaires, several new questions were developed. Questions about apportionment of actual and preferred work hours remained the same except that professors were asked to estimate the hours they spent or would choose to spend on each work cluster per week instead of the proportion of work time. They also were asked to total the work cluster estimates to check if that sum seemed reasonable. Questions about faculty rank, status, and institutional priorities for professional work were retained. In this questionnaire three open-ended questions were included: the former question about insights; secondly, a question about major decisions they had made about themselves or their careers

in recent years; and thirdly, a question about major problems faced by colleges, schools, and departments of education in the 1980's.

Table 8
Descriptive Statistics of Professors
Third Survey

	Number
Sex	
Female	15
Male	32
Year of Graduation	
1975	7
1976	10
1977	18
1978	12
Rank	
Assistant Professor	19
Associate Professor	25
Professor	2
Other	1
Tenure Status	
Tenured	21
Untenured	21
Other	5
Years at Present Institution	
1	3
2	0
3	4
4	4
5	11
6	13
7	7
8	5

Note. Data were collected in 1982. N = 47.



Exhibits and Interpretations

Quantitative analyses parallel to those done earlier or suggested by the two previous surveys were done and are reported below. These questionnaires were also matched with the respondents' earlier forms, making it possible to begin viewing the experiences not just episodically but also longitudinally. With the capacity for this kind of analysis, questions about the consistency of work patterns over several years could be studied. Professors' earlier preferences for work patterns could be compared with present actual and preferred work patterns. Changes in average weekly work hours could be seen. And the professors' insights could be viewed in regard to stability over years and the match with expected "critical events." Thus where some statistical analyses are still appropriate there is an increased possibility and value in viewing the data as individual cases. Certainly fuller understanding of the career development of professors can come only from such a shift in analysis.

Table 9
Hours per Week Spent Doing Job-Related Work
Third Survey

Work Hours	Number of Professors
fewer than 40	3
40-49	16
50-59	16
60-69	8
70 or more	4

Note. N = 47.

Table 10
The Means and Ranges of Work Hours Proportioned among Six Work Clusters
Third Survey

Work Clusters[a]	Actual Commitments		Preferred Commitments	
	Means of Work Hours	Range of Work Hours	Means of Work Hours	Range of Work Hours
A	11.8	1-45	6.6	0-40
B	11.3	0-38	16.1	2-40
C	4.0	0-20	6.7	0-20
D	7.9	1-30	7.1	0-20
E	2.9	0-10	3.3	0-10
F	14.6	3-36	12.3	0-30

Note. N = 47.

[a]The work clusters are described in Figure 2.

Work commitments. Table 9 displays the hours per week spent doing job-related work. The current sample of professors average 52 hours per week in work. For purposes of information Table 10 summarizes the actual and preferred work hours committed to each cluster through means and ranges of responses. It should be recalled that these are work hours and not proportions of work time as given in Table 5.

Recall that with the results of the second survey a search was undertaken for patterns of work clusters. It resulted in the determination that some professors' workloads might be characterized as balanced and others' as unbalanced. With the shift, in the third survey, to reports of actual hours instead of proportions of time committed to each cluster, it was necessary to adjust the rule by which the distinction between balanced and unbalanced workload was made. With the third survey data an individual professor's workload was labeled as balanced if, of the total reported work hours, no particular cluster was given one-fourth or more of the total time. If any cluster was allocated that much, the workload was characterized as unbalaned. This rule was applied to both actual and preferred work hours.

Table 11 shows the number of professors in the third survey whose work patterns could be characterized as balanced or unbalanced. Also evident is how these professors would adjust their workloads given the opportunity. As in the second survey (Table 6), more professors' actual workloads are unbalanced though a sizable number are balanced. The professors were distributed similarly in the preferred patterns, though about one-third of the sample preferred a different pattern than their actual pattern. This fact parallels the finding in the second survey.

Work commitments viewed longitudinally. With the third survey it is possible to view some of the data across several years, albeit for a smaller group. The number of subjects for whom this tracing could be done was 40. That is, they responded to both the second and third survey instruments with complete data. With such small numbers divided into several categories it is not useful to attempt to make generalizations about the experience, but some observations can be made which may suggest trends in their experience. This section will report the longer view for work hours, commitment to work clusters, and work patterns.

Table 11
Actual and Preferred Work Patterns
Third Survey

Work Patterns	Actual		Preferred[a]
Balanced	17	9	17
		7	
		8	
Unbalanced	30	22	29
Missing Data	-		1

Note. N= 47.

[a]One professor did not indicate a preferred pattern.

Table 12 displays the hours worked per week by the professors across all three surveys. In the first two surveys the 50-59 range was most frequently reported while the 60-69 range was second. By the third survey a noticeable drop in work hours was recorded. The paths of individual professors were traced through these three surveys to see how individual work hours fluctuated. There was considerable movement from one range to another so that the professors in any given range during the first survey have very likely changed by the third survey. Though there are exceptions, the noticeable drop between the second and third surveys can be attributed to professors who were promoted or tenured.

Table 12
Hours per Week Spent Doing Job-Related Work
Three Surveys

Work Hours	Number of Professors		
	First	Second	Third
fewer than 40	1	-	2
40-49	7	3	14
50-59	17	22	14
60-69	11	12	6
70 or more	4	3	4

Note. N = 40.

Table 13
The Means and Ranges of Work Hours Proportioned among
Six Work Clusters
Second and Third Surveys

Work Clusters[a]	Second Survey[b]		Third Survey	
	Means of Work Hours	Range of Work Hours	Means of Work Hours	Range of Work Hours
A	14.1	2-41	12.3	1-45
B	12.6	2-41	11.7	2-38
C	4.4	0-11	4.2	0-20
D	8.5	3-20	8.3	1-30
E	3.8	0-14	3.1	0-10
F	16.3	1-51	13.6	3-35

Note. N = 40.

[a]The work clusters are described in Figure 2.

[b]These data were transformed from percentages to hours.

Table 13 compares the same 40 professors on their work hour commitments to six clusters from the second survey to the third survey. These are actual work hours only. (In order to make this comparison, the second survey data were transformed for each respondent from proportions of time to hours. This was done by multiplying the mid-point of the range of hours by the proportion reportedly committed; for example, 55 hours x 20% = 11 hours.) In reviewing the table it can be seen that between the second and third surveys, these 40 professors as a group maintained a good deal of consistency in time spent on each of the six work clusters. Noticeable declines occur in the hours spent in administrative and service tasks and teaching. This may be consistent with the overall decline in work hours between the two surveys.

Another comparison across the time can be made by looking at the balanced and unbalanced patterns of workloads. The question is how professors who reported particular patterns in the second survey fared in their experience leading into the third survey. An effort

Table 14

Change of Work Patterns from the Second to Third Surveys

Second Survey Patterns[a]	Third Survey Pattern	
	Actual	Preferred
	Balanced Unbalanced	
Balanced preferring Balanced (N = 6)	2 → 3 Balanced; 3 → 1 → 3, 3 → 2 → 3 Unbalanced	
Balanced preferring Unbalanced (N = 3)	1[b] Balanced; 2 → 1 → 1 → 2 Unbalanced	
Unbalanced preferring Balanced (N = 8)	2 → 3 Balanced; 5 → 3 → 1 → 3, 5 → 3 → 2 → 5 Unbalanced	
Unbalanced preferring Unbalanced (N = 22)	3 → 8 Balanced; 5 → 17 → 5 → 8, 5 → 17 → 12 → 14 Unbalanced; 5 → 2 → 14 Unbalanced	

Note. N = 39. One respondent indicated no preferred pattern and is thus omitted from this table.

[a]Recall that these patterns were derived from the responses of the 118 professors who responded to the second survey.

[b]This respondent indicated the actual pattern but not the preferred pattern.

was made to trace this experience. Table 14 traces this complex development perhaps as best as it can be done. The four patterns from the second survay were used to organize the table. Each group's responses to the third survey were reported separately, and traced through their current actual and preferred patterns. For example, six professors in the second survey had a balanced pattern and preferred a balanced pattern. According to the third survey results, three of them actually have balanced patterns while three have unbalanced patterns. These six are also evenly divided on their current preferred patterns, but not in the same way.

Studying this development from the second to the third survey, these observations seemed supportable, Professors with unbalanced workloads outnumber those with balanced workloads in both the second and third surveys, though more moderately in the third. Actual work patterns in the second survey do not seem to predict very strongly actual patterns in the third survey. Nor do preferred patterns from the second survey predict actual patterns in the third one. Furthermore, preferred patterns in the second survey don't seem very strongly related to preferred patterns in the third. What this may suggest is that at this point in their careers professors' work patterns are highly changeable even over a short period of time. And change that occurs in their patterns is not always in the direction of their preferences. Preferences themselves were not particulary stable over the period between the two surveys. As a matter of fact, from these data it might be safer to say that their preferences seem more influenced by their actual work patterns than an influence on those patterns.

Key patterns. In the second survey an effort was made to identify patterns of actual and preferred work commitments of the new professors, and to relate those patterns to other descriptors of the new professors' experience. Using the second survey results two key patterns were identified which relate professors' preferences for balanced or unbalanced workloads to institutional priorities. It seemed that professors who preferred an unbalanced design much more frequently matched their institutional proirities in their own work emphasis than those who preferred a balanced workload. No cause or effect was inferred.

An effort was made to see if a similar set of patterns was evident using the third survey results. The same analysis was performed. But this time no such patterns emerged. What had been prominent differences between two patterns in the second survey results somehow were not repeated in the third survey data.

Speculation about why this occurred could take several courses. First, it is possible that the patterns developed in the second survey were spurious. Secondly, it is possible that the smaller number of respondents made it impossible to recognize patterns with allowable variation. Thirdly, it is possible that the patterns changed among the individual professors; evidence of the instability of workloads and preferences was given earlier in the longitudinal view of work commitments. Fourthly, it is possible that intervening events such as change of role within the institution, developing new priorities for work, promotion or tenure, or even changing institutions had some effect on the patterns. For whatever reason, what was a distinctive difference in the second survey was not sustained by the third.

The Work of Becoming a Professor

The study of the life of a professor has been a topic of keen interest for a number of members of the professoriate. The study of how a man or woman becomes a professor and lives the life has been the focus of fewer. The context of a life in higher education changes with the start of each academic year and the work of becoming a

professor thus changes for each generation of academics. This work merits continuing attention.

The new professor study reported herein was an effort at coming to understand the experiences of men and women embarking on careers in colleges, schools, and departments of education. Their experiences are probably somewhat different than other new professors'. Firstly, they are typically older and come to graduate study after some years of employment in the field. Secondly, their academic home is appropriately termed a professional school with all its implications for the work of a professor. But thirdly, the tenor of these times, especially as felt in the field of education, is particularly troublesome: reduced job opportunities, a colleague group of highly tenured, established faculty, declining college enrollments, and scarce funding. These contextual characteristics are likely to make their beginning different from other professors', and different even from professors of education who began a decade ago or will begin a decade from now. They deserve particular attention.

The new professor study tapped the graduates of particular institutions which had firm reputation in the graduate study of education. These graduates were probably at least as well prepared for the range of academic tasks as any, and possibly better prepared in some. Associating with a scholarly faculty while they were graduate students, teaching at the college level, engaging in research projects, participating in professional development seminars, sharing in college administrative and service responsibilities may have stood them in better stead than others in their cohort. But if these experiences have made them different they also may have prepared them to lead in formation and re-formation of their profession. It is important that their experience is brought into focus.

The new professor study used survey research methods. Given the number and geographic spread of the sample, this seemed the only reasonable course to take. The instruments did not take their content or format from other studies. This survey held in abeyance decisions about the nature of the professorial experience until the data itself helped to inform the issue. Care was taken to request data about what were believed to be potent dimensions while optimizing the likelihood that the new professors would respond. A limited number of questions were included in each survey and they provided a rich data base from which to build. Given the results that were obtained, this research strategy has satisfied demands of the problem. The sequence of three surveys gathered selected information about new professors' experiences from near the beginning through just over three years of their careers. The three surveys built on one another, clarifying and detailing these experiences, and were useful not only for tracing the experiences of this generation of professors, but also for illustrating points for study of academic careers at a broader level.

A particular contribution of the new professor study is that it followed subjects over a number of years. Longitudinal research is sometimes complicated by the loss of subjects; such has been the case with this study. While a smaller number of respondents limits the usefulness of certain statistical procedures, it enhances the possibility for more elaborate study of the few. This will be the direction of this research project in its next stage.

The new professor study reported herein really constitutes work in progress. The data already collected have not been fully analyzed. Future analyses will examine characteristics of professors who emphasize certain kinds of work such as research or service; the insights of Professors at different academic ranks might be used to organize their reports of the kinds of work to which they commit time; or years of experience at an institution could be examined in relation to actual and pre-

ferred workloads as well as to insights. Other changes over time in the professors' experiences may be found in the longitudinal data. Data will continue to be collected although the study will be less appropriately termed a study of "new" professors.

The data already in hand provide a basis for discussion of the work of becoming a professor. Analysis of the data has led to particular, tentative observations. It will be the purpose of this section to lay them out as a means of marking the progress of the study and as a means of prompting comment.

Time for Work

People beginning a career as professors in education work long hours. Their average work week is much longer than the typical American worker, in not a few cases increasing that workload by more than one-half. Self reports of time spent at work have been doubted, laboring under the criticism than they are exaggerated. While this study had no way of attesting to the accuracy of respondents' claims, it is inconceivable that the entire group of respondents would have so inflated their workloads. This study did find considerable consistency in the figures of two consecutive estimates approximately two years apart; this suggests that the estimates were neither casual nor without some foundation. Even with some degree of overestimation accounted for, the time spent at work by these professors is substantial.

Time is a major problem for new professors. Finding enough time to do all the things that they expect of themselves or that are expected of them is a real challenge. Controlling time in such a way that they can do the things they want to do more regularly is another facet of the problem. Given the time already committed to work, it is unlikely that a solution to that problem is simply spending more hours on the job. Rather, it must lie in making "better" use of time.

New professors, new to the institution, may be subject to conditions which place greater demands on their time. Even though they are new they are given assignments comparable to more experienced professors; some new professors report heavier teaching loads and more committee assignments. Each course they teach is to them a new course. Each memo they receive is one which demands attention. Each college-wide committee is a serious responsibility. Unfamiliar with the institution, they are unfamiliar with its procedures, and they are not privy to shortcuts which established faculty use to streamline their work. With more experience, new professors probably become more efficient.

As new professors gain experience at a particular institution, and perhaps more specifically, as they reach and pass the point of promotion and tenure, the time they spend at work seems to decrease. Whether this decrease is a result of greater efficiency or simply a release after the pressure of status review is unknown. Common wisdom suggests the latter. In either case, it is important to recognize that their average workload is still substantially above the typical American work week.

New professors do not complain about working long hours, with the exception, perhaps, of when such a load interferes with personal life. Otherwise, they seem to feel that putting in long hours is a necessary condition of life in higher education, and one which they can accept. Given the opportunity to redesign their work patterns, these new professors did not decrease the time spent at work; they simply spent it differently.

Tasks to be Done

The time professors spend at work is divided among a variety of tasks much more numerous than the traditional designations of teaching, research, and service. The variety and complexity of their work is evident in the words

they use to describe it; they are able to make differentiations among particular tasks which are more commonly seen as one. For example, teaching contains the activities of preparing for class, class instruction, and evaluating students' work. New professors see this work as distinct from working with individual students which itself contains a number of distinct activities. And it is yet different from curriculum development. Descriptions of professorial responsibilities such as occur in some job descriptions, annual faculty load reports, and in the pronouncements of institutional priorities may simply be too global to capture the experience of new professors. Perhaps as new professors become more experienced these distinctions will disappear; their work may become more integrated. But for the new professor these distinctions serve some function.

For purposes of this research, the activities were grouped into six clusters of work tasks: administrative and service tasks, research and scholarship, personal professional development, work with individual students, curriculum development, and teaching. These clusters were found to be useful in providing respondents with a parsimonious means of reporting their work as well as subsequently describing their work to others. But it should be noted that "catch phrases" such as these are less adequate than the full cluster descriptions provided earlier in the paper (Figure 2). These catch phrases are quick but they also obscure important facets of the cluster.

Consider several of the clusters separately for a moment. Cluster F, teaching is, as already has been noted, differentiated from Cluster D, work with individual students, and E, curriculum development. In the early years of becoming a professor learning how to teach is often reported as a disconcerting part of the experience. But for these education graduates none of these three tasks was reported as a problem or concern. Sometimes they commented on students' abilities and motivations, at times in dismay and at other times with optimism. But in all cases this work seemed to be within the realm of their competence. With some regularity, these new professors shared their enjoyment of engaging in this work. This might be as expected, considering that these new professors probably had relatively more experience in teaching than their non-education counterparts.

Cluster A combines what might be considered activities that are chiefly administrative with those that are chiefly service in orientation. It was impossible to distinguish between these two types of activities, and that was probably the case because professors themselves seemed to find them overlapping. Thus, sitting on a college committee might be perceived as a form of service or as a form of administrative work. Holding a role in a local professional organization might produce the same double perception. This confusion leads to tasks which are judged by some to be trivial being grouped with those considered important. Thus the cluster probably connotes a positive valence for some and a negative valence for others.

Cluster A and Cluster C, personal professional development, both would seem to include activities in which substantial contact with colleagues both immediate and distant is required. New professors reported that establishing relationships with colleagues can be a problem. Politics, personalities, traditions, and miscommunications underlie many of their griefs. This is not to suggest that Cluster A and C are problem clusters but rather that major problems new professors report are related to their work therein.

Commitments and Preferences

Most new professors commit some time to each of the six clusters of professorial tasks. But this commitment is far from equal. Administrative and service tasks, research and scholarship, and teaching by far garner most of their time, with the last of

these clusters typically dominant. Individuals, of course, varied on this count.

Personal professional development almost always receives a minimal commitment of time. For some this may simply be a token while for others it may represent what little time they can carve out of their schedules for reading, working with colleagues, and acquiring new skills that would enhance their work. Yet these professors are just out of programs of graduate study and are new to scholarship and life in the academy. Their professional development is hardly complete by any standard, but already it seems to be curtailed. Certainly this must be a shock in contrast with the support for and challenge of professional development provided in graduate school. Further, this may bode poorly for their long-term professional development. It may undermine the promise of the institution as well.

When looking at the overall allocations of time to the work of being a professor, it is possible to see that some men and women create a rather balanced work life. Others, clearly a majority, create a very different work life, emphasizing teaching, or research and scholarship, or administrative and service tasks. Given the opportunity to redesign their work life, most new professors would choose the latter plan. From this research it cannot be judged which life is the better to lead since institutions have different priorities, have different ways of expressing their priorities, and professors have different sources of satisfaction. Clearly, however, if productivity is related to the use of time then some plans may be more desirable than others.

Making judgments about priorities is a difficult task for new professors. They perceive, in some cases, differences between their own inclinations and the priorities of the institutions of which they are a part. Even given the opportunity to redesign their work life they do not always do so in concert with the institution. It seems also to be true that these professors changed their minds over the course of their early careers. The change may be related to changes in the context of their decision: changes in institutional priority, a clearer view of institutional priorities, a clearer vision of their future lives in the academy, or the critical event of status review.

There is some evidence to suggest that among these new professors, those who would prefer to organize their work life around one particular kind of professorial work are more often in concert with the priorities of their institution. The others who would not prefer to do so either do not perceive a priority or do not choose to follow it. This surely presents a dilemma for predicting success, satisfaction, or productivity. One might speculate that the latter group of men and women are leading a more fanciful professorial life. That is, they are not attuned to the real expectations being placed on them. The former group, however, would design their work life, if not in response to, at least in concert with those expectations.

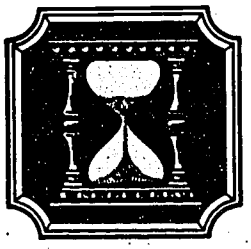
Creating a Life of the Mind

The work of becoming a professor is not simply a matter of identifying tasks, apportioning time according to priorities, and solving problems. It is more fully a matter of developing a life of the mind: sculpting a block of knowledge, making it one's own, identifying colleagues who respect and contribute to that work, and making that work available to the larger public. This work spans a career.

Becoming a professor is the first step of that work. The data from the new professor study suggest that while people are taking that first step, their progress and prospects are uncertain. The many hours they work may not be including enough time for the kinds of tasks that would assure the success of what is essentially a longterm creative endeavor. The number of hours they work also calls into question their capacity

for sustaining a career which spans a quarter of a century, or longer, and doing so with fervor. On the other hand, there is evidence to suggest that they are meeting with some success both in terms of institutional reward and collegial affiliation. And many report they like what they are doing. Such mixed evidence points up the uncertainty of success in creating a life of the mind.

The context of higher education is changing with each academic year. The capacity of these professors, who will in a decade be senior faculty, not only to perform the mechanical work of that role but also to continue to create a life of the mind may be again challenged. They may need to display greater flexibility, greater adaptability, and greater perseverance if that endeavor is to be sustained. And their current experience may be playing a large part in developing their capacity and crystallizing their commitment to such an undertaking. At some point these professors, as senior faculty, will themselves be creating the context for other new professors. A generation-after-generation effect develops. What these new professors recall of the work of becoming a professor, what they value as helpful in that work, what they judge as necessary, and the extent to which they sense progress in their efforts to create a life of the mind, may well, in turn, either extend or circumscribe the prospects for another generation of creators of the academic life.



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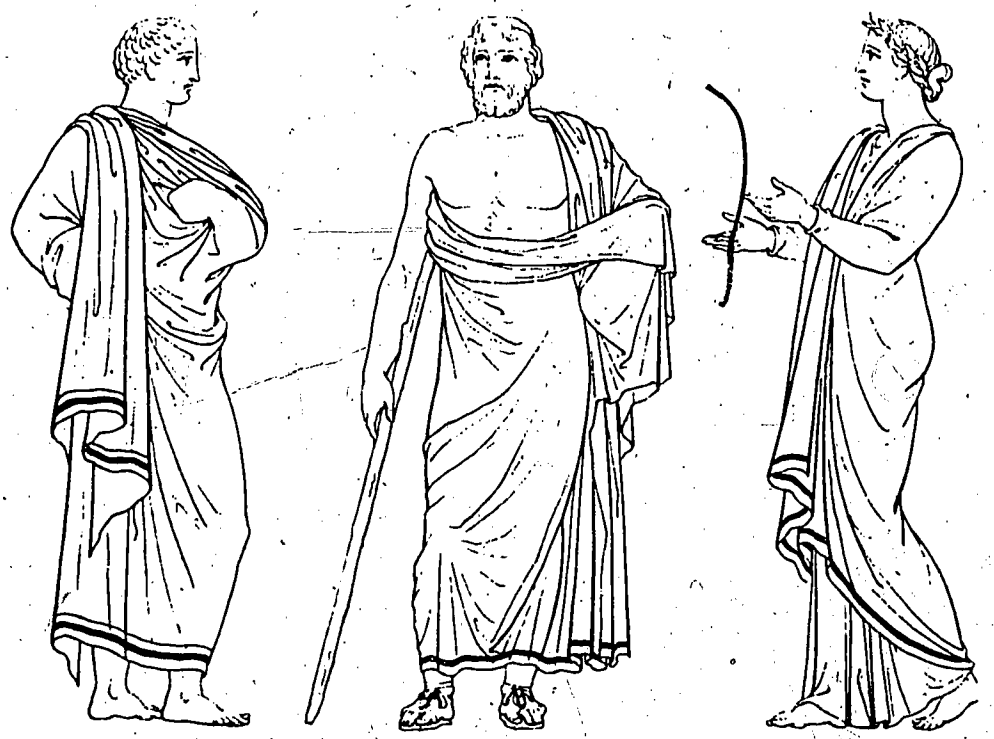


AN OLD PROFESSOR ON NEW PROFESSORS: A RESPONSE TO MAGER AND MYERS

Gerald M. Reagan
The Ohio State University

Ezra Pound once quipped that a philosopher these days is just a person who is too damned lazy to work in a laboratory.

Those who share Pound's sentiments may believe as well that philosophers of education are just persons who are too damned lazy to do empirical research. As a philosopher of education I don't believe that Pound was right, nor do I believe persons become philosophers of education to avoid doing empirical research. Yet is is true that as a philosopher of education I do not do empirical research and yet have the unmitigated gall to comment on the empirical research done by others. Although it does not reduce the gall, let me say that I applaud the work of Mager and Myers. I agree that the induction of the young into the academy is an important matter about which we need a better understanding. That understanding will not come about without careful empirical research.

I do want to make full use of my opportunity to comment and raise questions on the work of Mager and Myers. A few of these questions and comments may be at least tangentially related to what they have reported about their three studies. More of the questions and comments, I suppose, are ones about matters they have not studied but which happen to intrigue me.

1. Mager and Myers give several good reasons to look at "job time" demands facing new professors of education. I agree that it may well be that new professors face excessive demands on their time, that most professors work more hours than workers outside academe, that professors have some degree of control in scheduling their work, etc. As an old member of the professoriate though, it seems equally important to me that professors seldom count total work hours per day or week or month or term unless someone in authority, or someone with the ubiquitous survey research questionnaire asks them to do so. Professors do, of course, count the number of hours they teach, though seldom do they bother to calculate the number of hours spent which are related to that teaching. If I have a point here, I guess it is that it is not clear to me that many members of the professoriate are as conscious of work time and how that time is apportioned to various tasks as one might think from the Mager and Myers studies.

Many years ago, there was a cartoon in The New Yorker which struck my fancy. A man, unshaven, clad in an undershirt, drinking a can of beer, sits staring at a television. His wife, commenting to a friend, says "That's the Hell of being married to a philosopher. You never know when they're working and when they're goofing off." It seems to

me that this is true not only for philosophers but for many academics: when things are going well, it is not easy to tell, and it is even less important to tell, whether we are working or playing.[1]

The New Yorker cartoon exaggerates, of course. There are times for all professors when we know we are working, e.g., when one is explaining a concept to a student for the seventh time and seems to be losing ground as well as patience. And there are times when we are playing and know we are playing. But it seems to me that there are times--many times--when we would not be sure even if we were to think about it. If I'm even close to being right about this, it would seem that this is an important part of being a member of the academy as well as an important indicator of the extent to which a young colleague has become a part of the academic community. I'm not sure what this means in relation to the studies of Mager and Myers. Perhaps it is only that in addition to finding out how much our young colleagues work and what tasks constitute that work, that we should also find out how much of their work is experienced as work, and how much falls into the realm of the work-play puzzle.

Our young colleagues need to come to understand that the academy is not best seen as a job or career--even though it is convenient if our relatives and non-academic friends view it that way. The academy is, at its best, a way of life. There are, even in these hard academic times, a fortunate few who are allowed and even encouraged to live at least part of their working lives pursuing the life of the mind. There are disadvantages, of course, but there remain many of the advantages of the cloister without the disadvantage of vows of chastity and obedience--and as for our implicit vow of genteel poverty, the cost seems a small price to pay for this way of life.

2. I do want to say something to show that I am not ignoring the studies done. I need to study the Mager and Myers paper more carefully, but at present I'm not sure how well the "categories" and "clusters" which have been constructed work. Mager and Myers reject the traditional categories of Teaching, Research, and Service, but the Mager and Myers categories may not be an improvement simply because there are more of them. (Perhaps this is the place to call attention to the fact that the TRS categories are not always used the way Mager and Myers seem to assume. At Ohio State University, for example, we have what may be the world's worst "accountability form," the "Quarterly Activity Report," which each faculty member fills out for his or her Autumn Quarter work. Activities are listed and then for each activity the faculty member indicates the percentage of the time taken by that activity which should fall under each of the TRS labels. In short, it is not the activities which are categorized, but the different functions into which the time may be categorized.)

But back to my point. The Mager and Myers categories seem less categories of work or categories of academic function than categories of beginning professors' descriptions of work. Given an identical task, for example, we might find the following description-category:

New Professor #1: "Carrying out administrative tasks which are part of my job."
New Professor #2: "Providing service to my department, school, or university."
New Professor #3: "Completing administrative paper work---etc."
New Professor #4: "Carrying out the work of my assigned position---etc."
New Professor #5: "Carrying out grants----etc."
New Professor #6: "Preparing for teaching."

Perhaps I missed something, but it seems to me that Mager and Myers agree that these categories are not mutually

exclusive. Indeed, it appears that this is one of the reasons they move from the categories to the "clusters." But the clusters seem even more puzzling than the categories.

The clusters are clusters of activity descriptions. Further, any given activity description will fall into one and only one cluster, (i.e., the clusters do not function as do the TRS categories at Ohio State University as I have described that strange system.) Yet when we look at the clusters we find the following:

Cluster A includes "Carrying out funded projects."
Cluster B includes "All phases of research and scholarly production."
Cluster C includes "Work with colleagues to grow as a scholar."
Cluster D includes "Supervision of graduate students."

What puzzles me is that I have carried out both funded and unfunded projects, and the "carrying out" included all of the other items mentioned in B, C, and D. In short, a single activity contributes to many of the clusters. The clusters may hold as clusters of the way professors describe their work, but they may be misleading as categories into which the work described neatly falls.

I do not intend this as a defense of the standard TRS categories--I do not wish to succumb to that academic disease known as "hardening of the categories." What I do need is some further explanation about what the clusters constructed by Mager and Myers add to our understanding. Part of my concern here has to do with the use of the clusters as a basis for describing a work pattern as "balanced" or "unbalanced." Could it be that balance or lack of balance is simply a function of the cluster-category system? Might it be that a person who would be described as having an unbalanced work pattern using the cluster system would have a balanced pattern if work activities were apportioned out among the TRS categories?

3. I don't suppose that there is any reason to believe that professors' self-reports of how they spend time are any less honest or perceptive than self-reports of any other group. As I listen to colleagues both young and old, however, I have a nagging suspicion that they tend to exaggerate, particularly on the amount of time they are required to spend on tasks which they find unpleasant or unnecessary. Although I have not seen the Mager and Myers survey form, I would suggest that some not-so-open questions might help give a more accurate picture of how professors spend their time. For example, although it may be useful to ask professors how much of their time is related to teaching functions, it would be at least equally helpful to know (1) how many different course preparations they have each week, (2) how many classroom contact hours per week, and (3) whether their teaching responsibilities clearly fall within their areas of competence and training.

4. Mager and Myers have chosen an interesting sample to follow, i.e., graduates of prestigious universities who are survivors. They are survivors first in the sense that they got jobs. Second, they are survivors in the sense that each study focuses on members of the original sample who remain in the academy. This approach leaves untouched some questions which I hope Mager and Myers or other researchers will address at some future time, e.g.,

a. If we were to look at graduates from the smaller or less prestigious universities, would we find the same problems and patterns as with this sample?

b. Are there some "induction problems" for which training institutions could prepare graduates? Are students from prestigious universities spared some induction problems which face graduates of less prestigious schools? Are graduates of

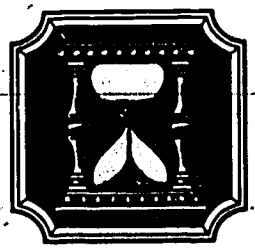
the less prestigious schools spared some induction problems faced by graduates of the more prestigious schools?

c. Do induction problems decrease if the new graduate takes a position in a college/university which has functions/missions similar to those of the training institution? Do induction problems increase if the new graduate takes a position in a college/university with functions/missions dissimilar to the training institution?

d. Do different training institutions attempt to pattern training exercises for specific kinds of academic institutions, e.g., do some institutions attempt to produce graduates who are research-oriented while others prepare students to be teaching-oriented? If this happens, does it make any difference in terms of induction problems.

I suppose that these questions really don't do much except indicate my concern that we need more study of the new professors. And we need studies which will give us a better idea not only of the problems new professors encounter, but also how the first major step in the induction process--doctoral study--can be modified to better prepare people for their initial full-time positions in the academy.

Mager and Myers have made a significant contribution. In pointing out what they have learned, they have helped us all develop a better understanding of how much there is about which we remain ignorant.



NOTES

1. This point is in no way original. Related discussions can be found in Thomas F. Green, "Work, Leisure, and the American School"; in Paul Nash, Authority and Freedom in Education, and in Harry S. Broudy, Truth and Credibility: The Citizen's Dilemma.

Commentary by Roger G. Baldwin
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On "Developing a Career in the Academy: New Professors in Education"

Mager and Myers indicate that very little empirical research has examined the early stages of the academic career. Evidence that is available (Baldwin, 1979; Blackburn and Havighurst, 1979) suggests that professors' early career experiences help to shape their later occupational course. The organizational career concept of tournament mobility (Rosenbaum, 1979) emphasizes the importance of initial career events. According to studies in corporations, early employment positions set an employee on a career track. If a person gets on the wrong track or has a negative early experience, subsequent career development will be affected. Productivity may be reduced. Satisfaction may be diminished. Potential advancement may be limited.

Because of the long-term implications of initial professional experiences, it is important for us to know about the problems and challenges beginning professors encounter. If colleges and universities understand the initial stages of the academic career, they can create a climate that fosters new professors' development and achievement. Mager and Myers' research on new professors in colleges and schools of education sheds new light on our rather impressionistic picture of the academic career. Several of their findings have important implications for schools of education and higher education in general.

The six task clusters the researchers developed help to clarify how new professors spend their time and energy. It is no surprise that teaching and administrative and service tasks take the largest percentages of a new professor's work day. However, it is worrisome to note that beginning academics, who have a great deal to learn about their new roles, cannot spend as much time as they would like on important duties such as professional development and research. If new professors find inadequate opportunities to develop professionally, they and the institutions they serve could suffer long-term negative consequences. To prevent such a situation from developing, colleges of education should identify methods to preserve sufficient time for all major faculty activities. Perhaps initially, new professors should have lighter work assignments than their veteran colleagues. They could be spared heavy committee assignments, for example, during an orientation period while they learn to teach, design new courses and try to initiate research.

The finding that most new professors prefer an imbalanced distribution of work among the six task areas seems healthy. Some faculty duties are not as important as others and should not consume equal amounts of time.

Assignments that divert large amounts of faculty members' creative energy to routine administrative chores are a poor investment of education's most valuable resource, its professors.

The fluctuation Mager and Myers discovered in beginning professors' work patterns and professional priorities is another significant phenomenon. The variation that became apparent from the second and third surveys implies that new education professors may not be in control of their careers. Rather, they seem to respond to fluctuating circumstances and changing institutional demands. A clearer expression of institutional expectations and evaluation criteria would probably help new professors to invest their professional energy more wisely. If, for example, schools of education would spell out clearly what they value, new professors could plan a consistent career path that would benefit both themselves and their institutions.

The problems new professors have in establishing relationships with their colleagues also deserve serious consideration. This finding of Mager and Myers suggests that schools of education should look for ways to foster greater interaction and cooperation among beginning and veteran faculty. There must be many ways novice and seasoned professors could assist one another with their teaching, research, and other faculty responsibilities.

As is true of most social science research, this study raises as many questions as it answers. Colleges and universities could benefit from further study of several of these unresolved issues.

First, are the findings about new education professors generalizable to the whole population of new college professors? I suspect that new professors in many fields have comparable experiences, but relevant data are needed to make that assumption.

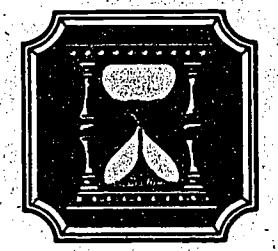
It would also be useful to learn who dropped out of the sample in each of the successive surveys and why they did so. Were they less competent professors? Were they less dedicated to a teaching career? Were they on temporary contracts and unable to locate new teaching positions? Were they attracted to positions outside higher education which offered better opportunities for advancement? The answers to each of these questions would sharpen our understanding of those who remain in the academic profession.

The enigmatic findings about faculty workload also deserve further investigation. Why do some faculty members have balanced workloads while other's workloads are skewed in one direction or another? And what characteristics distinguish professors who prefer balanced workloads from those who prefer to concentrate on only a few faculty roles?

I suspect that a mixture of balanced and unbalanced workloads is beneficial to an academic department. A blend of specialists and generalists enables an academic unit to fulfill all its responsibilities without requiring that all professors perform exactly the same functions. This flexibility recognizes that academics have different talents and can be most effective if they are able to exercise their principal strengths. However, it also leads to ambiguous definitions of acceptable professional achievement. Further research could explore what happens to the careers of new professors who have difficulty determining what their institutions expect of them and how they will be evaluated. Are they as successful as professors who have a clear idea of their school's standards of performance?

Some empirical explanation of why professors work less after tenure would also be enlightening. Do they burn out trying to achieve tenure? Or do professors gradually become more efficient and productive as they "learn the ropes" of their profession? Higher education institutions should consider what they can do to help new professors adjust quickly to their responsibilities, to become maximally efficient and effective.

Mager and Myers' research demonstrates the complexity of the early stages of an academic career. The investigators conclude that no simple advice can prepare a new professor for a successful career. Fortunately, however, studies which clarify the typical experiences and problems of beginning college teachers can help new professors to avoid major pitfalls and to plan strategy for achieving successful and satisfying careers. Schools of education and higher education in general would benefit from more research of this kind.



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