

The author also discusses the propriety of a question posed by Stanford on their application form: "Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense? Our purpose, of course, is to learn whether the personal qualities of the applicant may adversely affect either the applicant's career at Stanford or the lives of fellow students and others (p. 197)."

She ends her book by summarizing ethical dilemmas that face applicants, their high schools, and the admitting institutions. Most of these ethical dilemmas are the same for Canadian institutions. One example suffices. Stanford University like many universities uses work cards when reviewing a file. One will place on these work cards the positive and negative aspects of an application. I was not aware that in 1992, the U.S. Department of Education ruled that admitted applicants have the right to see such work cards. (The ruling did not apply to applicants denied admission. Why, is not explained.) In 1992, more than 700 undergraduate students at Stanford University asked to see their work cards. The ethical dilemmas for referees and admissions personnel are enormous. Stanford no longer retains work cards after the admissions process is complete.

In summary, although it is interesting as well as informative to learn about the admission process of a highly selective institution such as Stanford University; this book will also be used by Canadian professionals for the invaluable information it provides about different admission methods and the pitfalls to avoid.



Wright, W. Alan, & associates. (1995). *Teaching improvement practices: Successful strategies for higher education*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing Co., Inc. Pp. xviii - 402 (including index). Price: \$41.95. Reviewed by B. Gail Riddell, University of British Columbia.

For those of us who consistently defend the virtues of university instructional development programs, this book could be of much use. In prefacing a number of topic-specific chapters with one which surveys and documents the teaching practices and reward systems of four countries (Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia), the editor has set the stage for an inclusive approach to the subject of instructional development.

Unfortunately, the themes which emerge and are highlighted in that introductory chapter are not consistently followed through in later chapters. Several of these themes (relating to grants, reward systems, and other structural matters) are scarcely referred to again, which creates a sense of discontinuity for the

reader. Other factors, as well, seem to contribute to this lack of flow in the book, and will be addressed in the review. When the book is seen as a loose collection of chapters, some of which are of more interest to faculty developers, some of which are of use to faculty, it works much better.

The first chapter stands apart from the others, in that it documents the findings of Dalhousie University authors Alan Wright and Carol O'Neill following their analysis of 331 questionnaires from faculty development and other academic administrators in the four countries mentioned earlier. It provides detailed information on the professional practices and development choices in each country. One table, for example, ranks the perceived values of thirty-six possible teaching improvement practices separately for each country, and provides a composite score.

As mentioned, some of the remaining fourteen chapters follow themes arising in that first chapter, while others are ignored. The reader is not told how, or why, the choices are made, and the thematic linkages between chapters are not highlighted. For example, while McKeachie and Hofer (Introduction, p. x) mention the strong theme of student-centred teaching which characterizes all of the fourteen chapters, that first stage-setting survey chapter scarcely mentions the theme.

But this apparent failure to connect certain themes or to highlight others, does not detract from the value of the individual chapters. Wright and O'Neill are correct when they claim that, "taken together, the contributed chapters provide the valuable insights of the some twenty expert practitioners into the complex realm of improving teaching in higher education" (p. 51).

The second and third chapters take a close look at student learning, incorporating research and practical tips. Christopher Knapper neatly summarizes an extensive literature base on approaches to learning and highlights key issues. He then uses the literature as a base for discussing ways of encouraging 'deep' learning (higher order), instead of 'surface' learning (transmission of facts). Kenneth Trigwell follows with a discussion of teaching concepts which promote deep approaches to learning, including a useful example of how one teaching technique—in this case, buzz groups—can be used to promote either surface or deep learning.

Other teaching activities which have been well-practised and researched are discussed in the next three chapters. Barbara Millis' chapter on cooperative learning provides extensive research backup to her suggested classroom applications. Elizabeth Hazel looks closely at the teaching of science laboratories, and David Kaufman provides insight into the difficult job of training tutors for problem-based learning programs.

The theme shifts now, to more general approaches used to improve teaching effectiveness. Richard Tiberius sets the stage in his chapter, by commenting that “the traditional focus on teacher performance is shifting to a focus on the teacher and learner, their relationship and their context” (p. 181). He examines five teaching improvement approaches in this light. James Eison and Ellen Stevens examine different approaches used in two different faculty development programs — a short three-hour workshop and a long ten-day institute. Given the proliferation of workshops in the two to seven day range, the authors could have included an example in the middle range as well. And in the last chapter looking at broad approaches to faculty development, Peter Seldin and associates describe the teaching portfolio’s use as a tool for reflection and self-improvement.

In the next two chapters, the authors consider the issues of basic training for both graduate students and new faculty. Laurie Richlin’s discussion of graduate student development provides a good review of the literature. She includes useful tips for helping students in their current work as teaching assistants, and for their future employment as post-secondary instructors. Milton Cox suggests strategies and principles for practice for new faculty in the chapter which follows.

And in another thematic shift, the final four chapters look at broader institutional and national concerns. Mary Deane Sorcinelli and Norman Aitken use the example of their own American university to showcase institutional leaders working with faculty developers towards common goals. In examining the issue of inclusivity, Nancy van Note Chism and Anne S. Pruitt discuss both curriculum and classroom and provide a useful list of implementation steps for building programs that promote behavioural change.

The final two chapters look at two national programs in the United Kingdom which have affected teaching effectiveness. Graham Gibbs acknowledges the rise of large, lecture-style classes in higher education, outlines problems associated with such classes, and discusses the ‘teaching more students’ program which trained 8,500 faculty members to foster student independence in large class situations. George Gordon and Patricia Partington describe the major quality assessment and quality development programs recently funded in the United Kingdom, which they claim are enhancing cross-university collaboration and helping to promote the values of faculty development.

This book cannot easily be regarded as either a handbook or a compendium of approaches to teaching, since the choice of chapter topics is somewhat idiosyncratic and the consistent themes are not fleshed out. In fact, different parts of the book are appropriate for different situations. Chapter One, with its clear depiction of the breadth and priorities of faculty development programs across

four countries, could be a valuable tool for faculty developers and university administrators alike. The popularity of certain approaches to faculty development, for example, could be used as supportive data for initiating such a program in one's own institution.

Individual chapters, with their attention to the details of relevant research, context-setting, and practical applications, will be of value to those seeking to change their teaching, and wishing to know more of how to approach that change. And the faculty developers who come to know this book will be in a position to direct colleagues to relevant chapters.



McKinnon, Frank. (1995). *Church politics and education in Canada: The P.E.I. experience*. Calgary, AB: Detselig Enterprises. Pp. 128. Price: \$14.95. Reviewed by Hugh A. Stevenson, University of Western Ontario (retired).

In August 1963 the first Islander to visit our new home in Prince Edward Island was a representative of the Welcome Wagon. Her first question in the preliminary chitchat asked our religious affiliation. We demurred, not accustomed to such a personal intrusion from a stranger. "None" as in "none of your business" had no significant meaning on the Island. One was either Roman Catholic or Protestant; "other" did not exist as a category. Later we learned that the best that might be interpreted from our lack of response was the we were "Godless." In any event, the Welcome Wagon representative dropped her religious enquiries like a hot challis when she learned that I had been employed to teach history at Prince of Wales College. Unwittingly we had answered her question.

With equal innocence my wife and I had experience our first encounter with the pervasive importance of religion in life on P.E.I. We soon learned that religion and politics were inseparable, and their combined forces influenced everything, both important and seemingly inconsequential, on the Island.

All levels of government, public councils, boards and commissions, public education and particularly postsecondary education, public works from the paving of rural roads and the appointment of snowplow operators, to the construction of Confederation Centre were subject to the influence of both politics and religion. This environment combined with P.E.I.'s insularity, relative isolation and smallness created a fishbowl atmosphere where everyone knew everyone else's views, or thought they did. A tense excitement resulted characterising much of daily life on the Island, quite different from the impression of rural beauty and tranquility that tourists often bring away with their holiday memories.