Strategic Development of Pedagogical Competence – a National Swedish Project

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Background

- The project was financed by the Swedish Agency for Networks and Cooperation in Higher Education (NSHU)

- Ten Swedish institutions of Higher Education have collaborated during 2008-2010
Project activities

Activities at the ten participating institutions

- **Institution Days** about pedagogical competence at each of the institutions

National discussions about pedagogical competence

- Two **National Inspiration Days** (University of Gothenburg and Karolinska Institute in Stockholm). A **National student union seminar**

Meetings

- Project **Network Meetings** once each semester during the project period
- Project’s **Steering Group** has had several meetings during the project period
Project goals

A. How can we describe pedagogical competence?
B. How can pedagogical competence be documented?
C. How can pedagogical competence be assessed and who is competent to assess it?
D. When does pedagogical competence provide a qualification and how can it be rewarded?
Theoretical and practical framework

The collective experience of the project group makes up the starting-point of the project which builds on …

… international theories in university pedagogy on what characterises a competent university teacher, how this competence comes to the fore, and how it can be assessed, and rewarded.

… a scholarly approach towards local practices and varying strategies, and experiences of systems for documentation, assessment, and reward of pedagogical competence.

Important results...
Pedagogical competence

Three things are required in order to be able to assess a teacher’s pedagogical competence:

- A definition of pedagogical competence, so that what is being assessed is clearly evident.
- Known assessment criteria that are connected to the definition.
- A teaching portfolio, where the teacher documents and substantiates pedagogical competence.
The assessment criteria should include...

- A focus on student learning
- A clear development over time
- A scholarly approach to teaching and learning
It is not the same!

Teaching Skills

Pedagogical Competence
Pedagogical competence – a model

Student learning

TEACHING SKILLS

PRACTICE

Planning

Observations

THEORY

PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCE

(based on Olsson et al. 2010)
A description of pedagogical competence...

- should be based on that which supports the students’ learning.

- should include the teacher’s ability to develop with the support of theory and to make public their practice - Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

- should make it possible to describe a threshold value (a lowest level) and a progression of pedagogical competence.
There is a difference!

Performance

Demonstrated Skill

Teaching Skill

Teaching Portfolio

Documented Performance

Pedagogical Competence

(based on Magin 1998)
A Teaching Portfolio should include:

- a dialogue between theory and practice
- the teacher’s own reflections on concrete teaching examples
- course evaluations and possibly other forms of student voices. It is important that the teacher does not just describe results, but also shows their work in relation to goals, resources and student completion etc.
- material that gives evidence of concrete teaching examples, relevant certificates and documents that give evidence to all of parts of the portfolio.
Who is competent to assess pedagogical competence?

- A pedagogical expert is a person who is familiar with the conditions, theoretical assumptions and practical application connected to a particular activity in higher education.

- A pedagogical expert does not need to have the same subject background as the teacher whose pedagogical competence is being assessed.
Critical success factors for a reward system

- Focus on organisational development
- The organisation has to be ready…
- The support and acceptance of the organisation
- The support and trust from the leadership
- It has to be worthwhile
- Not an alternative career path
- Monetary incentives
- Scholarly attitude
The project report

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Especially our perspectives and conclusions from an international perspective...

Thank you!

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