Book Reviews: What to Read. Four Recent Books on Professional and Graduate Education

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WHAT TO READ

Four Recent Books on Professional and Graduate Education

By Gail M. Jensen

The Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching, under the leadership of Dr. Lee Shulman, now president emeritus, engaged in several key initiatives focused on graduate and professional education. Publications from three of these initiatives will be described below: 1) the “Life of the Mind” interdisciplinary faculty seminar that focused on bridging the liberal arts with professional education, 2) the Preparation for Professional Programs: a systematic and comparative study of the professional (law, pharmacy, engineering, nursing, medicine), and 3) the Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate, a five-year project focused on doctoral education. Several of the core themes in these books have a close alliance to concepts in liberal education (e.g., the concept of formation as critical element in student development; the importance of practical reasoning in preparing students for lives of engagement and civic responsibility; and the focus on moral discernment and agency as integral components in professional identity in professional education). Listed here are brief descriptions of four recent books.


This book is the result of an interdisciplinary seminar that brought together faculty from the liberal arts and sciences and the professions. The core purpose of the seminar was for faculty whose pedagogies exemplified the challenge of placing student formation for “lives of reasoned action” at the center of their teaching mission. The results of the seminar demonstrate how faculty from the liberal arts and the professions can learn from each other in achieving the goals of both liberal learning and professional learning more effectively. The book offers both well-formulated integrations of theory and practice elements across chapters. The appendices provide several examples of faculty syllabi that represent examples of how practical reasoning and professional identity are enacted in their courses. The focus on student formation requires faculty to also engage in a process of critical reflection on their own formation as faculty. The book provides a structure for designing and implementing similar faculty development seminars on your campus.


Envisioning the Future of Doctoral Education: Preparing Stewards of the Disciplines
Carnegie Essays on the Doctorate

A collection of essays across six fields of study (chemistry, education, English, history, mathematics, and nursing) was commissioned for the Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate. The development of doctoral students is seen as not only developing emerging experts in their field but also as “stewards of the discipline.” A steward is someone who:

- generates new knowledge,
- conserves valuable and useful ideas,
- and responsibly transforms understandings through writing, teaching, and application.

The underlying premise of the Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate is that doctoral education will be improved if conversations about purpose, mechanisms, and the elements of doctoral education become routine and public.

The Formation of Scholars: Rethinking Doctoral Education for the Twenty-First Century
George M. Psacharopoulos, Brian A. Henry, and George K. Karantonis

This book is a result of a five-year Carnegie project investigating doctoral education. The study was a combination of intensive literature reviews, site visits to institutions, interviews with faculty, the core themes of scholarly formation, integration, intellectual community, and stewardship as central elements in doctoral education. Doctoral education is a process of complex formation but is an integrated scholarly formation of research and teaching. The intellectual community represents the partnerships between faculty and students — exchange of ideas and respect for each other’s work that is centered on learning. A scholar is also a steward of the discipline which has a larger sense of purpose beyond the individual with considerations of preparation of the next generation of scholars. The book provides examples of tools, processes, and opportunities for transforming doctoral education.

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