The Dynamics of Language Program Direction

David P. Benseler
Editor

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Applied Scholarship in Foreign Languages: A Program of Study in Professional Development

Katherine Arens
University of Texas, Austin

As the chapters in this volume indicate, the humanities are starting to have excellent models for the development of teaching assistants (TAs) as teachers—explaining what teaching implies for language instruction, composition, and the teaching of literature within the typical classroom.[1] However well intentioned, though, such discussions of teaching tend to create the erroneous impression that "teaching" is an activity somehow divorced from or different than the rest of that TA-turned-professor's professional life (but this assumption is often contested; see Clark, 1987; Deneef, Goodwin & McCrate, 1988). Whether potential assistant professors specialize in literature, cultural studies, linguistics, or history, promoting the assumption that the skills involved in successful teaching are essentially different than those used by a successful scholar will prove detrimental to their careers. This chapter counters that damaging assumption and suggests a new context and rationale for preparing TAs to chart their own professional development, outlining the philosophy behind a pragmatic approach to professional guidance. It will also suggest how preparation guided by this philosophy can be implemented into the traditional graduate program or TA environment, and how the dynamics of language program direction must be expanded to include total professional preparation.

A New Need: Developing a Professional Profile

A growing body of literature addresses professional development, particularly for junior faculty increasingly beleaguered by monetary and temporal restrictions (see the rethinking of the university system offered in Pelikan, 1992; Peters, 1992; and Rand, 1992, for example). Perhaps the most visible of these works is Jarvis's *Junior Faculty Development* (1991). Jarvis broaches typical issues for the discussion: faculty reward, time for research, relative weighting and importance of teaching and scholarship. But his book also reveals the restrictions typical for the genre: it seems to be aimed primarily at administrators and chairs, arguing for the institution's need to place and deal fairly with its faculty, and suggesting to average faculty members what their "rights" should be, if they are to develop successfully.

If senior faculty members read suggestions made by such writers as Jarvis, Byrnes (1990), or Devens (1986), they will recognize the profession's current litany about what constitutes normal teaching and research schedules, clear and honest statements about faculty productivity under a variety of conditions, and a fair representation of the multiple demands on college and faculty (research, advising, administration, and teaching). Junior faculty members are more likely to consider the text utopian, far removed from their daily professional lives: their institutions may seem not to be delivering (or probably even offering) such incentives for development. Sabbaticals for junior faculty are disappearing; split teaching loads with ever-increasing enrollments are common; released time for course development is virtually unheard of these days. These new junior faculty members all too easily are overwhelmed by the time- and energy-consuming demands that seem to contribute little to their status in "the profession" and the rewards for which they were trained in graduate school. Many junior faculty members feel unappreciated by their new institutions.

A real fact of the 1990s is that institutions are not able to take care of their faculty as well as they did in the past. Even when the money and perquisites are available, the junior faculty's access to them is often conditional on finding an appropriate "mentor" in her or his department or administration to point them out—a process that takes time. Then, too, the junior faculty member may have the temerity to dream of a personal life, aside from the other burdens imposed on her or him. It may seem unrealistic, in the limited amount of time before promotion and tenure reviews, to expect all these elements to coalesce and enable faculty members to develop the "professional profile" predicted for them in graduate school.

The tenure system is by no means permanently stacked against junior faculty, no matter how impossible it seems at times. Nonetheless, tenure will be much less reachable unless junior faculty members take not only their personal lives under their own direction, but also their professional lives. In these tight times it will behoove each faculty member to be prepared to utilize the limited resources of the average college or university efficiently and consciously, not only to develop her or his own professional profile, but also to enhance the student and colleague environment. This preparation must start in graduate school: it must teach the TA about to become a professor about the demands of the profession, not just about scholarship or teaching in isolation.

Currently, when one reads applicants' dossiers for academic positions, one notes painfully that these new PhD's often do not know what they will be doing when they fill an academic position. They have few clues about what the profession will demand of them. They may have mastered the basic mechanics of assembling curricula vitae, cover letters, and letters of reference, and they may be able to follow the procedural directions included in standard references like Showalter's (1985) *Career Guide for PhDs and PhD Candidates* (but not necessarily the spirit of those directions). All too often, the total package fails to suggest an identity behind these documents: the applicants do not realize who they must be to meet the real demands they will be faced with in their professional lives: balancing time, scholarship, and institutional and personal pressures.[2]

New Academic Jobs: Reassessing the Professional Profile

The Ph.D.-turning-professor needs to be prepared to negotiate largely uncharted shoals. Various checklists help us define successful scholarship; there needs to be a commensurately comprehensive checklist to aid us in outlining a successful professional. Choosing a scholarly profile may appear premature when one is a graduate student. But such directions and their accompanying habits need to be established in graduate school, if the TA is to learn to organize time efficiently as a beginning assistant professor—one who hopes to chart a path to tenure or to other professional and personal avenues of satisfaction growing out of years of study.

This checklist must: 1) project ideas about quality of life as well as scholarship; 2) be comprehensive, because the answers it suggests evolve only gradually as an individual rethinks what she or he is able and willing to do in a profession; (3) outline the options in an individual's "professional profile" (her or his self-definition in teaching, scholarship, and institutional activities), showing how the individual's interests match up with the profession and the institutions in which she or he works; and (4) assume tacitly that an individual's ultimate goal is not only an academic job, but a career (and, probably, a life) that will grow, not only through a first job, but into a second or third as well.

The core checklist helping to chart an individual's professional landscape has three questions, each pointing to professional options which, viewed systematically, help establish a priority system for the choices an individual must make to iterate a professional life with personal preferences. All three questions interlock, but prioritization is nonetheless worthwhile.

Am I Primarily a Scholar?

If the faculty member assumes this profile, she or he will be "playing" for tenure and scholarly recognition in a research or research-compatible institution (that is, one with research leaves, conference sponsorship, or at least a respectable library in a scholarly specialization). Her or his professional persona will be evaluated in terms of scholarly productivity and likelihood of tenure. Can that assistant professor, for example, place six to ten articles in literature or linguistics, and a book at a refereed publisher, within the time allotted for tenure probation? If she or he chooses the book option, this book should generally be in addition to the published dissertation, no matter how much rewritten (the "tenure book" needs to encompass significant new material or a fresh approach, and mark an advance over the dissertation). Can this professor write grant proposals for extramural support to get the released time to complete this research? Can she or he accomplish this research while still teaching reasonably well, and without imposing undue and unfair burdens on departmental colleagues by neglecting other shared duties? (See Elling, 1984, for a list of other factors.)

The "scholar" profile overtly claims, too, that this individual can teach the "survey" and the "introductory course" in the specialty discipline, both on the graduate and the undergraduate levels. That profile also claims that her or his approach to the scholarly field (in terms of material and pedagogy) will be able to speak to both the "older (that is, canonical) generation" who will be the winning votes in a hiring or tenure decision, and to the "younger generation" interested in scholarly innovation.

The department evaluating a professor with a "scholar" profile will also be looking for a scholarly colleague, more or less covertly. They need answers to questions such as: Does this person "share" research, reading, and references? Can she and will she read and edit for other people? Is he able to conduct a useful discussion about the specialty to specialists in other, neighboring or nonneighboring, disciplines? These questions constitute a professor's "personality quotient," the public face of a potentially successful scholar: even a scholar needs to manage interpersonal relationships with her or his peers in the profession. "Pure scholarship," just doing one's work in the ivory tower, needs to be mediated to students and other professionals.

Am I First and Foremost a Teacher?

If assistant professors assume this profile, they are claiming not only good teaching recommendations and a track record of good student and peer evaluations, but also an interest in curriculum development and educational research. Interviewers will evaluate them as possible coordinators, or as liaisons to the campus's center for teaching effectiveness. Moreover, they will be expected to document their classroom commitment publicly, since what students say is only hearsay to colleagues and the institution. Therefore, in addition to classroom success, they will have to: publish articles on pedagogy; on TA, apprentice, or student teacher supervision; or on curricular innovations; and/or they will have to give workshops to educators at other levels and in varying contexts.

An acknowledged "teacher," as customarily defined, gains professional visibility as an advocate of the students and of defined curricular practices. That advocacy must extend beyond the classroom to the profession and to the educational establishment. Again, that is established through substantive publication, committee work, or workshop/in-service contributions to the profession and the institution—not "just" to one's own students. Said more pragmatically: if that new course is really good, a description of it and its pedagogical goals ought to be publishable in an appropriate pedagogy or education journal (see, for example, Adelson, 1988, and Jurasek, 1988).

Am I a Potential Administrator or Program Developer?

A teaching profile often merges into a third major option, that is, is the assistant professor going to make a mark on the profession organizationally "instead of" or "in addition to" scholarly ways—a phrasing which badly misrepresents the impresario and organizational genius who can become a successful college and university dean or president, a journal editor of stature, or a leader of professional organizations.

Such a profile is difficult to assert for junior faculty, since it usually only comes to fruition over years (especially for humanities professors, who have much less contact with major granting agencies than do those in the sciences or social sciences). Even to consider evolving this profile, a professor will have to be able to write and edit reports, to coordinate, to deal with study abroad programs, with honors program development, with university or national committees, with funding entities, or with the government. Moreover, that professor will need the broadest possible exposure to educational issues at the highest level, and so must know how the home institution stands vis-à-vis others of its type, level, and region.

That professor must be active in professional organizations such as the American Associations of Teachers of German (AATG), French (AATF), or Spanish (AATSP), the Association of Departments of English (ADE) or Foreign Languages (AFDL), the Modern Language Association (MLA), the Linguistic Society of America (LSA), . . . and a list of similar organizations that do policy for their professions. Even a graduate student or a beginning assistant professor can begin to participate in one of the many local layers of national organizations, each with huge amounts of work needing to be done. At the same time, this professor must teach for undergraduate majors, for graduates, for the student population of the institution in general, until a full-time academic management post becomes available. Administrators at the department and program levels need to accrue "professional credibility" not only by teaching, but also by publishing and appearing at professional meetings in the field of their Ph.D.'s—administration does not come "in lieu of" teaching and research.

The answers to these three questions are not measured qualitatively or quantitatively, but by a faculty member's focus of attention and chosen audience (what issues, how framed, and who is reacting to these messages).

Survival Tactics: From Answers to Actions

The core questions above are philosophical. They imply, however, a set of tactics that most of us presumably develop as a part of "on-the-job training." Yet they are so basic for survival in those jobs that leaving them to chance means that we fail to acknowledge the reality that scholarship, teaching, and academic service are complexly interrelated in ways that are opaque to the uninitiated. Consider the following issues from the point of view of the strategies needed to address them:

Professional Tactic 1: Uncovering institutional needs that can be filled while concomitantly enhancing one's own ideal professional profile.

Professional Tactic 2: Doing so expediently, early enough in the career to change course, if necessary.

To illustrate the preparation that is essential to negotiate these multiple challenges successfully, let us consider two case studies.

The Cases of Professor Q and Professor V

Although she was finishing her Ph.D. at an extraordinarily prestigious research institution, Professor Q was grateful for the only tenure-track job offer she received in tight times, and has thus landed at the third-tier campus of a large state university system, about an hour's drive from a major city. But having arrived on this campus, she discovered that the situation looks bleak. She is an expert in the nineteenth-century novel, and this system campus houses the schools of nursing, biological sciences, and social work. Her first year is a horror: students understand cells and counseling techniques, but "seem never to have read a book," let alone understand how to write an essay in proper grammar (native or foreign language). Professor Q thus has evolved what she feels is a survival strategy: spending weekends with a friend in the adjacent larger city, using the major research library there during the days, and "catching up" on culture. What promised to be a haven in a fine area of the United States has turned into a nightmare.

Q's teaching feels worse every semester, leading her to assume that her students are much inferior to those she taught in graduate school. Her colleagues, she feels, must not be much better, since they have never lobbied for the library holdings that would enable her to do her work properly. No wonder, then, that she feels she is getting nowhere on research, either.

Q has fallen into the trap of assuming that she and her graduate institution had the only viable image of what the study of the nineteenth-century novel might imply, and that only students who accept this definition are worth teaching. Even if her attitude (as missionary to the cultural heathens) remains good, she has never asked herself the key question: why should any particular groups of students think that the nineteenth-century novel is the epitome of high culture? Q has tried to persuade them of this fact by example of her presence—and a few of them actually ordered her dissertation through interlibrary loan. Needless to say, her credibility as the voice of American culture was strained, as the students gamely tried to penetrate her very fine, but relatively technical dissertation, written with an altogether different audience in mind.

In her fifth semester of teaching Q has decided that her job may, indeed, depend on student retention, and her class sizes have stabilized at a modest number—fewer than her colleagues' classes. In desperation, she decides to teach science fiction (which she has never studied systematically), and finally gets a full class. Instead of being delighted with her new strategy, Q sees her worst fears confirmed: she is living in the wilderness, and if she tries to teach her specialization, her existence in the profession is threatened.

How has Q gotten into this mess? This professor has committed a potentially fatal error: she has imported assumptions wholesale from the "major leagues" of her graduate institution and wonders why they do not work in other institutions. She has not checked what "natural resources" exist on the campus—what prerequisites, what type students, what successful programs, what regional needs—and so she is teaching into a void of her own making.

Q's classmate, V, got an almost identical job offer in another state, but has taken her career in another direction. Professor V considers her job to be one of those felicitous situations that allow her both to research and teach the nineteenth-century novel on her campus successfully. She found out that virtually every student on her land-grant campus went to the Friday Night Films, and that the series planners were eager for program suggestions. She thus had them order the feature film versions of five nineteenth-century novels, and constructed a course based on how the books were adapted into films: in other words, she had the students analyze narrative perspective, voice, and point of view, which they were eager to do in the new framing. This tactic turned out to be so popular that she was asked at least once a semester to introduce a Friday Night Film with a short popular lecture.

For another course, she rethought the content of her favorite novels, and realized that many of them were written by physicians or dealt with disease and public health in the nineteenth century. Needless to say, her course on "Doctors and Society" became a favorite for the premed students, especially when she had the students pretend they were physicians and write up case histories of characters in the novel, as if they were treating them and making a diagnosis for file records. This was not the kind of expository prose she was used to teaching, but she was pleased to discover that assigning "case studies" instead of essays for half the semester taught her students enough of the mechanics of formal writing that their final papers (on more traditional literary topics) improved dramatically. That class won an award from the biology students' club, the only humanities course to be so mentioned.

Where Professor Q had almost dismissed the resources of her campus as an asset for her tenure quest, Professor V has used her campus to figure out how her professional specialty and her day-to-day responsibilities could match. As by-products of these new courses, V was able to present papers at a symposium on popular culture and at the Society for Literature and Science, opening up her own scholarship to new interdisciplinary twists that made her future scholarly writing much more distinctive than it might otherwise have been.

What do we learn from our tales of contrasting career paths and attitudes? Professor Q never really undertook a realistic inventory of her campus situation, her students, and her own specialization. Because of this mistake, she did not recognize that her earlier courses had not been relative failures because she was unlucky or because her students were poor. Courses are not good or bad by themselves; teachers are rarely global successes or failures. But Q's courses were ineffective in terms of the demographics and resources of her campus. In Professor V's case, her felicitous discoveries added up to a professional life that actually aided her personal life. After she started mobilizing her campus's resources, V was able to overcome the sense of intellectual isolation that beset her friend, Q. V no longer felt that her real life happened on weekends, when she went to the city alone. In conversations, V ultimately recognized that Q's failure to get tenure was, in large part, strategic: Q had wasted a lot of effort, and had thus overlooked remedies for the intellectual problems she felt—solutions and opportunities right at hand on almost every campus, if she had only thought to look for them earlier.

Hidden Professional Issues, Part 1

All too often, professors (like Q) labor under the delusion that institutions are supposed to appreciate them and offer them automatic rewards. That is only conditionally true, based on what the institution needs—not necessarily on what the professor has to offer, which may be a mismatch.

Moreover, the institution is not likely to sense the mismatch unless something goes grossly wrong, or unless an extremely effective mentoring system is in place. The most successful professor is, to be sure, the one hired by an extraordinarily careful screening committee; one that understands that the candidate's personal goals need to be in tune with an institution's profile as regards its reputation as a scholarly and teaching institution. In other cases, as with Professor V above, the faculty member must be able to iterate between the needs of the institution and the individual, so that common goals can be uncovered and served, directing resources to fulfill the institution's plans while serving the individual's needs at the same time.

On one level, this iteration between personal and professional success involves the ability to do an effective inventory of campus resources, to determine what resources are needed to support successful integration of a research specialty into an institutional curriculum, and into a research/teaching symbiosis that will allow teaching and research to produce simultaneous yields.

On a second level, this iteration also requires an ability to achieve this symbiosis expediently, since professional development takes time. Institutional analysis helps reduce the time taken by failures, by quixotic innovations that require more careful groundwork than initially anticipated, by overlooking obvious "holes" or opportunities. Moreover, if a specialization can be integrated into a campus strategically, the new colleague has automatically created a publishing opportunity for herself or himself: she or he gets to work actively and often with seminal texts in the field (the "classics," if not all the secondary literature), and engages in dialogue with students to keep the materials fresh and to open new perspectives on research. Preparing a text for almost any level class can open a thought for an article, a speech, a "culture capsule," or a new teaching strategy for the classics—any of which can yield professional rewards.

The example above was a case where a professor has learned to integrate teaching and research. Hidden in these successes, however, are two additional professional skills that will emerge as crucial over time:

Professional Tactic 3: Taking a specialization to the public, not assuming a gap between "real research" and "what students need."

Professional Tactic 4: Realizing that an academic or managerial specialization means not only a set of materials, but also a writing style, a style of thought, and a history, each of which can be highlighted to create new courses for the existing curriculum, thus ultimately expanding the interest base among the available student body for your disciplinary specialization over the long term.

Now let us consider the dilemma faced by a third mythical professor, W, who teaches in a different type of institution than Professors Q and V above—an institution with a whole tradition of education that needed to be rethought as missions for distinguished liberal arts colleges begin to shift.

The Case of Professor W

Professor W has taught at a small liberal arts college for a decade, and is responsible for one of the most successful literature courses on the campus, "Other Voices in American Literature." This course had grown directly out of W's dissertation, which analyzed literature dealing with the Civil War, particularly texts by women and slaves. W was hired to be the voice of multiculturalism on the campus, and is generally considered to have done so successfully. Nonetheless, W is not entirely satisfied with the cultural diversity of the rest of his department's literature and language courses: he is the only one teaching texts in minority literature, and, tacitly, students who want to go on to graduate school consider the survey courses in American literature to be much more central to their education, even though they have all enjoyed W's course. W is getting a little bored with the course as it stands, as well, even though the demand is constant; his own research has moved on to more theoretical questions of minority literature and censorship, and to a much broader concept of the social function of literature. Whenever he mentions the theories on which his new work is based, his colleagues agree how interesting the new work is; when he pilots some of these theory texts in his undergraduate class, however, students think the materials are abstract, too difficult, and off the point.

After long deliberations, W decides to pilot a follow-up course to "Other Voices in American Literature," combining pairs of texts about social movements (wherever possible, texts written by the different social or ethnic groups) with a beginning text on the group sociology and social power. Although he has to move very slowly at first, students gradually learn how to analyze literature from the perspective of sociology. This course eventually gets cross-listed in the sociology and political science departments as a recommended elective for majors. With this success, W is able to develop a new series of courses, based on his current research, that more fully integrate minority voices into the literature, sociology, and political science majors. Moreover, another faculty member will be hired to help sustain this innovative "multicultural imperative in liberal arts education."

Hidden Professional Issues, Part 2

This kind of success story is all too often perceived in terms of a professor "moving out" of literature, when, in fact, he is bringing literature to a new audience and is showing how literature is part of a culture's history that can be used in other contexts. Professor W has shown a willingness not to accept a snap judgment about the suitability of literary theory for the undergraduate curriculum, and an ability to insert it into a new context that expands its viability for the general curriculum.

Professor W has managed to avoid a damaging assumption running through language and literature departments. All too often, course design is defined by identifying a topic that the faculty member wants to present to the students—as a body of information, without an explicit social, political, aesthetic, or conceptual framework. In other words, Professor W (like the successful Professor V discussed earlier) has transcended the bland "information only" approach that Professor Q stubbornly clung to. Professor W has chosen instead to apply the information of his speciality in a very real, intellectually honest sense. Such applications are implied in any disciplinary discourse, and if professors realize this, as Professors W and V did, they learn to control more covert issues: the questions of suitability, acceptability, and validity that are often less a question of investigatory correctness, and more one of "sounding professional" or assuming the right disciplinary discourse.

Expressed more pragmatically, a specialist in one literature can teach that literature, or the distinctive narrative strategies of that literature, or use that literature as an example or case study of another type of problem. A new course can be a new spin on an existing course, or an adaptation of an existing course to new student populations or curricular needs (for example, "multicultural imperatives"). As in the earlier case of Professor V, such an innovation can benefit the professor not only by reducing the distance between his or her teaching and research, but also by creating a new environment of support for a speciality on a campus (in this case, an interdisciplinary component).

Such new courses represent real curricular innovations that can fit into institutional requirements other than those for the official "major department" for which the professor teaches. Professor W aimed to create a new track; in other cases, a small literature department may be expanded or diversified (offering a greater variety of courses) if courses are designed with an eye to area or distribution or general education requirements. The core of a major can remain intact, while added courses draw in students who otherwise would not have entered that department's buildings.

Toward Pragmatics in TA Preparation: Habits and the Professional Profile

The four tactics exemplified above are definitely not the only ones that can make or break a scholar or a teacher, but they often are the ones that will make or break a career, in that they predict the ease or difficulty with which the PhD/TA can turn into a producing scholar and teacher with a distinctive profile among peer colleagues and on the campus. They are tactics that enhance diversity without sacrificing quality in the classroom, and that allow a professor to use time efficiently, by combining aspects of teaching and research that have all too often been considered separate fields. The need for such mutually informing perspectives will grow as colleges and universities change. (See Lunsford, Maglen & Slevin, 1990, to make that case, or DiPietro, 1983, or Waldinger, 1990, for examples of how whole disciplines are changing.)

As an aside, these tactics may also be the recipe for the humanities to survive into the next generation, in a situation in which "research professorships" in the humanities seem to be the exception to the professional norm, not the rule. The "real profession" does not exist only in theoretical scholarly innovations, conferences, and colleagues (see, for example, the Modern Language Association Program issues each November in *PMLA*, and the reports put out by AEGIS, the Alliance for Education in Global and International Studies). The classroom will remain the funding source for humanities research, not the converse.

The successes that the mythical Professors V and W achieved are, at present, all too easily seen as products of extraordinary minds. In fact, they are based on real and teachable parameters of the academic posi ion, not "trade-offs" or "personal preferences" that are left to individuals to solve when they "profess"; they rest on tactical skills that should be taught as part of every graduate curriculum. From this perspective, *academic professionalism must be redefined,* not as a set of behaviors (as if they were manners, and not central), but as a set of *activities that influence every facet of a future professional's life.*

For this reason, this chapter suggests that certain assignments should be incorporated into every phase of graduate work, not just when "pragmatic issues" arise. The suggestions to be made are not necessarily new. Many programs and departments address them under the rubric of professional workshops; virtually all Ph.D. supervisors address these issues with their doctoral students when it comes time to put a dossier together and apply for jobs. What is new is the suggestion that such professional development be integrated into the training of a discipline itself. To wait to instruct TAs about how to develop a professional profile until they are putting together their vitae and dossiers and searching for jobs is simply too late. Instead, "TA training" needs to be redefined as the development of professionals—not only professional teachers, but professional scholars.[3] And therein lies a key to getting more of a department's faculty involved in the TA process, through assignments that teach the survival skills outlined above.

The first assignments that need to be implemented into every phase of a graduate curriculum should foster a sense of the linkage between a disciplinary specialization and its implementation in the classroom at every level; these assignments should also facilitate the communication of a discipline to different audiences, to expert and less-than-expert alike. Such communication is not based on the limited idea of "applied learning" decried by Patricia Kean (1993) in a recent *Lingua Franca* (which takes the intellectual strategies from a teacher's discipline and applies them to problems that students will encounter in typical jobs after graduation). Instead, students can learn how an academic discipline may be interesting because of its information content and because of its inherent strategies for formulating and solving problems on fields of data. The link between a discipline and a new audience must respect both the discipline and the audience: it brings students into contact with an academic mind-set, instead of diffusing academics' knowledge into a secular work world.

The average PhD does not realize immediately, for example, how a research project on the modern sonnet may be furthered in a technical college or science-focused university. After all, sonnets are a literary form, but engineers only understand mathematics and symbolic logic. However, math and symbolic logic are themselves only formalized versions of natural languages, technical patterns that communicate closely reasoned conclusions to a group of cognoscenti who understand those languages. Starting from this observation, a sonnet may be redefined as a natural language variant of formalized conventions—and, in this way, sonnets may be made interesting and intellectually significant for engineers, just as nineteenth-century novels interested future doctors in the example of Professor V above.

Preparing professors to make such connections, however, involves a rethinking and retooling of the graduate curriculum. For example, one very typical type of graduate literature, linguistics, or cultural history seminar requires graduate students to write an extensive final paper. Most often, that essay is graded as part of the discourse of the particular seminar. However, to prepare them in the tactics of connecting scholarship and institutional mission, students should be required to address the audience of that paper explicitly—most easily by making them add an abstract or commentary sheet to their essay, outlining which audience this paper is meant to address, and how the material and presentation would need to be changed to adapt the paper for alternate audiences. As a shorthand approach to this problem, the students could be required to decide which professional journal or conference would be most likely to accept the essay (if edited up to proper quality) as it stands; the second phase of the assignment would require them to adapt that choice to a second journal, identify that journal's different audience, and again outline the changes the paper requires.

As another variant of such tactic-oriented assignments, each student should be asked to write an abstract of a class or seminar paper, of the kind that would be submitted to a conference's call for papers or to a granting agency for preliminary screening. The faculty member should then comment on and grade that abstract as if it were being considered for a panel or first-round grant cut. If geographically feasible, the program should also require that such an abstract actually be submitted to a conference, at least once during the period in which the student is taking classes. In the same vein, each student should be required to revise and submit at least one seminar paper for possible publication (again, during the period before the dissertation, while they are still taking courses).

This practice sounds extreme at first hearing, yet it reflects the habits of successful scholar-teachers, who are proficient in recycling preparation. Each new course taught easily yields one conference presentation, which should subsequently be turned into an article. Note, too, that this recycling may be multifaceted. It may focus on the presentation of the material, as well as on the research content of the material: a new course can represent a strategy for curricular innovation that can be described in a journal article. Thus such assignments (presentations and publications) are eminently appropriate for the terminal MA or MAT student, not only for an academic or scholarly PhD Even a culture capsule for a first-semester language course or an innovative assignment for writing classes can be written up and published as a short report in a pedagogy journal specializing in "how-to's"; a scholarly essay that is solid (and not exactly vanguard) can still be a valuable contribution to an entry-level or graduate student journal.

When students move into the dissertation (and into the ranks of real specialization and less contact with departmental and professional reality), the contact between material under study and audience becomes even more crucial. At a comparatively early phase of dissertation work (ideally, within a year of starting in or being accepted for candidacy), the student should be required to present the work in progress to the department or program, whether that student feels ready or not. The questions asked by a sympathetic audience of other students and faculty will provide peer feedback, and aid the student in giving shape to a project, which ultimately may save drafts or many long hours locked in a personal mental closet instead of engaging in the discipline and among their peers. Such an activity encourages socialization and outreach, and fosters professional community and the belief that projects can be interesting and significant. It also prepares students for the subsequent annual or third-year reviews increasingly common for untenured faculty.

Not only individual classes, but entire graduate programs can compel students to work to improve flexibility, requiring them to adapt materials to various audiences. Students may be required to present dissertation or seminar materials to various study groups on campus, to guest lecture in other graduate or undergraduate courses (with reviews, videotaping, or other evaluative feedback), or to work out how a paper might be presented to a strictly disciplinary and then to an interdisciplinary conference (in the first case, for example, presenting work on a sonnet to a group studying sonnets; in the second, presenting what sonnet structure and symbolic logic have to do with each other, in the question of the "sonnets for engineers" example from above).

The foregoing may sound like radical requirements for most graduate programs, but work groups in natural sciences departments regularly require such presentations from their graduate students. With such experience, the student learns that a presentation or essay stands or falls not only because of the material it contains, but also because of its success or failure in contacting a public. Alternate presentations force students to consider how projects can be extended or adapted; they enable students to redefine the significance of their scholarly work, and to consider how their work might impact an institution, a professional organization, or a classroom. Perhaps equally important, while still graduate students, future college professors will learn how to engage in the style of the pragmatic discourse characteristic of successful researchers.

A second group of assignments fostering professionalism is more familiar, since its tasks deal with pedagogical concerns. Increasingly, the need to implement these assignments into every graduate program has been recognized, to aid students' transitions from dissertation writers and teachers of beginning writing or language to contributors across all levels of their institutions (see, for example, the program of the January 1993 conference sponsored by the American Association for Higher Education on "Faculty Roles and Rewards"; see also the representative reports completed by the American Association of Teachers of German Task Force on Professional Standards, 1993).

Traditional graduate teacher preparation in the foreign languages, for example, has often involved designing a course for the primary language or composition sequence in a hypothetical "typical" department. What this assignment is lacking (aside from any potential link to most dissertation topics) is exactly what is being valorized in language teaching today: a move toward interdisciplinary curricula and linkages to other humanities departments (see Jurasek, 1988, or Adelson, 1988, for example). Beyond a first-year course, students should also design a course or set of courses based on their dissertation material or area: generally, a fourth-semester content course (for the "introduction to reading" slot in a foreign language department, or the "masterworks of literature" slot in sophomore English tracks).[4]

From this perspective, the traditional first-year course design problem also needs to be augmented. As part of learning to teach a language course, for instance, a TA should learn not only the method on which that particular textbook or syllabus is based, but also the population for which that method is most effective *and* which changes should be made for different target populations. Without such flexibility, a new professor unconsciously imposes the teaching styles of the degree-granting institution on the new context without assessing their appropriateness *or* considering how different conceptual or classroom approaches would be more appropriate to help new students achieve the same intellectual rank as ones in the prior institution did. Just as scholarly articles should be reframed for different audiences, outlining what changes would need to be made in an existing course if it were to be taught in another (and specified) institution should be part of any course design project.

Traditionally, "scholarly" PhD candidates are not prepared to turn their dissertations into courses. But here again, a candidate would be well served by doing so. For example, a PhD dissertation in philology may present material on older languages or methods of linguistic inquiry not conventionally represented in the undergraduate curriculum. But certain of the skills or materials involved in the dissertation speciality may be extremely appropriate for an undergraduate course—a course on the etymology of familiar words, for example, or on nonsense languages (exemplifying linguistics or philology, and introducing undergraduate students to fields not ordinarily presented to undergraduates). Or other such courses may enable a future professor to capitalize on the dissertation and teach students how to use and enjoy historical reference books—as, for example, when Professor V's students wrote case histories instead of other kinds of formal essays, as an innovative approach to composition in the undergraduate curricula.

Other variants of course design assignment may be useful for other types of PhD candidates: foreign language students may design a course that can fit typical campus distribution requirements for interdisciplinary or intercultural studies, or writing requirements (in English); English students, a course in "writing across the disciplines" in either the upper or lower divisions, using dissertation area materials as a case study for some other point. Here again, the students designing these courses must describe the institutional niche the course is meant to fill (perhaps using the home institution as a model, or any other recognized institution type, including schools)—doing the research for and explicitly linking their courses to prerequisites, cross-listings, student types, and other campus resources. Moreover, they should provide an argument describing why the course should exist within a particular institution, what its particular learning outcome should be on the target campus (as a language for special purposes idea). Only if these issues are addressed will the graduate student/TA become aware of the process of adapting courses and materials to varying student and institutional needs, as in our examples above. Again, such assignments increase the outreach of an individual's intellectual program—and make scholarship relevant to teaching by integrating their contexts.

The suggestions made above should be integrated into the graduate curriculum on all levels. Such assignments need to be an integral part of every graduate course, if individuals are to develop healthy professional habits; tactical capabilities must be integrated into courses at all levels (even specialty seminars).

But to succeed in preparing graduate students for the diverse faculty roles they must play, the typical graduate program also needs one more addition, if a TA's professional development is to be as effective as possible: a course in "applied scholarship," teaching the students how to develop and assess their professional development—in a certain sense, a course teaching the bookkeeping appropriate to the professional profile, the bookkeeping that uncovers the cause-and-effect relations of outside evaluations of the evolving professional career.

An example will clarify what is meant here by "professional bookkeeping." If a professor is developing a scholarly profile, she or he will quite naturally be involved in getting grants and released time from teaching. What is not often discussed are other results of getting grants—the expectations they build. For instance, a professor who has a research grant is creating the expectation of scholarly publication. If no substantial publication results from such a grant-released year, that scholar stands an increased risk of being considered a failure. Similarly, if a professor gets released time from a dean or chairperson to develop a new curriculum, that dean will expect successful implementation of that curriculum: increases in enrollment, positive evaluations, and quite possibly a report to a professional organization or journal about that innovation, "advertising" the institution that paid for it in released time.

Such "facts" are clear to senior faculty; they constitute essential criteria for evaluating the professional success or failure of a career. What a course in applied scholarship can do is teach TAs such facts, as they are evolved and evaluated in the context of an individual's professional profile. This course must reemphasize the assignments suggested for general curricular implementation by tying these activities into a regular pattern of documenting and evaluating one's developing professional profile. The primary instruments in such documentation and evaluation are the same as those used in promotion and tenure decisions: a detailed curriculum vita and a teaching portfolio, evolved in ways outlined below (for a checklist of the details of a vitae and teaching portfolio, see the Appendix to this chapter on these two sets of documents, which also contains examples of the professional decisions that must be made while assembling them).

It takes time and practice to establish and maintain this documentation; without them, a professional cannot be fairly assessed. Usually, TAs receive direction in assembling a vita when they apply for a job, under the mentoring of an individual professor. This is perhaps the least effective way to learn about a vita, since that professor often shares fields and intellectual assumptions with the student—and so the document reflects an understanding between virtual peers, instead of speaking to the profession as a whole.

Increasingly, institutions do a third-year or even an annual review of their junior faculty to assess their trajectory, inform the department of their activities, and suggest remediation, if potential problems are perceived. I suggest here that each department do the same for their M.A. and Ph.D. candidates, using a course in midstudy as the instrument of that assessment: that, as part of a course on applied scholarship, each student write up a professional vita to assess her or his professional profile (and more pragmatically, start to learn appropriate bookkeeping). This vita should, in turn, be submitted to the department as part of the student's candidacy process, and be evaluated as stringently as the dissertation proposal itself typically is.

Each department can decide who assesses these documents, but more than the dissertation supervisor should give feedback about how students are presenting themselves and what they could do to bolster their career goals without enormous amounts of additional work—or what real service or activities they have given to the department that deserves mention on the vita (again, see the Appendix for practical suggestions). Moreover, particularly for the PhD candidate, the public exposure that such a link between one individual course and the program will afford may also create professional opportunities.

Such a course recommends itself for the student in advanced stages of course work, perhaps in the third year of full time study. As such, it will constitute a reality check, a progress report along the way for students to ascertain if they are perceived in the way they think they present themselves. It will get TAs into the habit of checking their professional environment, to see what opportunities they can exploit for their personal advancement; it will tie their course work into a public presence, and aid them in solidifying their professional images, to fine-tune the diction norm and appropriate activities of their field, and to displace their anxiety about their future onto a set of learnable and manageable tasks. The language and literature professions and their institutions are diverse enough that almost any personal profile can be accommodated, as long as the person can project a professional image that indicates that she or he knows what she or he is doing.

The syllabus for the prospective course will involve most of the activities suggested above. Each student should come into the class with a finished seminar paper that is central to at least one area of her or his scholarly interests or career goals. What the class will do is force students to make the kind of transformations that professionals do: to project their interests into the various realms in which they will engage as teacher-scholars.

The first group of exercises deals with editing and professional writing, and should be backed up with an appropriate textbook (such as Claire Cook's *Line by Line.* [1985]).

Task One: Using the *MLA Directory of Periodicals* (1993), and under guidance of a work like *The Academic's Handbook* (Deneef, Goodwin & McCrate, 1988), which indicates what a particular area of scholarship implies for a future career, locate the best journal into which the improved paper would fit.

Task Two: Write an abstract for the proposed paper, and present to the class that abstract and the proposed venue of publication—subjecting these documents to peer review.

Task Three: Peer-edit the paper's thesis statement, reviewing before and after statements of the first page.

Task Four: Consider how an area of research can be funded by identifying a funding source for this or a similar project.

Task Five: Write a research proposal to be submitted to that agency.

Task Six: Assemble and critique a vita to accompany the grant proposal.

Task Seven: Refine the abstract to be submitted to a conference panel.

Task Eight: Prepare a mock conference presentation with peer review of the scholarly essay's material.

Task Nine: Develop a course proposal (with an institutional critique and description of pedagogical goals) on the basis of that research area, including sample assignments, book list, teaching capsule, and examination.

Task Ten: Compile a research and teaching profile by writing at least two letters of application to model job search committees at different types of institution; compile the documentation to accompany those letters.

Task Eleven: Critique (peer review) the version of the essay to be submitted for possible publication.

One might object that it is not possible to do all these things in one semester, but since students enter this course with a complete seminar paper, the effect of the time pressure will be to force them to begin working on the professional activities they need to have by the time they are applying for jobs in earnest. Most of these activities, therefore, will be "real," not classroom activities; a few (for example, job applications) will be simulations, but will be real within a brief period of time. Each department may have its own standards for discourse, or preferred models, but the students must learn early to do such things.

Again, it would be valuable, too, for some of these assignments to be reviewed by faculty members beyond the immediate class—who could come hear the sample conference papers, or critique the mock job applications and vitae, for instance. As the case was made above, such discussion must be the responsibility of the entire department.

Conclusion: The New Coordinator(s)

The proposals made above, whether implemented as a course or as a set of program requirements, outline to TAs what a professional career really implies for an academic. They should help disabuse them of the notion that a career can be composed uniquely of "teaching or scholarship," and aid them in making professional choices that will facilitate their lives and careers.

Hidden in these proposals, though, is an additional need: a redefinition of the TA coordinator, or of TA coordination as a larger concept, including the graduate faculty in general. Traditionally, the coordinator is the one who teaches TAs to teach and who monitors their progress, while the graduate adviser is responsible for each TA's academic progress. This model, though ubiquitous, is obsolete today, because it does not consider the whole situation of a professional scholar and teacher. What the new coordination should encompass is the professional as a whole; who the coordinator must coordinate is not only the student, but also the faculty responsible for that student—the coparticipants who must assist by teaching professional tactics and monitoring a graduate student's progress into a career by evaluating their professional behavior, including and beyond classroom performance as teacher and student.

This final suggestion does not, by any means, imply that one faculty member can remand colleagues' academic freedom or supervisors' relationships with their students. Nor does it imply that a single faculty member could or should fill all these roles. However, unless a program as a whole takes active responsibility for its students' professional development and skills, that program is not fulfilling its obligations to the profession as a whole (since it is purveying unskilled workers into the field) or to students (since they will not be equipped to chart personal and professional careers other than by trial and error). Individual supervisors may disagree with what constitutes viable scholarship or desirable jobs, but programs as wholes rarely disagree when they see failures.

This new kind of professional coordination is thus a logical extension of the work currently considered independent turfs: supervision of lower-division courses and graduate advising. These two perspectives must merge before graduate programs can expand their development programs and treat their students as future professionals who will address varying audiences: comprehensive universities, liberal arts colleges, vocational schools, and community colleges. This chapter has thus argued that programs should extend the purviews of their existing advising entities, or create new professional advising roles to round out the preparation given graduate students. Moreover, these new advising roles must be cooperative, involving the major part of each program's faculty as a microcosm of the professional peers with whom graduate students-turned-assistant professors must interact. Only with attention to the larger professional environment and the attendant professional skills will graduate students be able to chart their courses effectively in this time of academic change, and to survive in a world of shifting faculty roles very different from those of their supervisors and of the research institutions where they themselves are studying.

Notes

1. Sally Sieloff Magnan (1993) has, however, outlined how even most successful TA development programs may not adequately prepare TAs to teach in second-year courses.
2. Parts of this chapter were originally given as a presentation for a panel on "The Second Job Search" organized by the MLA Committee on Careers for the MLA Convention in New Orleans in December 1988. My thanks to Janet Swaffar for her significant editorial and content suggestions; the failings which remain are my own.
3. Here, some might object that I am speaking of the PhD candidate, not the terminal MA or MAT I am, however, referring to activities that are

appropriate for all levels: keeping professional books, defining one's career track, writing abstracts and professional reports or papers, and participating in professional organizations. These are activities appropriate to and adaptable for all our graduate students, no matter the level. For a model of a course that fills these needs, contact Janet Swaffar in the Department of Germanic Languages at the University of Texas at Austin, who has organized a professionalism development seminar under the rubric of a graduate writing course; this course provides a model for the course in applied scholarship described in the last section of the present chapter.

4. In the Department of Germanic Languages at the University of Texas at Austin, for example, PhD candidates in pedagogy are required to design a fourth-semester course; other students are strongly encouraged to do so. Evidence suggests that having these course designs available as part of their job dossiers significantly aided these students in their job placements.

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APPENDIX

Documenting a Professional Profile, Part 1: The Curriculum Vita

Traditional wisdom says that a vita includes the following sections, which each student must learn to handle for self-publicity:

1. Name/Address
2. Dissertation
3. Education
4. Professional Experience
5. Grants
6. Honors
7. Publications
8. Invited Lectures
9. Service
10. Languages
11. Professional Memberships
12. Areas of Specialization

These things seem simple and self-evident, but information must be organized to help communicate the individual's desired professional profile. Accordingly, each section has possible uses as a bookkeeping aid, either for or against a professional, and should be treated with discretion. They constitute the "reality check" for a professional profile, since each type of entry can cause or counter a danger in a successful profile.

Name/Address sounds simple, but if the student has an ethnic name that matches the field, that student must figure out what personal data she or he is comfortable revealing, and what the advantages and disadvantages of such revelations can be. Stating US birthplace or US residency influences the readings of an individual's language abilities or cultural preferences: Did she or he learn languages at home or in school? Is the person with a West Indian name who is working on West Indian literature a West Indian herself or is she only married to one? It is technically illegal to be asked about sex, ethnicity, marital status, and the like, but such questions are asked if the vita does not clarify possible confusions before they arise. Students must develop their own sense about how much personal information to reveal in order to balance expectations against their performance.

A *Dissertation* will be construed as the starting point of a career, in terms of its predictive value. If it has been many years since the dissertation's completion, its title and supervising committee may be insignificant. However, its title should not, for example, be replicated in the title of a first postdissertation "book," or the presumption will be that it is a reworking, not an original piece, which, in certain cases, may mitigate against future tenure. It helps to consider the long-term ramifications of titles and committees early on, and to get used to optimizing.

Education needs to be organized with most-recent level first, and preferably with dates introducing the degrees and places—continuity is most important here. If a student has skipped around, or has taken a lot of short-term, in-service, or summer courses, he or she might need to introduce a separate category to separate out *Other Education* from *Degrees* so that the clean lines of education and career development emerge. If the student "stopped out," that needs to be explained (not justified, but related to real circumstance or opportunity). Keep in mind that if a field is changing any little bit of formal preparation that seems in keeping with that change may look good; thus, even the single summer institute or conference may warrant inclusion on a vita.

Professional Experience for academics usually means teaching experience, but several other scenarios easily emerge: editing experience? in-service workshops? teaching in nontraditional (for example, corporate or military) environments? One might want to make subcategories such as: *Professional Experience: Editing,* in order to clarify the picture. Even

Teaching may, in certain cases, be profitably separated into categories—particularly if they emphasize curricular or supervisory abilities, and the like. On the other side, one may want to mention, but nonetheless "hide," certain experience that otherwise needs to be included to account for time—for example, that a former high school teacher is really a scholar now. Extensive high school-teaching experience in a field related to later Ph.D. work is significant, but the professor may need to separate out college-level teaching experience, community college experience, and high school experience, depending on whether the institution respects such outreach—research institutions may find high school teaching experience irrelevant, if not downright embarrassing; community colleges will appreciate that experience with "real students," which may speak well to an individual's long-term commitment to general education.

Grants, Honors, Publications, and Invited Lectures (with possible additions like: *Panels Organized, Workshops,* or *Panels Moderated/Respondent)* need to be treated with sense. The professor must figure out everything that can fit in these categories, and then design an order reflecting the strongest professional profile. Those items should be located high on the vita that match the intended profile. The expectations that such an organization creates must also be monitored: if any category gets disproportionate, it will be questioned (for example, if he gives so many lectures, why aren't any published?).

Honors like "best graduate student" are important if that is what a beginner can point to, but any publication would be more important than that, and such an entry would be embarrassing for an associate professor. Conversely, a Rhodes Scholarship listed under *Grants* has lasting cachet, no matter how long the career. *Honors* from very undistinguished sources may be less significant than *Invited Lectures* (a division hinting that the candidate is better than his or her degree-granting institution).

Publications must be differentiated and put into a hierarchy: books, textbooks, chapters, articles, edited volumes, notes, reviews, translations is an approximate hierarchy, reflecting relative importance. To mix them up is false representation: several reviews mixed up with one article makes it look like someone is trying to "sell" herself or himself as a spurious four-article person.

As a variant of "teaching documentation," as I will discuss below, it is also important to document effectiveness in other ways, available as supplements to the vita proper. To document performance at conferences and workshops, one can ask the audience at a presentation to evaluate the presentation. If proceedings of such oral presentations get accepted for publication, keep documentation (letters and the like) indicating how the choices were made, and what selection criteria and degree of selectivity was ensured, to show that what could have been an automatic acceptance was actually highly competitive in intellectual quality. Similarly, to confirm the quality of a journal, keep a record of the acceptance rate of a journal, available to append to the copy of a published article that is in an official scholarly portfolio.

Service also fits this ability to frame professional expectations: carefully document committee work (not only title, but significant projects undertaken) in the profession, the instituion, the community, and the student body. Subsection titles may be used to highlight achievement, or to match service to the expectations of a particular institution's values. Too, new titles and organizations may repackage an individual for a new institution or profile. Lists of committee work should be kept by year, with descriptions of the committee's projects for the year—to prove that it was not a committee in name only (for example, the examination committee who evaluated 16 students in a year, not none; the university committee that revised an official policy instead of one that passed three routine resolutions).

Languages, Professional Memberships, and Areas of Specialization generally look like padding, and are usually dropped after one gets the first job. To be sure, a philologist or comparativist needs to indicate degrees of multilingualism because that is integral to the job description; in contrast, a specialist in "modern American literature" might profit by multilingualism, but may easily conduct a large part of her or his research and teaching monolingually. *Professional Memberships* are important only if they are elective; if a vita is blank, such memberships show that one knows where a particular field fits in the profession; if a vita is full, this category only consumes space. *Areas of Specialization* does not mean much as a category in the days of decline of canonical job descriptions. A much better tactic is to document areas by having a publication in each. If that cannot be done, or if an individual is too new in the profession, then add a separate page to the vita (in another format) that purports to explain transcripts and education (organizing course work—with expanded, illustrative titles, instead of the abbreviated computer-generated ones—under scholarly areas, possibly in alternate versions for various purposes).

The importance of such a vita cannot be exaggerated, and thus a course focusing on professional activities and their presentation in such a document is more than recommended. This document needs careful construction and critique; a program of study is responsible for giving a vita's owner what it implies to them—and to indicate if the emerging profile fits the student's strengths, and what activities should be undertaken to render that profile acceptable to employers and grant agencies. That critique should begin at "silly" issues like legibility, white space, use of titles and first-page priority to suggest what the individual values most. It should extend well into the realm of suggesting the need for professional engagement at any level. To put this critique at the level of a course and program requirement will reinforce its importance, and can aid students in taking professional development into their own hands, out of the hands of chance mentors or benevolent administrators.

Documenting a Professional Profile, Part 2: The Teaching Portfolio

What is a teaching portfolio? And what needs to be in it, except for copies of all course syllabi taught or designed?

This is a new document being suggested to faculty within an institution, designed to flesh out a committee's sense of an individual's day-to-day activities, and to demonstrate more thoroughly how scholarly and service work impacts an institution and its students (see Shore, 1986, Seldin, 1992, Seldin & Annis, 1991). It should contain additional documentation, but also short essay statements that are the professional narratives around which a career is built: showing, for example, that a course was developed not only to gratify the professor, but in order to respond to student or institutional needs, or how research was requested by a campus or a professional organization. This is the place to explain why a professor did what she or he did.

This explanation has a source and a goal: where the individual started from (dissertation, education, and the like), what arose, and how the individual developed. This includes notification of how an individual transferred competencies, applied expertise, devoted successful efforts, and the like.

The teaching portfolio should thus provide backup documentation: it should contain not only the syllabus of a course developed, but also a description of the program, major, or requirement it was designed to improve. Such documentation may also include correspondence about that course: memos, compliments, fan letters from students, and the like. Each course description should also be accompanied by course evaluations written by students (officially, if available, or unofficially); these evaluations should be kept by semesters, as a master file for courses taught. Note, too, that promotion files usually require three years' teaching documentation; more than that can prove evidence of steady improvement, and/or a change in student evaluation of a course over the long term. It is also important to keep records of why a professor had a teaching disaster: indicate whether participation was voluntary, if the program has a record of that course being difficult, or the like.

In this context, it is also important to have documentation of colleagues' visits to classes (at all levels); each visitor should file a report on observations (dates, topics, description of the class hour, statements of strengths and weaknesses). Again, this documentation is designed to complement student evaluations. TAs should encourage their supervisors to observe their teaching regularly—at least once a year. TAs should also look for opportunities to offer guest lectures in graduate or undergraduate courses, to build up their teaching experience, and to gain other types of teaching recommendations from the professors in whose classes they guest.