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**Abstract**

Boyer's call for the study of the 'scholarship of teaching' has rekindled interest in outstanding teaching in higher education. However, most studies of teaching quality and student experiences in higher education have paid little attention to intense, meaningful key experiences and were limited in answering the pertinent question: Can universities administer excellent instruction? The current paper attempts to answer this question by providing exploratory evidence of key experiences in higher education. It is based on evidence from a large qualitative study of such episodes, using retrospective accounts provided by adults who speak about their best educational experiences in higher education. The results are grouped under three major thematic headings. The first describes the centrality of personalized student-teacher relations. The second focuses on the ways in which identification and integrity provided students with models to emulate; and the third tells of excellence in the skills of teaching. These results point that the administration of the scholarship of teaching is an intricate

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