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**Abstract**

The story of how the sciences began to understand themselves as independent fields of research starts by detaching them from philosophy. The identity of the science in question will then further develop as it writes its own history. Higher education studies are, in such reflections, understood as a relatively new field that has its beginnings in the 1970s in questions of psychology, sociology and educational studies. Recent discussions have pointed out that there is an identity crisis going on within this field. This study returns to the old tradition of how a science forms its identity with the help of philosophy. The study returns to the influential formulations of Aristotle. Olaf Pedersen writes in his book on the history of universities that 'many of our present difficulties, on closer inspection, appear to have been built into the system right from the beginning?'. Our aim is not primarily to study what Aristotle said about higher education but instead to understand our present views and problems better. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Himanka, Juha, E-Mail: juha.himanka@helsinki.fi