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Title

The rhetoric and reality of good teaching: A case study across three faculties at the Queensland University of Technology / Belinda Carpenter ; Gordon Tait

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Abstract

Universities now have a lot to say about tertiary teaching. University policy, teaching units, and promotion criteria have a very specific understanding of good teaching within the academy. This case study of Queensland University of Technology (QUT) found that good teaching has two central features: it is necessarily student centred, and it is 'innovative', a characteristic that, at QUT at least, is increasingly equated with the use of technology. This paper 'based upon interviews with twenty-four QUT academics across three faculties (Education, Science, and Law), an analysis of QUT's teaching and learning policies, and some additional historical research ' will suggest four things. First, that the concept of student centred learning, based on ideals of progressive education, is neither an historical inevitability nor theoretically unproblematic. Second, that irrespective of discipline, all lecturers espouse an underpinning 'progressive' teaching philosophy, even though, in practice, teaching style appears to be determined primarily by subject-matter. Third, given that, in practice, the progressive model seems to suit some faculties and subject areas better than others (i.e.

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Education, as opposed to Science and Law) this has significant professional implications for the lecturers concerned. Finally, that rather than promoting a 'progressive' pedagogy, the use of technology in teaching actually appears to reinforce traditional teaching techniques. Consequently, it is suggested that monolithic understandings of good teaching, when applied across the academy irrespective of context, are often inappropriate, ineffective and inequitable, and that universities need to think through their teaching policies and programmes more thoroughly. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)