

English Abstracts

Philosophy and Happiness: Socratic Exhortation to Philosophy and Platonic Higher Education

KANAYAMA Yasuhira (Yahei)

This paper argues that the study of philosophy, especially that of the history of philosophy, helps students to lead a happy and satisfying life. In this respect, there is no essential difference between the introductory and the higher courses of philosophy. Philosophy is different from simple free discussion. It often occurs that the so-called “independent thought” is nothing but prejudged opinion arising from unconscious desires. Philosophy is an enterprise where reflective thinking works to facilitate the search for truth and the pursuit of a better life. The best way to transform students as consumers of knowledge into its producers is philosophy education at the university level, carried out through a Platonic turning of the mind. Journeying through the history of philosophy is especially effective for this purpose as it enables students to stand on different and unfamiliar perspectives. Through joint attempt with their teacher, students can learn to understand original texts, overcome challenging problems, and develop their intellectual abilities to cope with changing situations of the present complex world. Writing about one’s deepest thoughts and feelings about some philosophical topic is the best way to train excellent generalists, who can in turn become real winners of the Win-Win games in this world.

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How to Teach Critical Thinking in a Philosophy of Science Course: A Report from Classroom Teaching

AOKI Shigeyuki

How should we teach “philosophy” to those majority of undergraduate students who will likely never enroll in a “philosophy” course again for the rest of their lives? This paper argues that critical thinking (hereafter CT) represents some essence of general and useful aspects of philosophical thinking, so CT education is a viable option for undergraduate philosophy courses. In the first section of this paper, I will discuss some trials and errors from my teaching experience in undergraduate philosophy of science courses, explaining why I started teaching CT in philosophy courses. In the second and third sections, I will enumerate several merits of introducing CT into philosophy courses, and then discuss my own classroom teaching on CT and students’ reactions to it. In the fourth section, I will offer some theoretical reflection on the merits we can expect from philosophy faculty’s CT teaching. In the last section, further problems for CT-based philosophy of science education will be addressed.

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What can Philosophers Teach Non-philosopher Students, if not Philosophy?

SUZUKI Takayuki

Today those who specialize in philosophy often have to teach non-philosophy courses. In such cases, philosophers may feel embarrassed because it is not clear what they can and should teach, if not philosophy, to students who do not specialize in philosophy. In this paper, I, as a philosopher facing this problem, present my own struggle with it. Having taught bioethics, neuroethics, critical thinking, and other topics in non-philosophy courses, I found that there is a dilemma here. If philosophers choose philosophical issues as their course topics, more and more students will lose interest in the courses and keep away from them. If philosophers try to be less philosophical, more and more students may attend the courses, but it does not seem necessary for philosophers to teach those courses. Teaching critical thinking might be a good choice here because critical thinking requires the abilities that philosophers are trained to acquire, though this strategy may work only under certain circumstances.

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Teaching Philosophy in KOSEN (Colleges of Technology): from the Viewpoint of Curriculum Design

KITANO Takashi

In this paper our goal is to set guidelines for teaching philosophy in KOSEN (national colleges of technology in Japan), especially from the viewpoint of curriculum design.

First, we briefly explain what the curriculum design is and identify the important points of view to be considered while setting the guidelines. Second, we show some conditions for thinking about teaching philosophy in KOSEN: the position of philosophy and philosopher in KOSEN, and the state of the philosophical courses there. Third, we discuss some tasks relating to teaching philosophy in KOSEN.

Finally, we suggest that teaching philosophy in KOSEN can be comprised of 3 features: (1) a close relationship with an “ethics” class in a lower grade; (2) a close relationship with an “engineering ethics” class in the JABEE (Japan Accreditation Board of Engineering Education) course; (3) an element of critical thinking, which is connected with some objectives of KOSEN, critical mind, and logical thinking.

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Philosophy Education for Engineering Students

SEGUCHI Masahisa

This paper examines the contents of philosophy education at Nagoya Institute of Technology and proposes some ideas for improving philosophical and ethical education for engineering students.

According to a survey on the images of science and philosophy, most students think that philosophy can neither reach any agreement nor solve problems, on the one hand; but science can obtain universal agreement and solve problems in a clear way, on the other. They tend to perceive philosophy as a difficult and useless never-ending story or a personal belief. Engineering students often equate science with technology and think that science is the art that makes our way of life convenient and comfortable.

The “Science and Philosophy” class aims at challenging students’ prejudices toward philosophy and science by discussing how historically science has developed from the tradition of natural philosophy. In the “Engineering Ethics” class, students are presented with ethical dilemmas of technology. In my view, the virtue ethics of Plato and Aristotle can provide better tools of understanding Engineering Ethics. While case studies of serious accidents are indispensable in Engineering Ethics class, Ancient Philosophy, too, has its place in the field of ethics and philosophy for engineering students.

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Consideration of Framework for Student Learning Dynamics

KAWAI Toru

Recently, there is a growing interest in “student learning” in Japanese higher education. It is imperative to research about student learning dynamics. In this paper, I constructed a framework for student learning by reviewing articles on learning research. First, I reviewed the current study on student learning from the perspective of student learning dynamics. Second, I reviewed the literature on learning research and examined the historical emergence of behaviorism, the establishment of cognitive science, the impact of situative turn, and the subsequent coexistence and development of those three perspectives. I found five constituents in the framework for learning, that is, object, actor, practice/interaction, community, and time. I considered the relationships among these constituents. Finally I considered researches on student learning in higher education based on that framework. While considering how researches on student learning are oriented and organized, I found that they should have reconnected to higher education and specific educational practices.

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The Function of the FD Guide as a Device for Faculty Development

ITO Nagako

The purpose of this paper is to clarify the functions of the FD Guide as a device for Faculty Development. The FD Guide is essentially a one-page outline providing precise background information and points for discussion on certain topics. It has three features; it is simple to create and comprehend, easy to share as an educational resource, and it also encourages teacher autonomy. Presently, it is being developed at Nagoya University and Mie University. One of the sections in this paper discusses the effects of the FD Guide on Japanese literacy.

The following three points became apparent through this study. First, the metacognition of the chosen topics improved. This was evident in the writer's self-reflections. Second, because of the increased self-awareness, there was an improved sense of ownership and care. Third, as a result of sharing information among teachers and staff, a greater sense of direction in student guidance followed.

There were two points that became evident in Japanese literacy. Through the actual writing of the FD guide, the creative process became visible. Another point that became clear was that troubleshooting could be tended to at any stage.

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Can Faculty Development be a Method of Quality Assurance in Higher Education?

NATSUME Tatsuya

The purpose of this paper is to review some features of the central government's policy and practice concerning university Faculty Development. This paper also considers whether Faculty Development can be a method of quality assurance in higher education.

In Japan, many universities have been delivering faculty development to faculty members under the central government's policy since 1999. Back then the central government had made faculty development mandatory for universities. Ninety-seven percent of universities delivered it in 2008. In fact, faculty development has not been serving as a method of quality assurance in higher education.

This paper points out some conditions for enhancing the quality assurance function of faculty development

- a) it is necessary for universities to check the progress of faculty development programs and maintain the necessary environmental conditions and so on.
 - b) it is necessary for universities to examine who should be responsible for delivering faculty development.
 - c) it is necessary for researchers of higher education to examine the concept and role of faculty development.
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Inquiry into the Administrative Management of the TA System in Japan: as Viewed in Japanese National Universities

KAIHARA Ryo

The purpose of this paper is to clarify certain issues of the Teaching Assistant (TA) system in Japanese national universities from the viewpoint of the management governance in those universities and to suggest areas for TA system reform regarding those issues.

This paper reveals some problems of TA system: the current management system for handling TAs has become limited and same at many universities. This system was unilaterally granted to national universities by the Ministry of Education.

Examining the historical development of the TA system, it turned out that the reason behind the development of the TA system has changed from providing “Labor” to the “Educational effect of TAs.” Pursuing this line, it is possible to design a new system without the restrictions of the current system. If a new TA system is to be designed, the following three points must be considered in its design: (1) Universities must reconfirm the purpose of their TAs. (2) Universities must clarify what the educational effect [purpose?] of their TAs is. (3) Reexamine the payment system for TAs under this new system and not be restricted to a fixed hourly wage system.

These considerations will enable the TA system to be applied to a PDCA cycle and be more rationally managed.

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International Trends and Issues in Undergraduate Research

NAKAI Toshiki

Recently, undergraduate research has developed and has been integrated into the curriculum in many universities and colleges in North America, Europe, and Australasia. The purpose of this study is to clarify trends and issues in undergraduate research and to identify implications for undergraduate education in Japan. Since undergraduate research is promoted as one of the effective ways of enhancing the linkage between teaching and research, national organizations and funding agencies promote the development of institutional practices in some countries. Empirical studies show that undergraduate research enhances student learning, develops academic skills, increases retention and enrollment of students in graduate programs. Undergraduate research has two aspects, student learning and academic research, and they create tensions between student development and research outcome in defining the purpose of undergraduate research. Different types and dimensions of undergraduate research are discussed in the paper. The concept of undergraduate research has potential for enhancing undergraduate education in Japan, where many faculty members emphasize research.

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Academics' Perceptions of Receiving, Teaching and Supervising International Students

CHIKADA Masahiro

How have university professors perceived international students while receiving, teaching, and supervising them? Based on the survey for academics conducted by Nagoya University, Japan, this paper discusses some perceptions and stresses that have been reported.

The findings are as follows: first, academics share many common perceptions of international students. They have faced similar problems and stresses in teaching and supervising international students, and in keeping them from being isolated in laboratories. Second, academics also have made great efforts in supporting the daily living, lodging, and various administrative procedures for international students.

These findings suggest that academics have not completely shared with colleagues their experiences and know-how for guiding international students. Some academics also feel that acquiring Japanese language skills is important in helping international students adapt to their host country. The shortage of hard and soft infrastructures in Japanese universities for receiving international students causes the burdens and stresses of academics.

To resolve these issues, the university should involve academics in related discussions and encourage them to share individual experiences and wisdom in dealing with international students.

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The Present Status and Features of Faculty Development in Korea

SON Joon Jong

The purpose of this paper is to review the present status and features of Faculty Development in Korea. First, I examine the terms and concepts of FD and their historical contexts in Korea. The development of FD is divided into three phases: the introduction period (1980s), the development period (1990s), and the growing period (2000s). Second, I review FD activities at the national and institutional level. FD was influenced by the university accreditation system and evaluation policy for improving university education competency and quality. Since 1997, the Center for Teaching and Learning has been established in many universities, and these local centers have been developing various FD programs and providing education opportunities to professors and students. The Korean Council of Center for Teaching and Learning, which is a nationwide network of university CTL, was organized in 2001. Finally, I summarize the challenges confronting the future development of FD. FD has been focused mainly on instructional development and educational technology. Many professors, however, hold negative and cynical attitudes toward FD and have not recognized its necessity. To create a more positive culture for FD, it is very important to improve CTL functions and FD programs based on professor's needs.

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Reform of University Governance: Ex-ploring the Role of Organ-isational Culture and Leadership

OBA Jun

Today, in the context of greater institutional autonomy, governance reform is one of the most important issues for many higher education systems in the world. Institutional governance reform necessitates not only legal system changes but also more importantly, changes in institutional culture which constitutes fundamental elements of each university. These cultural changes can be brought about by organisation-level learning, in which leadership that encourages participation plays an important role.

In Japan so far, institutional governance reform, such as incorporation of national universities, has placed high importance on the development of legal frameworks, and leadership has tended to be interpreted as top-down management. However, as previous studies have shown, universities need bidirectional leadership that encourages participation and consensus building. Such leadership should exist everywhere and at every tier in universities.

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Educational Practice and its Assessment for Improving Student Learning Outcomes: the Effects of Problem-based Learning in Large Classes

IYOSHI Hiroko

Individuals with a critical reasoning ability and an enthusiasm for constant learning play a significant role in achieving a high quality of life and creating a well-functioning society in the 21st century. Societies must raise the critical question of whether they can raise such individuals capable of formulating solutions to complex problems confronting them. Universities share the responsibility of raising this question and will need to develop the fundamentals of the abilities and attitudes needed by making maximum utilization of their main resources i.e., academic knowledge, thinking methods, and the faculty.

It will be necessary for universities and their faculty to develop educational practices to improve the desired student learning outcomes and the assessment methods of the practices. The steps to “teach the arts of inquiry and innovation” of AAC&U (Association of American College and Universities) may be useful in this regard. Referring to these steps, this study investigates the trials and analyzes the effects of the problem-based learning in large classes. As a result, even in the large class trials, possibilities were observed wherein a teacher can make students think about and answer a big complex question, make them integrate their acquired knowledge, abilities and experiences, and also can make them aware of their learning outcomes. Finally, more trial and error in each discipline or each course needs to be conducted by each faculty.

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On the Development of Faculty in Japanese Universities

HATA Takashi

Faculty development is a critical issue for improving higher education in Japan.

The purpose of this paper is to examine some problems surrounding Faculty development, understood as attempts to develop educators in higher education institutions.

This paper reviews the empirical research and some meta-analysis studies on Faculty development, including those conducted in foreign countries. Among the issues and questions to be discussed are: (1) the concept of Faculty development, (2) the role and competence of faculty, (3) the relationship between research and teaching, (4) the relationship between professional development and career stage in higher education, (5) professional development as an ethical goal of the profession, (6) the responsibility of professional development, and the roles of individual faculties, departments, and centers in teaching and learning.

This paper concludes that a major goal of professional development for university faculty should be to develop the capability of faculty not only in the area of teaching skills but also in other areas such as overall research, university management, organizational citizenship, and academic integrity. As a final conclusion, effective programs should be created and implemented for professional development, focusing on faculty career needs at different stages, through cooperation with departments and CTL.

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