

BOOK REVIEW

Cases on Quality Teaching Practices in Higher Education

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Cases on Quality Teaching Practices in Higher Education

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Universities, especially research-intensive ones, tend to prioritize research over teaching. Teachers, in most cases, are not required to have any formal teaching training before they start to teach at a university. The career advancement for university teachers is almost entirely depends on research productivity. The quality of their teaching just plays a small role in the evaluation of faculty promotion. In general, teachers and universities pay little attention to how teachers teach and how students learn. However, with demographic changes, the competition between universities is greater and greater. This is particularly true in these countries where the low fertility and declining population reduce the university student enrollment rates and threaten

the life of a university. Recognizing that teaching quality is one of the core considerations for students to select schools, universities begin to rethink the importance and meanings of quality teaching. The book, *Cases on Quality Teaching Practices in Higher Education*, aims to encourage teachers and universities to focus more on the quality of their teaching. It also aims to help people to enhance best practices in teaching and learning at both individual and institutional levels. It is a valuable resource for those who is reconsidering the position of teaching and would like to make efforts toward teaching excellence at a university level.

This book contains 22 chapters which are divided into three sections. The first section (Chapter 1 and 2) serves an introductory purpose. By presenting a survey study by Diane Salter and a concise summary of the results of over 20 years' research by Michael Prosser and his colleagues, this section gives readers a general picture of the following topics: 1) the student-centered teaching approaches, 2) the pedagogical use of technology, 3) the

relationships between teaching strategies and student learning outcomes, and 4) the quality assurance and quality enhancement of teaching and learning in higher education. Section 2 and 3 are comprised of case studies from different disciplines and countries. In section 2 (Chapter 3 to 10), the teaching theories, philosophies and approaches adopted by the award-winning teachers are described in details. The conceptual change/student-centered teaching method is the main focus in this section. The pedagogical use of technology in teaching and learning is also highlighted here. Section 3 (Chapter 11 to 22) emphasizes changes, improvement, and innovation in teaching and learning at the institutional level. Topics in this section are related to faculty learning communities, intrinsic rewards for innovation in teaching, faculty capacity development, assessment, peer review, national teaching awards, university change processes, the global university, and the use of online resources.

Exploring issues from multiple perspectives is one of the strengths of this book. The authors discuss teaching and learning from not only individual teacher's level but also institutional and community levels. This makes the book comprehensive and thorough, and gives readers a full picture of quality university teaching. Another strength of this book is related to the diverse disciplines covered in the book. The authors collect case study examples from a variety of discipline areas including business management, sociology, accounting, medicine, neuroscience, psychology, and medical education. The remarkable range of disciplines broadens readers' views and knowledge. In addition, case study examples collected in this book are generalizable and can be shared cross disciplines. Readers, no matter from related or different subject areas, can be inspired by them. The book should be of interest to educa-

tional researchers in various disciplines, such as leadership, psychology, technology, educational policy, and evaluation. Moreover, it is a valuable resource for university professorial staff, faculty developer, policy makers, faculty learning communities, and for those working at teacher training programs. The book is suitable for courses related to education in both undergraduate and graduate levels. It is believed that education students who are interested in education innovations, technology pedagogy, and global university can benefit from this book.

Nothing is perfect. The book is no exception. A wide range of countries is covered in this book, including Hong Kong, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. However, the inclusion of Eastern countries is limited. The educational philosophies, cultures, and the characteristics of students are quite different between Western and Eastern countries. Thus, collecting more examples from eastern countries, such as China (Mainland), Japan, India, Syria, Turkmenistan and so on would expand the width and depth for this book.

Cases on Quality Teaching Practices in Higher Education is a comprehensive and an in-depth book. It explores approaches, changes, and innovations in teaching and learning from different perspectives, and gives readers a vision of future global university. At this moment when higher education is more and more competitive and universities begin to rethink the importance of quality teaching, the birth of the book is particularly important and meaningful. Despite the above mentioned suggestion for further improvement, it is no doubt that the book is a timely work and must-read masterpiece. *Cases on Quality Teaching Practices in Higher Education* is strongly recommended. We believe that those who are interested in or working toward quality university teaching will benefit numerous after reading it.

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