A Correction to American Policies

Faculty Workload And Productivity in Scandinavia

[NEA Almanac 2016]
SCANDINAVIAN Case Study 1- Sweden
Scandinavian Case Study 2 - Norway
Scandinavian Case Study 3 - Denmark
Scandinavian Case Study 4- Finland
Acknowledgements

- Dr. Mark Smith, NEA Almanac
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Limits to the Study

• Secondary analysis of extant materials
• Unable to scrutinize the validity and reliability of extant data obtained from websites
• Budget limits
• Not site visits
• Time constraints (a snapshot)
• Biased social network contacts
• The inevitable gaps of being an outsider
• Most available information/data is about Sweden
• Language and cultural incompetence of scholar
Why Study Scandinavian Higher Education?

- To understand the factors related to the global reputation of Scandinavian nations in producing quality of life for their citizens
- See *The Spirit Level* [epidemiologists concerned about public health among the nations]
- To assess the impact of academic unions in Scandinavian systems of higher education
- To scrutinize the ideas and policies that have informed faculty workload and productivity in Scandinavian academic institutions
ScANDINAVIAN (Swedish) Policy Outcomes

- Lower overall rates of social inequalities per capita [compared to U.S.A.]
- Fewer societal/public health problems per capita
- Higher rates of social mobility
- Higher rates of trust in government (+ policies)
- Higher aggregate levels of education
- Higher life expectancy
- Egalitarian sentiments expressed in public spending
- Social outcomes without centuries of slavery, genocide, oppression, and ethnic discrimination
Scandinavian Policy Outcomes

- **Realistic pragmatism in accomplishing social justice** [Human Development Index scores]
- **Higher voter turnout (participation)**
- A predilection toward collective social capital over individualistic or neoliberal outcomes
- **Higher levels of gender parity in employment and incomes**
- **Rapid expansion of the middle class in the post-WWII era**
- **Branting: political reforms are anemic apart from social reforms** (p. 4)
Scandinavian Cultural Distinctives

• An ethic and ideology of caring for the masses (above and beyond markets)
• A genuine desire to curtail the excesses of neoliberalism and/or unbridled capitalism
• A political philosophy infused with union leadership, research, and activism (Sweden)
• A heritage on non-alignment and non-imperialism
Scandinavian Cultural Distinctives

• The intergenerational legacy of the Nobel Prizes (global intellectual pursuits)
• The Myrdals (An American Dilemma, etc.)
Scandinavian Policy Investments

- Free public education from preschool through university
- Comprehensive universal health care
- Strategic unemployment benefits (80% of earnings)
- Job training and relocation
- Effective retirement pensions
- Subsidized day care
- Low-cost public transportation
- Housing allowances for families with children
- [see Earl B. Gustafson’s, The Swedish Secret]
Policy Investments

• Collectivist capital formation (the People’s Home)
• Universalistic social policies in housing, education, and healthcare (until recently)
• Innovative thinking, not just monetary incentives
• Intergenerational, flexible, and adaptive union leadership
• Political parties constrained by the “Swedish Model” and its legacy or tangible successes
S.W.O.T. Analysis

- Declines in school quality/international achievement test scores
- The standardization of EU membership
- Uniqueness is under negotiation with new global realities (in flux at present)
- Security concerns, due to terrorism
- Global economic fluctuations (exports)
- Declining levels of global scientific competitiveness compared to neighbors
Swedish Higher Education

- Responding to the Bologna process and Lisbon agreements [bureaucratization/assessment]
- Confronting new public management strategies
- Inadequate, uncertain, and insufficient funding streams
- Higher ranks correlated with higher salaries, but high levels of taxation
- Low levels of interinstitutional mobility
- Faculty insularity from global changes/global rigors in science
- Unstable academic careers
- Americanization pressures
- Importance of research for academic mobility
- 49 hour workweeks
Swedish Higher Education

- 14 universities, plus 22 other state sponsored higher education institutions
- Strategic role of The Swedish Association of Teachers in shaping higher education policy
  - From 2005 data:
    - Average age for completing Ph.D. is 35.
    - Women faculty = 17% of full professors and 54% of Adjunkts (junior lecturer)
    - 1/3 of undergraduate teachers do not have a Ph.D.
### Table 6. Issues Affecting Faculty in Scandinavian Higher Education Systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nation</th>
<th>Social and Academic Transformations</th>
<th>Implications for Faculty</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Enhance breakthrough scientific research (accentuate expertise).</td>
<td>Consolidate quality and productivity.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Enhance school quality at all levels (declines in achievement).</td>
<td>Need to revamp funding mechanisms, career structures, and university governance.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Enhance global competitiveness.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>International pressures for school reform (OECD).</td>
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<td>Active union engagement.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bologna Process/Lisbon Declaration.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>International pressures for school reform (OECD).</td>
<td>Enhance funding for infrastructure and research.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local and regional parameters affecting reform.</td>
<td>Enhance career and working conditions.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Active union engagement.</td>
<td>Enhance teaching and research simultaneously.</td>
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<td>Bologna Process/Lisbon Declaration.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Consolidation of institutes and enhancing universities.</td>
<td>Stabilize career structures.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Stabilize policy climate and enhance funding.</td>
<td>Enhance funding.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Reduced state control.</td>
<td>Stabilize career structures.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International pressures for school reform (OECD).</td>
<td>Enhance and stabilize funding and policy shifts.</td>
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The “American Dilemma” in higher education consists of an absence of a vision regarding the future of the academic enterprise in a world of global social changes. The loss of a sustainable vision leads to the “mismeasure” (Gould’s term) of higher education—especially for faculty—by substituting external instrumental or bureaucratic foci for academic productivity, innovation, creativity, originality, and achievement in research, teaching, and service. The neoliberal assumptions associated with external regulation and the absence of vision result in atrophy and sterility. European scholars conceptualize four prominent visions for universities, their organization and governance (Table 7). The primary divide is between actors sharing norms and objectives and those with conflicting norms and goals. The former group envisions universities as rule-governed communities of scholars pursuing free inquiry, scientific quality, and professional autonomy with minimal interference. By contrast, universities may be viewed as instruments of national political agendas implementing predetermined goals efficiently and effectively. The academic systems of Sweden and Norway, having emerged from these visions, confront the two remaining schemas. In nations with academic systems characterized by conflicts, such as between private and...
Potential Signs of Hope

- The youthful constituents involved in the Bernie Sanders campaign
- The youthful activism related to a variety of social issues: police misconduct, campus injustice [Mizzou?], voting rights, Flint (MI), etc.
- The failures of inept conservative policies and polemics [Chicago State University, etc.]. We need rigorous research that can be translated for public understanding (via media).
- Graduate student unionism/activism
Signs of Hope--continued

• The success of academic unions in Scandinavia and other European nations

• Union leadership is desperately needed regarding research, policy matters, and activism in the United States

• Unions must shape a vision for 21st century higher education and academic work

• Unions must lead in conceptualizing international standards for workload and productivity
My hopes and Dreams for Future Leaders

- **Unions ought to coordinate research and development activities globally** [start a Manhattan Project against neoliberalism & anti-intellectualism]. My suggestion: Imitate the most effective global scientific associations!

- **As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said:** we must guard against moralistic ignorance and conscientious stupidity!

- **Unions must be much more effective and creative in telling their stories to an uninformed public** [target PBS: The American Experience] films?