Faculty Workload and Productivity in Scandinavia: A Corrective to American Policies

By Henry Lee Allen

Faculty workload and productivity have been insufficiently examined in Scandinavian universities. This can be attributed to the unique social and institutional structures of these countries. To analyze these factors, a theory connecting institutions, social networks, academic professions, and national policies must be devised. Henry Lee Allen, professor of sociology at Wheaton College in Illinois, is working with Wolfram Research to develop such a theory. His research on faculty workload and productivity in Canada, Israel, and Scandinavia will contribute to this goal. Allen expects his studies to result in mathematical models for analyzing academic systems and the societies in which they operate.

If the misery of our poor be caused not by the laws of nature, but by our institutions, great is our sin. —Charles Darwin

Universities are the most robust structures for producing “expert” knowledge in postindustrial societies. But different conceptions of universities yield different attitudes toward faculty work. Analysts underestimate these differences and even neglect professors entirely when examining issues arising out of the Great Recession, such as costs, access, funding, assessments, accreditation, administration, technologies, and credentialism.

Social structures affect the policies of postsecondary systems and of individual universities—and vice versa. Global economic oscillations, along with competition for resources, power, and legitimacy among interest groups, institutions, and citizens affect the most exemplary social democracies. Conversely, as Charles Darwin recognized, institutional policies, not natural forces, affect the fate of societies. Postindustrial societies can exacerbate social inequalities by prioritizing markets, a fundamental tenet of neoliberalism. Conversely, they could invest in the social welfare of their citizens. The stakes for citizens are great. “We pass through this world, but once,” wrote Stephen J. Gould. “Few tragedies could be more extensive than the stunting of life,” he added, “few injustices deeper than the denial of an opportunity to strive or even to hope, by a limit imposed from without, but falsely identified as lying within.”

Many postsecondary education systems have experienced recent changes in academic climates, policies, and affiliations. Institutional adaptation to international markets for student and faculty recruitment has produced administrators and stakeholders with a global orientation. Have these changes produced the “injustices” predicted by Gould?

This essay examines the relationship between ideologies, systems, and policies affecting the
academic professions. It shows how four egalitarian societies—Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland—maintain their academic systems in an age of neoliberalism and concern about global competitiveness. Which of their policies pertain to the United States? Would policies found in Scandinavian universities ameliorate the decline of faculty careers in America, or is erosion inevitable?

SCANDINAVIA

Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland report less income inequality and fewer social and health problems than other developed nations. They also show higher rates of social mobility than the United States, the United Kingdom, and West Germany. Trust among citizens is high. Norway, Denmark, and Sweden rank among the top 20 nations in level of education, according to the United Nations Human Development Index Ranking for Education (HDI; Table 1). Scandinavia maintains cultural vitality and resilience even in economic downturns. By contrast, extensive economic inequality in the U.S. results in social and public health problems.

Each Scandinavian nation wishes to improve its education system, knowing that inequalities become rigid without an intelligent populace. Table 1 shows population size, life expectancy, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, and HDI rank for each nation. Sweden’s population approaches ten million; GDP per capita is ranked 13th in the world. Norway, Denmark, and Finland, each with a population of about five million, rank in the upper tier on the HDI and in per capita GDP.

THE SWEDISH LEGACY

Sweden is a parliamentary representative democracy under a constitutional monarchy. The majority of Swedish citizens live in urban jurisdictions. Life expectancy is 81.8 years. Emerging from monarchic dominance, hegemonic elites, and war, as a “consensus-based democracy,” Sweden institutionalized cultural values associated with the common good: pragmatism, advancement, independence, social

Figure 1. Scandinavia and Surrounding Nations
Table 1. Social and Economic Characteristics of Scandinavian Countries, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nation</th>
<th>Median Age in Years</th>
<th>Population in Millions</th>
<th>Life Expectancy in Years</th>
<th>GDP Per Capita and Per Year</th>
<th>World Rank GDP Per Capita</th>
<th>U.N. Human Development Index Ranking for Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>$58,887</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>5.02</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>97,363</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>5.63</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>60,634</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>80.5</td>
<td>49,541</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


justice, and sharing. Many experts now view Sweden as the world’s most innovative nation in promoting social welfare.25

Five decades of experience taught Swedes that deeply rooted egalitarian impulses produce public spending for effective social welfare policies that enhance economic growth, and produce high voter turnout, collective synergy, and intergenerational human capital.26 Women enjoy greater social and economic equality than most nations; employment levels are high and incomes are at or near parity. Sweden expanded its middle class after World War II by adopting these policies:

- Free public education from preschool through university.
- Comprehensive universal health care.
- National child allowance.
- Unemployment benefits of about 80 percent of former earnings.
- Job training and relocation.
- Subsidized day care.
- Housing allowances for families with children.
- Paid parental leave for up to 16 months to care for newborn children.
- Regular and supplemental retirement pensions.
- Guaranteed five-week paid vacations.
- Low-cost public transportation.
- Subsidized art and cultural programs.27

This “Swedish Model” yielded these results:

- No wars.
- No persistent underclass.
- Consensus democracy with a well-educated electorate and high voter participation.
- A strong role for women in government and society.
- An efficient market economy.
- Strong labor unions that contribute innovation, productivity, and prosperity.
- Healthy citizen participation in sports, recreation, and the arts.
- Adequately funded, tax-supported public services.28

One cannot understand Sweden or its political economy apart from its social democratic ideals, with their distinctive union stamp.29 These ideals include political consensus, negotiation, collaboration, planning, organization, and moral sensibility about the common welfare.30 From Hjalmar Branting to Gunner and Alva Myrdal to the current leadership, Sweden tied union activism to political engagement.

Government action, neoliberals assume, is less efficient than market capitalism. So, they conclude, reduce the size of government and the level of public spending. Reduce taxes on the wealthy for the benefit of all; ignore federal deficits, and legalize “God-given” religious beliefs.31 In Sweden, by contrast, leaders
and policies place the needs of the many first; people matter more than markets or profits. Policies developed to nurture the common welfare restrict material acquisition.

"Liberalism confines its attention to the political and moral spheres and neglects the social problems that confront the modern worker," wrote Branting, Sweden’s Social Democratic Prime Minister during the early 1920s. "Freedom of religion, republicanism, temperance, and thrift may be fine in themselves," he added. "But only hypocrites can imagine that they constitute a solution to the social problem." Branting criticized liberalism "as simply incapable of completing the emancipation of the worker." “It declares the freedom of labour,” he added, "but overlooks the social compulsion that forces the worker to sell his labour for starvation wages.”

Liberalism’s chief failing, Branting concluded, “is its belief that political reforms rectify everything when what is really required are social reforms.”

Sweden’s accomplishments result from a distinctive deeply rooted political culture seeing public sector investments as a means of attaining collective freedom. Swedish society, as Branting suggests, evolved from political to social to industrial and economic democracy, empowered by unions and collective bargaining.

Sweden values collectivist capital formation, full employment, industrial democracy, a wage policy based on mutual dependence, an active labor market policy, women’s workplace equality, parental leave, and sex education. Its politicians view universalistic social policies, including suitable housing, education, and health care as key to the success of its welfare state and its tolerant immigration policies. Embracing labor and controlling the imperfections of capitalism made Sweden an exceptional democratic society. Its record of success refutes neo-liberal assertions that markets cure all social ills.

Tilton argues for the primacy of societal ideology in shaping economic and structural outcomes, particularly for Sweden. For him, thinking matters more for the fate of society than material phenomena, such as economic growth, bureaucratic interests, electoral outcomes, labor organization, the structure of the state, and the interests of capital. Sweden was a sovereign nation before the United States existed, and intelligent voices in the United States echo the results of Sweden’s experience.

Bridging the divide between capitalist countries and nations emerging from dogmatic communism, the academic systems of Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland can serve as benchmarks for assessing academic climate change elsewhere. State policies and financing, democratic imperatives, and sustained union activism—via the Swedish Association of University Teachers (SULF), the Forskerforbundet, the Norwegian Association of Researchers (NAR), the Danish Association of Masters and Ph.D.s (DM), and the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers (FUURT)—reshaped policies to benefit the academic professions and their respective societies.

Cultural norms shielded Swedish and Norwegian professors during the second half of the 20th century. Inter-institutional equality was a prevalent social imperative or national interest. For Sweden, societal ideology shaped markets and their outcomes more than vice versa (notwithstanding political oscillations). Folkhem—the “Peoples’ Home”—has inculcated the best of human rights and spread neutrality worldwide. Sweden implemented a broad range of educational institutions and opportunities because equity and equality directed policy. “For advanced learning, there are now ten universities, plus twenty smaller public university colleges, eight specialty colleges, and four technical colleges distributed across the country,” Gustafson noted in 2006. “Tuition is free and students can obtain loans on very good terms for housing and other expenses.”

Yet, the Swedish model is vulnerable. Declining scores on international tests in reading, math, and science and growing numbers of low-performing students between 2000 and 2012 sparked concerns about its educational system.
These concerns fueled a political consensus for substantive changes to reform the nexus between quality and equity, accountability, and continuous learning.\textsuperscript{45} Calls for school choice and national standardization influenced Swedish elementary and secondary education, while calls for decentralization, quality assurance, and marketization affected higher education.\textsuperscript{46}

As in the United States, the status of the teaching profession in Sweden is unattractive. Learning outcomes are diffuse or confusing; standards are loosely coupled. Assessment regimes are in their infancy. Political cleavages and shifting alliances destabilize educational priorities. These internal dynamics, coupled with pressures induced by membership in the European Union, are altering the direction of Swedish society.\textsuperscript{47} Swedish national identity is in considerable flux.\textsuperscript{48}

**THE SWEDISH ACADEMIC SYSTEM**

In 2015, Sweden had 14 universities, 22 other state-sponsored higher education institutions, and ten private institutions.\textsuperscript{49} Academic programs are offered on the bachelors, masters, and research levels. The Swedish Association of University Teachers represents faculty members. The academic career structure begins with Ph.D. candidacy, and extends to postdoctoral fellow (\textit{Forskarassistent}), junior lecturer (\textit{Adjunkt}), senior lecturer, and professor.\textsuperscript{50} Appointment as an \textit{Adjunkt}—one-third of undergraduate teachers—does not require a Ph.D. The average age for completing the Ph.D. is 35; social science and humanities scholars average 41. Research and teaching are expected at all academic ranks. \textit{Adjunkt}s, senior lecturers, and professors normally have permanent posts; promotions also depend on external funding.\textsuperscript{51} But heavy teaching loads stifle research productivity and jeopardize promotion prospects. Faculty members typically report 49-hour work weeks, including at least nine hours in the classroom.

Low rates of inter-institutional mobility characterize Swedish universities. Two-thirds of professors hold appointments at the university where they earned their doctoral degrees. The proportion of women faculty members varies inversely with their academic rank: 17 percent were professors and 54 percent were \textit{Adjunkt}s in 2005.\textsuperscript{52} Table 2 shows the number of academics in each rank in 2005, the latest available data.

Table 3 shows salaries for each academic rank (in euros). Not surprisingly, higher salaries accompany higher academic ranks.\textsuperscript{53}

Historically, the concept of \textit{Bildung} influenced university culture within the Sweden and other Nordic countries. This notion integrated objective and subjective aspects of knowledge, and attained a strong reciprocal relationship with state apparatus. But Sweden’s higher education system now has to respond to changes in student demand, funding, and personnel.\textsuperscript{54} It is subject to shifting political agendas within and beyond national boundaries. Sweden’s entry into the European Union, subsequent adherence to Bologna process mandates, and the Lisbon agenda absorbed its universities into a consolidated continental architecture.\textsuperscript{55}

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### Table 2. Distribution of Faculty in Sweden, by Academic Rank or Classification, 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Rank</th>
<th>Social Sciences</th>
<th>Humanities</th>
<th>Law</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postdoc/Research Assistant</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textit{Adjunkt}/Junior Lecturer</td>
<td>2,152</td>
<td>962</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>6,326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Lecturer</td>
<td>1,896</td>
<td>1,082</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>6,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3,930</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students can pursue academic degrees seamlessly in European institutions at the cost of the traditional strengths of Swedish higher education. The condition of higher education is increasingly typified by:

- the systemic intertwining of teaching and research.
- new public management strategies accompanied by reduced state funding.
- weak data related to assessment and performance measurement rubrics.
- the hegemonic influence of American businesses and universities.

These trends do not bode well for a happy ending for Sweden. Contrary to its laudable social history and its democratic impulses, Sweden’s academic system suffers from a crisis of confidence. Scientific standards are declining relative to its chief competitors: the Netherlands, Denmark, and Switzerland. The causes, according to the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, include problematic funding schemes, academic governance, and faculty career paths. This decline imperils a new generation of assistant professors, and offers little hope for improving the working conditions of full professors.

Misguided policies, responding to economic downturns beginning in the 1980s, eroded academic excellence. Intense competition for external funding within a fragile academic system too often results in unstable faculty careers and weak internal structures and policies. Bureaucratic reforms and accountability demanded by external stakeholders stifle the research infrastructure and sabotage creative risk and scientific innovation. Adherence to the whims of uninformed stakeholders corrupts academic values and jeopardizes its quality of life. Sweden’s example provides a lesson for those who would weaken American academic life.

There are hopeful signs. Higher education, with its rising enrollments, remains Sweden’s largest public-sector investment. Government sources still provide more than 80 percent of funding for Sweden’s universities and colleges; at least 78 percent by direct grants. Free education, supported by tax revenue remains a staple, though Sweden required tuition fees from students outside the European Union in 2011. Sweden invests over one percent of its GDP on research and development, and engaged 34,500 persons in research and teaching in 2014. The Swedish Higher Education Authority and the Swedish Council for Higher Education mandate quality in research and teaching. Universities and colleges retain considerable autonomy. Swedish unions and competent academic leaders must build on these strengths to regain primacy in decision-making.

THE NORWEGIAN ACADEMIC SYSTEM

Like Sweden, Norway is a parliamentary representative democracy within a constitutional
monarchy. It ranks second on the HDI and fourth for GDP per capita with a population of just over five million (Table 1). Under the authority of the Ministry of Education and Research, its public higher education system includes eight universities, two national academies of art, and 25 university colleges. National universities include the University of Oslo, University of Stavanger, the University of Bergen, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, the University of Agder, the University of Nordland, and the Norwegian University of Life Sciences. Institutions are state-funded, but have autonomy related to teaching and research.

In 1993, Norway adopted a tenure-track system for academic careers that required research competencies for promotion to the highest rank of professor. The Norwegian Council for Higher Education promotes international standards. Faculty members are expected to allocate their time equally between teaching and research. Struggles with teaching workloads mirror those in the Swedish academic system; the average age for completing the Ph.D. was 38 in 2006. The rank of senior lecturer, or associate professor, can be secured without a doctorate; lecturer and senior lecturer are teaching positions at state university colleges. Women are disproportionately located at lower academic ranks; just 17 percent served as professors in 2005. Yet Ph.D. candidates have the same benefits as other ranks: pension rights, unemployment support, maternity and sick leave, and democratic voting rights in the university. Table 4 shows the distribution of faculty positions in 2009.

The Norwegian Association of Researchers (NAR) champions Norway’s attempts to be competitive internationally, recognizing that its society lags behind other Nordic nations. It advocates an increase in research spending to three percent of Norway’s GDP, assuming that all teaching must be research-based, nurtured by time for research and development, and rooted in academic freedom. The NAR holds the

Table 4. Number of Full-time Equivalent Academic Positions in Norwegian State Universities and University Colleges, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Number of Full-Time Positions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor (Professor)</td>
<td>2,977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Docent (Dosent)</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor (Førsteamanuensis)</td>
<td>3,203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Lecturer (Førstelektor)</td>
<td>846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer (Universitetslektor)</td>
<td>925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Lecturer (Høgskolelektor)</td>
<td>2,657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor (Amanuensis)</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Teacher/Practice Teacher (Høgskolelærer/Øvingslærer)</td>
<td>488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher (Forsker)</td>
<td>786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdoctoral Fellow (Postdoktor)</td>
<td>971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D. Candidate (Stipendiat)</td>
<td>4,419</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Norwegian Association of Researchers, 2011, 18.
government accountable for promoting equal rights in higher education, for increased funding, for a productive infrastructure, and for student access. It lobbies for significant wage increases and protects the rights and working conditions of faculty members, including vehement opposition to the expansion of contingent labor.68

THE DANISH ACADEMIC SYSTEM
Denmark shows the highest level of personal satisfaction among the Nordic countries.69 It is a constitutional monarchy with a parliament.70 Its possesses three large universities, five smaller universities, and three national research institutions—all publicly financed and regulated by the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation.71 The University of Copenhagen and Aarhus University have world-class status.72 Like Sweden, Denmark’s academic system conforms to the Bologna Process.

Academic ranks resemble the categories used in Sweden and Norway. Like these nations, taxes range from 40 to 50 percent of salaries. Candidates for promotion encounter difficulties at promotion time as they struggle to produce rigorous research. Table 5 shows the distribution of professors across areas of study in 2006. Most faculty members are concentrated in lower ranks, in contingent employment.

Danish research was relatively weak until the 1980s, sustained by just two universities and by an international reputation in physics. Political changes made after the economic downturns of that decade led to strengthened university governance and improved funding. A newly created Danish National Research Foundation embraced “curiosity-driven” research. Infusing funds and adopting new polices spurred long-term creativity and innovation via centers of excellence and the Danish Council for Independent Research. These new entities heightened the status of the academic system.73

The relationship between the Danish government and academe became more centralized during the 1990s, compared to the Swedish policy of decentralized state control. New accountability and assessment protocols, including performance measures, helped institutionalize the role of the academic system in generating economic growth. At the same time, a bipartisan political agenda created a culture of academic excellence. Since 2006, Denmark seeks to invest at least one percent of its GDP on innovation, education, and research.

Thus far, policy reforms show mixed results. Positives include significant increases in the power of university departments, Ph.D. production, and postdoctoral education. Denmark recognizes the salience of early career support and the need to fund a new generation of professors. Recruitment of scholars internationally replaced nepotism as the hiring norm. However, professorial positions remain rare. Institutes and universities merged ineffectively to create “superfaculties.” Over two-thirds of research and education still emanates from just four premier institutions—Copenhagen, Aarhus, Southern Denmark, and Danish Technical University. Momentum in the sciences will affect Danish higher education.74

Table 5. Distribution of Faculty in Denmark, by Academic Rank or Classification, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Humanities</th>
<th>Social Sciences</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>4,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjunkt/Postdoc</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>1,483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>938</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>3,642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>1,047</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Danish political and institutional leaders recognize that investing in professors strengthens a nation facing a tight economy. But “soft money” and external funding dictate too many temporal reforms.

**THE FINNISH ACADEMIC SYSTEM**

Finland is a parliamentary democracy. Its academic system includes 20 universities and 29 polytechnics, all under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. As state-owned institutions, these universities and polytechnics receive most of their funding from government revenues. National universities include University of Helsinki, University of Eastern Finland, University of Turku, University of Oulu, and University of Tampere. Each university may devise its own admissions, curricular, and administrative policies. Students do not pay tuition; study grants are available. The mean age for completing the doctorate is 38.

Like other Scandinavian university systems, research, publications, and international standards determine academic promotion. Professors struggle to excel at research in a tight academic labor market despite heavy teaching duties. Excellence in teaching is also expected. External funding is crucial to advancement and success. The tenure-track system is not a staple in Finland, but all academic staff members are civil servants. In 2005, women occupied 50 percent of lower academic positions, but only 22 percent of the professorships.

Finland spends one percent of its GDP to promote world-class scientific investigations. The Academy of Finland, the Research and Innovation Council of Finland, and the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation (Tekes) reinvigorated the academic system by funding centers of scientific excellence and of the humanities and social sciences. Here again, external stakeholders—disenchanted by the supposed insularity of Finland’s universities—pushed for reforms that transformed Helsinki University, newer institutions in Lapland, Oulu, Vaasa, Joensuu, and Kuopio, and polytechnics and institutes. As in Sweden and Denmark, governmental and institutional elites stimulated the quest for global achievement by the scientific disciplines. Key stimuli included external funding, quality assurance, and consolidation of innovations. But these initiatives have stagnated since the start of this century. Though free from state control, universities marginalize academic input and compete for funding based on performance indicators, such as publication rates. Dependent on soft money, academic career paths are unclear and problematic for young scholars, even when funding increases.

Neoliberalism influenced most policy shifts. The political motives underlying the reforms, notes the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, were a mix of administrative rationalism, economic efficacy, and international trends. In Finland, scientific quality is associated with utility and exploitation.

**PORTRAITS OF SCANDINAVIAN UNIVERSITY SYSTEMS**

Scandinavian countries care about the social welfare of their citizens, including the needy. Their academic systems are adjusting to internal and international pressures, especially global competitiveness in science and markets. Enhancing or revitalizing academic systems is a paramount internal goal at a time when each society must deal with economic, political, and ideological oscillations (Table 6).

**POLICIES MATTER**

Understanding academic climate change—including changes in universities and departments, faculty work and labor markets, and disciplinary structures—requires grasping the dynamics of political, economic, cultural, and social change. Scholars know the social effects of Americanizing European higher education and research. Leadership, technology, organizational demography, ideology, markets, and population affect and are affected by academic
norms. 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. Alternately, 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
Table 7. Four Visions of University Organization and Governance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict:</th>
<th>Autonomy: University operations and dynamics are governed by <strong>internal</strong> factors.</th>
<th>Autonomy: University operations and dynamics are governed by <strong>environmental</strong> factors.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actors have shared norms and objectives</strong></td>
<td><strong>The university is a rule-governed community of scholars.</strong></td>
<td><strong>The university is an instrument for national political agenda.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Constitutive logic: Identity based on free inquiry, truth finding, rationality and expertise.</td>
<td>Constitutive logic: Administrative: Implementing predetermined political objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reasons for autonomy: Constitutive principle of the University as an institution; authority to the besty qualified.</td>
<td>Reasons for autonomy: Delegated and based on relative efficiency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Change: Driven by the internal dynamics of science. Slow reinterpretation of institutional identity. Rapid and radical change only with performance crises.</td>
<td>Change: Political decisions, priorities, designs as a function of elections, coalition formation and breakdowns and changing political leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actors have conflicting norms and objectives</strong></td>
<td><strong>The university is a representative democracy.</strong></td>
<td><strong>The university is a service enterprise embedded in competitive markets.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Constitutive logic: Interest representation, elections, bargaining and majority decisions.</td>
<td>Constitutive logic: Community service. Part of a system of market exchange and price systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reasons for autonomy: Mixed (work-place democracy, functional competence, realpolitik).</td>
<td>Reasons for autonomy: Responsiveness to “stakeholders” and external exigencies, survival.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Change: Depends on bargaining and conflict resolution and changes in power, interests, and alliances.</td>
<td>Change: Competitive selection or rational learning. Entrepreneurship and adaptation to changing circumstances and sovereign customers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Maassen and Olsen, 2007.*
public sectors, a third viewpoint sees universities as agents of a representative democracy where elections, collective bargaining, power, authority, and conflict resolution adjudicate majority and minority interests. The final view conceives universities as service enterprises embedded in competitive markets where stakeholder or customer demands are preeminent. Economic recessions and ideological swings have led Scandinavian countries towards the latter two pathways since the 1980s. EU political pressures prevailed, at unspecified costs.

THE IMPACT OF UNIONS AND LABOR POLICIES

_Civilizations die from suicide, not by murder._  
—Arnold Toynbee

The United States, despite a bifurcated system of higher education, has much to learn from changes within public Swedish and European universities. Each system has a structure with associated social agents, processes, and outcomes. We must not emulate any nation and its academic system uncritically, given their variance in antecedents, adaptations, population traits, and caliber of institutional leadership.

“Academic climate change” is ubiquitous. Ongoing and irreversible global transformations in academic work and systems force nations to get ahead of the evolutionary curve—or median, as in Denmark. Those that fail to get ahead become engulfed by having to react to the curve (Sweden). The U.S. must include its unions in developing and implementing a bipartisan, collaborative vision that rejects neoliberalism. Unions can help plan creatively and test scenarios.

Just as neoliberals want to standardize and assess systems of higher education and science, we must create and adopt _international standards_ for evaluating these core dimensions of academic work:

- equivalent measures for comparing or translating salaries and compensation.
- teaching loads.
- research productivity.
- institutional service.
- graduate or undergraduate FTE.
- institutional conditions/resources.
- quality of administrative leadership.
- quality of recruitment.
- quality of student abilities and efforts.
- considerations of academic and social equity.
- allocation formulas for departments or disciplines
- quality of institutional and departmental academic climate.
- quality of social networks or expertise affecting these items.

Most current measures reflect the biases of government agencies or of philanthropic stakeholders. But innovative unions can level the playing field by conceptualizing alternatives favoring faculty interests.

Reciprocity exists between societies and their universities and colleges. To move toward developing robust scientific knowledge, we need validated and reliable data about: (1) the social networks within colleges, universities, academic departments and programs, (2) the structures, agency, processes, and outcomes of these networks; (3) their spatial proclivities under various contingencies, and (4) the ratio and quality of universities to population size. We should ascertain the characteristics of individuals and collectivities that generate, distribute, and certify expertise via teaching, research, and service.

We must be wary of those who wish to transform higher education systems without consulting faculty members and students. Talk is cheap, especially when critics are wanting in the domains in which they sermonize. Distinct concepts of the role and significance of citizens influence the policy outcomes affecting higher education, for better or worse. Unions played a
transformation role in Scandinavian higher education and society. U.S. leaders must cooperate with, not run away from, unions to enhance the common good and end ignorance and myopia.

CONCLUSION
Faculty unions in the Nordic countries have a greater impact on policy than their American counterparts. American unions must help develop high levels of global intellectual capital, and assert their ideas about sustainability and innovation into the global mix.

Unions must expand their involvement beyond their essential role in collective bargaining to include research and development. They must lead in the global debate regarding academic climate change by aggressively challenging the recommendations of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the World Economic Forum.

Quality assurance, decentralization, and accountability have increased across Scandinavia, as has a jingoistic focus on international standards. But these nations invest more public and private resources and funds in research and teaching. Research is privileged in academic career structures and in the plans of societal leaders. Quality development in teaching and research (productivity) must be a top union concern while promoting novel ideas.

So must the hiring and promotion of women professors; women are disproportionately concentrated in the lower academic ranks of Nordic academic systems.

Administrators and governmental leaders must be held accountable for their investment and policy decisions. The Royal Swedish Academy of Science calls for nurturing innovators, not managers. True academic leadership, supported by faculty unions, is crucial.

NOTES
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3 Cummings and Teichler, 2015.
4 See the World Economic Forum website regarding the Global University Leaders Forum (GULF) and its views on the future of higher education: https://agenda.weforum.org/2015/01.
5 Wilkinson and Pickett, 2010; Wilder, 2013.
8 Standing, 2014.
10 Kogan, Bauer, Bleiklie, and Hinkle, 2006.
12 Gumport, 2007. These are the salient questions endemic to the sociology of higher education among nations.
14 Berman, 2012. At the state level, Sweden is a benchmark because of its small population; at the national level, Sweden demonstrates how intelligent social policies can enhance economic outcomes. Socio-economic equality and economic efficiency can co-exist in Sweden, despite minor oscillations or adjustments.
17 Ibid, 52-53, 92-93, 159.
20 Chen, 2015; Sharkey, 2013.
21 Wolfram Alpha defines GDP as “the measure of an economy adopted by the United States in 1991; the total market values of goods and services produced by workers and capital within a nation’s borders during a given period (usually one year).” The HDI is “measured by the mean of years of schooling for adults aged 25 years and expected years of schooling for children of school attending age. Mean years of schooling estimates are based on duration of schooling at each level of education. Expected years of schooling estimates are based on enrollment by age at all levels of education and population of official school age for each level of education. The indicators are normalized
using a minimum value of zero with maximum value set to the actual observed maximum values of the indicators for the countries in the time series. The HDI shows where each country stands in relation to these goalposts, expressed as a value between 0 and 1.” Wolfram Alpha, September 2, 2015.

22 Ibid. Per capita GDP for the United States in 2014 was $55,032—fifth on the HDI.

23 The parliamentary assembly is named the Riksdag. The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences selects the annual Nobel Prizes. The Norwegian Nobel Prize Committee chooses the Peace Prize winner.

24 Wolfram Alpha. Stockholm (829,417), Goteborg (515,252), Malmo (261,548), Uppsala (128,409), and Orebro (107,038).

25 Gustafson, 2006. Earl Gustafson was a Minnesota state legislator and judge. He traveled extensively to Sweden.


28 Ibid, 185.


30 Ibid.

31 Ibid., 13-21.


33 Ibid, 230.

34 Ibid, 276-277.


36 Ibid.


38 Sweden and other Scandinavian societies are not without their critics. See Nilson, 2007.

39 This essay is based on an analysis of extant research. Thanks to the many scholars and agencies that made my heuristic exploration possible.

40 Kogan, Bauer, Bleiklie, and Hinkle, 2006, 127.


42 Gustavson, 2006.

43 Aguis, 92-116.

44 OECD-Sweden, 2015.

45 Sweden declined on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) from 2000–2012, falling below the OECD average, more so than any other nation in that time period.

46 Marton, 2000.


49 European University Institute, 2015a. National universities include: University of Stockholm, University of Goteborg, University of Uppsala, University of Linkopings, University of Lund, and University of Malmo.

50 Ibid.

51 See www.Sweden.se, a national website.

52 See European University Institute, 2015a for data on academic careers in Sweden. Sixty percent of students in Swedish higher education are women. See www.Sweden.se.


56 The Bologna Declaration promotes student mobility and employability throughout Europe to boost Europe's global educational competitiveness. The Lisbon Convention “entails reciprocal recognition of degrees in other countries” to “create an integrated European Higher Education Area (EHEA).” See www.Sweden.se.

57 Maassen and Olson, 2007, 155-178.


59 Swedish Higher Education Authority, 2015.

60 The Swedish Council for Higher Education offers scholarships to these students.

61 www.Sweden.se; Swedish Higher Education Authority 2015.

62 Recent policy initiatives include student representation.

63 There were methodological problems retrieving valid, comparative data regarding the distribution of faculty by area of study and salary data from the European University Institute.

64 European University Institute, 2015b. The institute website provided most data about Norwegian professors.

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.


69 Albrechtsen, 2013.

70 See www.Denmark.dk website.

71 European University Institute, 2015b.
REFERENCES


