

K. D. Hostetler, R. S. McLaran, and K. W. Pritchard, (Eds). *The Art and Politics of College Teaching: A Practical Guide for the Beginning Professor*, (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing. 2001. 343 pages. ISBN 0-8204-5204-1

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The preparation of graduate students for entry into the professoriate has been a hot topic the last few years. It seems that the meager number of doctoral programs coupled with the growing need to replace retirements of professors at colleges and universities throughout the U.S. and Canada has escalated the conversation on how to best prepare individuals for success in higher education. The chair of a recreation and parks program at a major doctoral granting institution recently quizzed other park and recreation chairs and program heads about what they looked for in new hires and what experiences/abilities were important in the recruitment and selection process. All of this attests to the need for a better understanding by the “new professors” of the demands of college teaching and the politics that surround employment in institutions of higher education. The second edition of Hostetler, McLaran and Pritchard’s edited book is a significant contribution to filling the gap “between what graduate schools prepare students for and what colleges and universities expect of new faculty members.”

The book is divided into three parts for easy digestion. Each part has a variety of contributors in hopes of providing as broad a perspective as possible within each section. The editors offer a solid introduction to the book that sets the stage for what appears in each section and a rationale for why the book is the way it is. The first part is dedicated to exploring the roles and expectations of professors at different types of institutions of higher education as told in a personal manner. The second section examines the crucial steps in building an academic career and the last section is dedicated to examining the legal and ethical issues that confront all professors. Each part of the book is designed and written to provide valuable information that is not commonly taught in graduate schools, but in actuality, may be the most important aspects for those seeking careers in higher education.

Part One is written by eight different authors and each chapter is a distinct view of eight different institutions of higher education, from the major research university, to the small liberal arts college, to the two-year college. Each of these writers captures the essence of what each institution is all about. Although they make specific mention of their particular universities or colleges, the descriptions and applications appear universal to me. They dissect the roles of teaching, scholarly research and service at each type of institution as well as nuances that surround work in these various institutions. I was particularly impressed with the care each author took to tell her or his personal story and provide tips and direction to the reader about being a successful teacher/scholar/colleague in that specific type of institution. I found each story to contain the kinds of advice I would have would have benefited from when I entered the profession some 35

years ago. Examples such as “versatility is the keynote of what small liberal arts colleges expect” (Abbott), and “deferred gratification is not a cliché but a way of life” (Whitla), as well as “the primary function of the faculty is teaching, so the values necessary for faculty success are *people values*” (Bergquist) resonate throughout each chapter in the first section and make this part essential as a foundation to the last two sections.

The second section of the book is aimed at providing an overview of the “basic career steps through which faculty members must progress.” The narrative style is again used in this second section but I did not find this section as engaging as the first. That could be attributed to the fact that I have already progressed through many, if not all, of these steps. And it certainly was not from the fact that the essays included here lacked information or failed to create a good understanding of the steps or the issues. Rather, I was simply more engaged by the discussion of values, rules and guidelines of a variety of institutions that appeared in Part One. Solid advice abounds in this part of the book for the new professor or one considering entering into higher education as a professor. The best chapter in this section was titled “Gaining National Recognition: A Place in the Sun.” The authors do an excellent job of describing how one might achieve this national reputation by following one of seven career patterns. If I was starting out now as a new professor, I would have found this information most helpful. I was also intrigued by the final piece in this section titled “Leaving Gracefully or Not So Gracefully.” It contains good advice for today’s newest professors just starting out, or for those who might be considering moving on to a new university or college.

The final section explores everyday issues that we commonly deal with in the professoriate. As such, the book discusses academic freedom, affirmative action, and the ethics of the profession. Each issue is covered well, albeit not to such an extent that any issue is totally explored, but each provides excellent food for thought for anyone in higher education today. The writing is solid and the final chapter on ethics concludes with some exploration of some cases of ethical judgment causing some introspection for this reader.

This book has personality! It is not a sterile description of institutions of higher education or a generic prescription of how to become a successful teacher, scholar or community/university servant. Rather, it is a collection of personal stories splattered with real trials and tribulations as well as experienced-based tips on how to succeed and navigate one’s career through the professoriate. As such, it reminds me of the popular book of essays by professors in the recreation, parks and leisure studies field titled *Beyond Promotion and Tenure: On Being a Professor* edited by Dustin (1990). Yet Hostetler, McLaran and Pritchard go further though, by taking a more comprehensive approach to exploring a variety of university settings and a wider array of issues in that same personal story approach. As such, it truly is worthwhile reading for any graduate student seeking a career as a professor in higher education, or, for that matter, any professor who has lost her or his way in higher education. It offers insight into the expectations that exist at various institutions, institutional values at various institutions, and sound advice

for climbing the ladder to success and realizing the fulfillment and satisfaction that abound in the professoriate. Read it, because by doing so, you'll quite possibly be able to identify why you are in higher education or how to achieve greater satisfaction for the course you have charted or will chart for yourself in this noblest of professions!