

Demonstrating and rewarding excellence in university teaching

Thomas Olsson

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LUND UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Engineering
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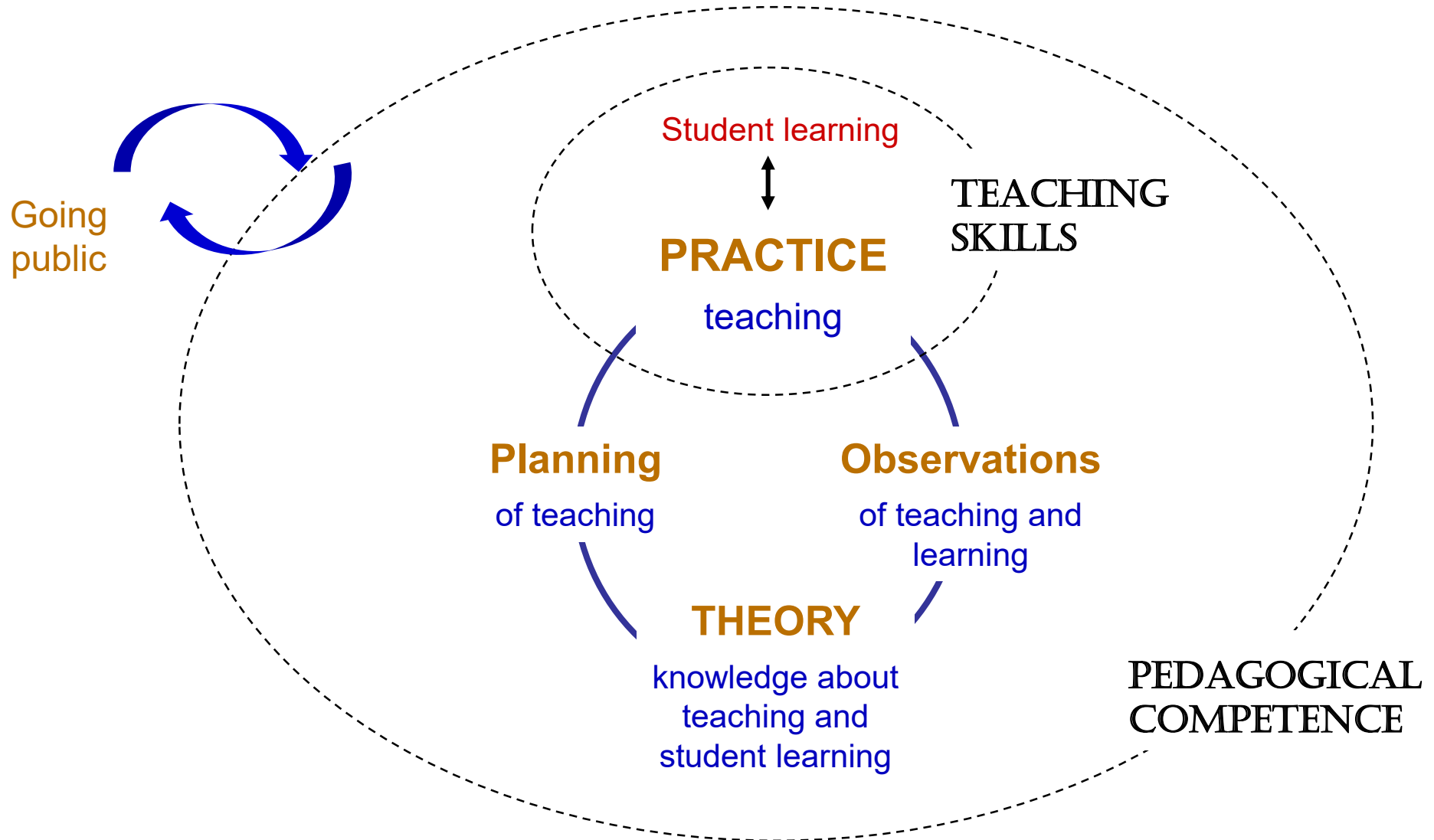


What constitutes excellence in university teaching?

How can we assess university teaching?



Teaching Excellence – a model



Olsson et al. (2010)

Olsson & Roxå (2013)

Challenges for universities

Engagement is crucial

Focus on the institution – all levels

Never forget the subject

Development “will happen”,
but it will take time



A reward system...

The Pedagogical Academy

- rewards teachers with a clear focus on student learning and a developed capability to reflect scholarly on their teaching practice
- monetary incentives for individuals **and** departments
- based on a teaching portfolio which is exposed to peer-review
- since 2001



Assessment criteria (areas)

A clear focus on **student learning**

A clear professional **development** over time

A **scholarly** approach to teaching and learning

A developed ability to incorporate **the subject** in a teaching and learning context

A total of 10 criteria within these areas



Assessment criteria

1 Focus on students' and PhD-students' learning

- A teaching practice based on a learning perspective
- An integrated relation between theory and practice
- A practice based on a sound relation to students

2 Subject knowledge – a developed ability to incorporate the subject in a teaching and learning context

- Use of developed strategies to support students' work towards an increasingly complex and useful knowledge
- Subject content and teaching methods are related to the courses and objectives of the curriculum

3 A clear professional development as a teacher over time

- An effort to, over time, consciously and systematically develop students' learning
- Credible ideas and concrete plans for continued development

4 A scholarly approach to teaching and learning

- A reflection on practice based on educational theory relevant for the discipline
- A search for and creation of knowledge about student learning in the discipline
- An effort to make findings public with a purpose of collaboration and interaction

Teaching portfolios

The **teaching portfolio** is a central document



A teaching portfolio is about a practice

the actual teaching practice



description and analysis of
the practice



evidence (artefacts)



To be **concrete** in the portfolio is of fundamental importance . . .

the portfolio is about your teaching and the students learning – it is **not** about your knowledge of teaching and student learning in general



The importance of the **subject** ...

This could not be overemphasised



Subject matter content knowledge

Pedagogical content knowledge

Discipline specific examples, analogies, explanations

Discipline specific learning hurdles

Useful learning pathways; **patterns (!)**

Curricular knowledge

Link a subject to other disciplines (parallel, before, after)

Challenges

Changes and development will take time

Engagement (from leadership, heads of department)

Research community (research intensive university)

PhD education

Policy levels (will eventually be affected)

Next (ongoing) steps

New promotion criteria – full professor

The importance of the subject

Interesting development “will happen”...



Rewarded teachers -- 2016

Total 116 (31 women; 85 men)

Different categories

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| Professor | 42 |
| Lecturer (with PhD) | 62 |
| Lecturer (without PhD) | 12 |

Departments

All 18 departments

(between 12 and 2 rewarded teachers)



Evidencing Teaching Achievement

A key question is ...

How can we understand higher education institutions so that activities (in this case rewarding excellent teaching) aimed at developing teaching and student learning generate the desired results?

also based on research by K. Mårtensson, T. Roxå



Theoretical perspectives

A theoretical perspective about educational development in higher education organisations is important.

The literature about organisational culture in higher education and the scholarship of teaching and learning are central.

Trowler 2008; van Maanen 2007; Jawitz 2009; Schein 2004;
Berger & Luckman 1966; Giddens 2004; Berlin 2000;
Mårtensson, Roxå & Olsson 2011; Roxå & Mårtensson 2011;
Roxå, Mårtensson & Alveteg 2011; Eisenhardt 1989;
Trigwell et al. 2000; Olsson & Roxå 2013

Mårtensson 2014 (PhD dissertation);
Roxå 2014 (PhD dissertation)



Based on theoretical perspectives,
developmental activities are
operationalised into assumptions...

The quality of teaching generally improves if:

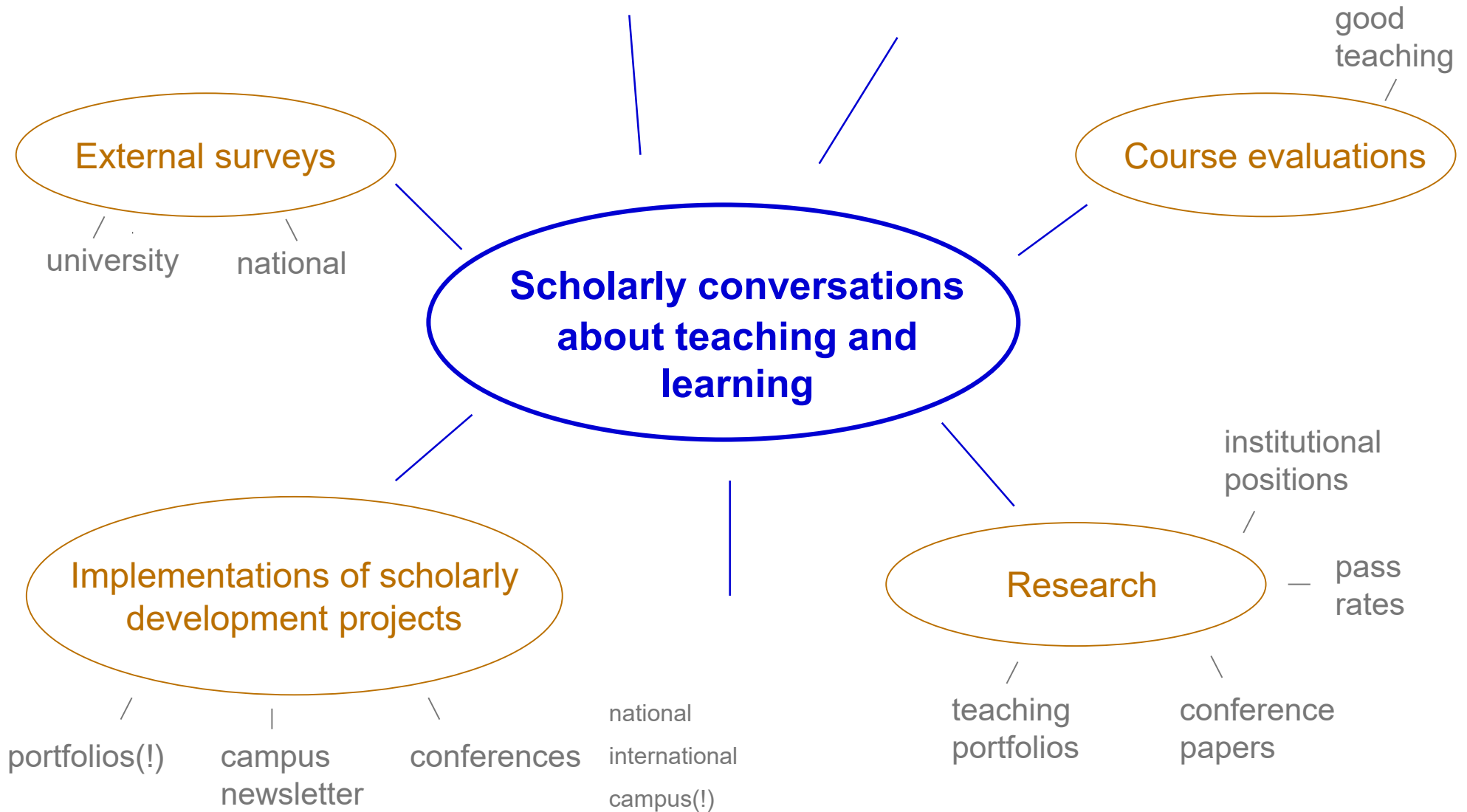
- individual teachers improve their **understanding** of teaching and student learning
- individual teachers are able to choose wisely among available teaching **methods** and adapt them to specific teaching situations
- colleagues sharing the same culture **talk** more to each other about teaching



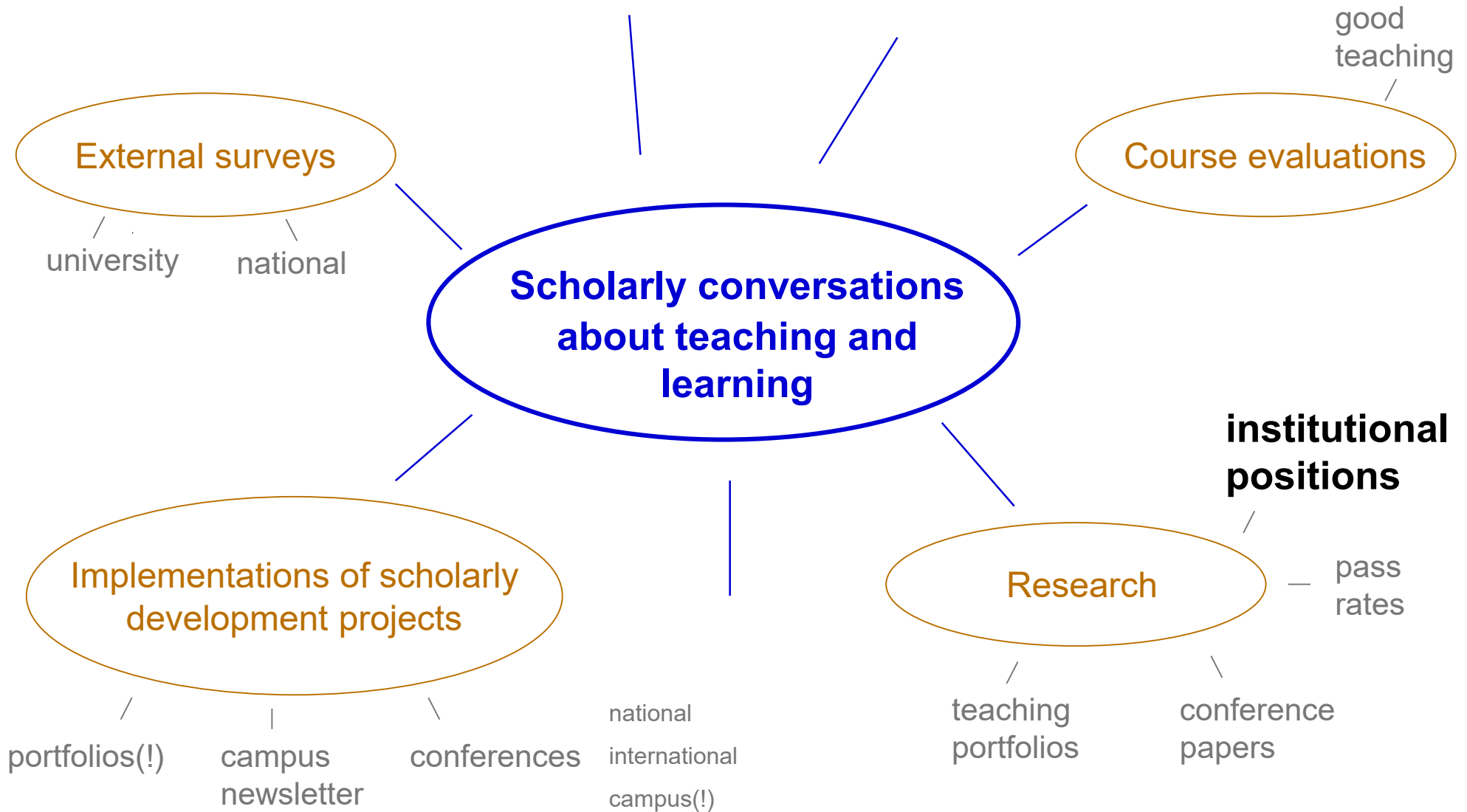
- conversations are informed by systematic **observations** and educational **theory**
- conversations are influenced by values supporting a **critical attitude of inquiry** towards teaching and student learning
- teachers share **authentic experiences** of teaching across the organisational context
- activities are being **recognised and rewarded** by the formal organisation



Indicators(!) of teaching improvement...



Indicators(!) of teaching improvement...



Excellent (rewarded) teachers at important positions

(January 2017)

Proportion of rewarded teachers/leaders (%)

| | |
|---|----|
| Programme leaders (undergraduate education) | 40 |
| Management group (undergraduate education) | 33 |
| Research board | 22 |
| Postgraduate education board | 29 |
| Career board | 25 |
| Recruitment board | 25 |
| Heads of Departments | 44 |
| Dean, Associate Dean, Vice Deans | 40 |
| Board of the Faculty of Engineering | 67 |
| All teachers at the Faculty (650-700) | 16 |

Impact and evaluation of effects

It is complex...

We argue that we have a case and that we can show that teaching and student learning have improved along lines indicated by the theoretical perspectives.





Thank you!

thomas.olsson@lth.lu.se



Scholarship of teaching and learning

goes beyond the individual and influences institutions

- includes systematic observations and analyses of teaching and student learning in the subject, related to theoretical frameworks
- is documented, public, and subjected to peer-review

which will result in . . .

increased engagement that will promote cultural change of teaching and learning
informed discussions and documentation that are crucial for developing the culture



Levels of investigation

- 1 inform oneself
verified by oneself

Personal knowledge

- 2 inform within a shared context
verified by those within the same context

Local knowledge

- 3 inform a wider audience
verified by those outside of the local context

Public knowledge

Ashwin and Trigwell (2004)

