

## Repurposing university teaching-and-research: A socio-ethical argument

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Covid-19 should prompt universities to expand the portion of academics who teach-*and*-research. Yet sector-wide governance reduces the portion, further separating ‘teacher’ from ‘researcher’. This presentation makes a socio-ethical case for teaching-*and*-research expansion, and addresses governance that stands in the way.

There is urgency to *re-purpose* academic labours in care for local-and-planetary futures, at a time of burgeoning crises of climate, economics, politics, culture, and unjust power inequalities across these domains. Most people experience such *structural* crises as ‘glitches’ in local *infra* structures (Berlant) that meet life-sustaining needs. Local communities deserve support from knowledgeable academics, not by *visits* but through *projects that build citizen capacities* to collaborate, across diverse groups, on ‘problems that gather them together’ (Pignarre & Stengers).

Crucial, among socio-*ethical* capacities to care-take towards viable and *just* social futures, is capacity to pro-act with others *knowledgeably* on ‘problems that matter’ (PTMs; Zipin & Brennan), which are *emergent*, as are knowledges to address them, including ‘funds of knowledge’ (Moll et al.) among people who live the problems. Academics thus need to learn-*and*-teach *with* diverse groups in those lifeworlds, in projects that *research* PTMs in *pedagogic* practices of dialogic democracy wherein all ‘apprentice to the problem’ (Pignarre & Stengers), building citizen-capacities to make knowledge of emergently richer use-value. Academics involved in such project need practiced strength in *both* teaching *and* research. While some academics might *mainly* ‘teach’ or ‘research’, all should interact within robust teaching-*and*-research cultures sustained by *a healthy core portion* who combine both.

As well as staff numbers, a *healthy* portion means reasonable workload time for both. Here, decades of a *crisis of governance* weigh heavily. Governance increasingly performs *ideological functions of simplifying the complexities of lived problems*, as federal/state governance apparatuses apply narrow political-economic logics, reduce university funding, and impose market-competition criteria. In turn, university ‘leaders’ invest in fewer ‘high-performance’ researchers while milking low-payroll ‘productivity’ from overworked teaching-only staff. A simplistic justification – shared by university and federal/state governance – is that students primarily need teaching ‘specialists’ to cultivate ‘work-readiness’. These trends accelerate under pandemic-induced budget crunches and ‘snap-back-the-economy’ logics.

Yet counter-senses of *perilously complex* futures also abide among both academics and people living the perils, who need capacities well beyond ‘skills for work’: at-once researchful, pedagogic and proactive. Perhaps academics working with student and community actors, in projects that repurpose university education, can mobilise critical mass for a politics that pushes ‘the governors’ to rethink social-ethical purposes for teaching-*and*-research.