

## HOW DID I LEARN TO PREPARE GRADUATE STUDENTS TO BE TEACHERS

Denise Vaz de Macedo

Labex, Depto de Bioquímica, IB/Unicamp, Campinas, SP, Brasil

The pedagogic training of graduate students, when and where it exists, is restricted to theoretical courses or to the participation of the students as teachers' assistants. This model is essentially conservative and reproductive of the pedagogic system and offers few opportunities for any significant curriculum innovation. In fact, when the new teachers become engaged in some course the lack of alternative models pushes them to follow the established curricula, with their pre-selected contents, their conventional methodologies, and their traditional structure. The center of the problem is not the maintenance of the traditional curriculum itself but rather its acceptance without criticism. The lack of alternative models of teaching contributes a lot to that. I had the privilege to experience many of those models with Prof. Bayardo B. Torres. Since 1993 I learn, discuss and apply alternative methodologies of teaching under his orientation. When I came back from my pos-doc in Belgium Dr. Torres and me, together with Prof. Eneida de Paula, created a new discipline that was included in the Biochemistry Graduate Program of Unicamp and USP-SP, devoted to train our students for educational activities. During one semester the graduate students established general and specific educational objectives, selected and organized contents decided on the instructional strategies and planned evaluation tools. The contents were explored using a wide range of strategies, which included computer-aided instruction, laboratory classes, small group teaching, a few lectures and round table discussions. The graduate students have also organized printed class-notes to be used by the undergraduate students. Finally, as a group, they taught the summer courses. I know that this experience has influenced all of the graduate students that experienced it, but for me it was a really special occasion, because there I learned how to proceed towards the teachers' formation. I have learned with Dr. Torres how to apply different teaching methodologies as well as the importance of teamwork. At present I coordinate at Unicamp a basic discipline of Biochemistry for undergraduate students in Physical Education and a *lactu senso* course, named "Biochemistry, Physiology, Training and Sport Nutrition" with about 250 students/year. All the pedagogic activities on those courses are carried on with *teacher-students* of different levels: for the undergraduate discipline, for instance, they are in the master program or carrying on a Scientific Initiation project and in the *lactu senso* course they are master, PhD or post-doc students (about 28). In weekly discussions each group have the opportunity to develop a critical vision of teaching. Moreover, the undergraduate students also acquire the necessary critical capacity, as they learn how to deal with their own produced data. Although laborious, this proposal allows the futures teachers to experience the sensation of a classroom and to face the brilliant eyes of an undergraduate student when he/she finally comprehend a concept/theory/hypothesis as a whole. I owe all this to Dr. Bayardo Baptista Torres, as well as many other colleagues of mine. I thank Prof. Torres on behalf of them all.