The Practice Dimension of Higher Education at CBS

Higher education must develop analytical competences in students, integrating them into the universe of science and research. While that happens, students go through a personal development which is also relevant to their ability to participate in society. The majority of contemporary students, moreover, are headed for a labor market outside the world of Higher Education. For that reason, the development of students' personal abilities and practical competences is assuming higher importance.

For business schools, this has long been evident. Like graduates from other universities, business school graduates must know analytical approaches and tools, and be able to develop those. But they are educated to be active participants in management and decision-making in businesses and institutions, and as such their personal abilities and practical competences are of special importance.

The need of practice-oriented education is primarily driven by:

- A high level of Complexity in business and society
- The need for Employability of graduates
- The demand for Responsibility in business and society
- A need for Creativity and initiative in societal and organizational practice

These four dimensions describe the need for a practice dimension in higher education, and thus also the necessary contents of that dimension.

Practical qualifications in the knowledge society; contents:

Complexity: of the knowledge society, with its cultural diversities, fluid organizations and digitalized infrastructure, demands graduates who know that theories are learned in disciplines, but realities are multiple, complicated and ambiguous. Practices are built on extant routines, but new conditions require the development of new practices.

Employability: while some university graduates still go on to establish their own position in the world of knowledge, as researchers or publicists, the vast majority must be employable. They must either fit into a career in organizations outside the research and higher education systems, or be able to shape their own careers through entrepreneurial initiatives. Their qualifications must match the current requirements of employing organizations or match the needs of independent entrepreneurs.

Responsibility: organizations, as well as individuals, must reflect upon their own effects on the world around them. Graduates must be able to reflect organizational action in terms of the specific societal context and its consequences. The management of organizational responsibility is an integral part any action. Graduates must be able to integrate a responsibility perspective in their work, which calls for a basic understanding of the practical context of organizational action rather than a pure theoretical one.

Creativity and innovation: graduates must be able to take action, to be creative and innovative. While everything in the modern world is organized, for organizations to develop and progress, they need individuals who are capable of initiative and action. Our graduates are expected to contribute to organizational development and innovation. Theory learned in academia should support the development

of an entrepreneurial mindset and capability in the graduates. To be creative is to hatch new ideas, but also the ability and capability to act entrepreneurial in a practical context.

These four categories of practical competences describe the *contents* of graduate competences. When reflecting on practical competences, however, content must be complemented with *process*: it is not enough to know *what* to do, but also to know *how* to do it.

Practical qualifications in the knowledge society; the learning process:

In the schedule below, the demands for practical qualifications are divided into competences, skills and knowledge (the three columns), and the methods for attaining the relevant qualifications are listed in the rows, grouped in curriculum (what is to be learned?) didactics (which methods and components go into the curriculum elements), and organization (what sort of learning organization and process is suitable for attaining the learning objectives?)

Qualifications: Operatio- nalization:	Reflexive practice (Competence)	Practical skills (Skill)	Professional fields of action (Knowledge)
CURRICULUM	Graduates must be able to - use and choose theories and methods in a practical context. - Reflect on questions of societal implications and responsibilities - Cooperate on practical subjects - Handle complex contexts and problems	Graduates must be able to - plan, decide, implement and connect the stages of business conduct - engage in their own personal development as effective and responsible agents	Graduates must - be familiar with practices in specific business professions and business functions. - know business practices in specific regions or industries
DIDACTIC	Teaching must - address contexts of practices (professions, functions, actions and agents). - address critical aspects and practical implications of organizational action and practice.	Students must learn to - Investigate empirical cases, finding data and encountering real organizations - Use analytical tools and techniques - Communicate managerial matters to relevant audiences - Address questions of innovation and business development	Teaching must - deal with real-life cases about companies, problems, decisions and contexts - relate to questions of innovation within and across industries
ORGANIZATION	Teaching must be - inter-disciplinary - interactive - focusing on different analytical perspectives - based on critical feedback from teacher to students - intended to stimulate students' creativity	Programs and courses must challenge and test students' social and communicational skills, and their personal abilities	Education programs must relate to relevant sectors and industries