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Abstract

This paper argues that it is reasonable to expect the professoriate, including full professors, to balance traditional academic values with external demands for accountability. Today's universities are characterised by increasing diversity, wider access to higher education, decreasing funding and greater oversight through quality assurance: professors have a particular responsibility to respond to these modern realities and expectations. The essay explores how the role of professors in supporting knowledge development and dissemination through research and teaching can be elaborated and enhanced to ensure that universities contribute to the social good. How well the professoriate responds to contemporary challenges within and beyond traditional academic interests will determine the future of universities, just as previous responses have contributed to their endurance as institutions for more than 900 years. The essay concludes with emphasis on how full professors in particular can promote their special role and responsibilities for supporting the ideal and idea of the university in today's world.(HRK / Abstract übernommen)