# UFOs of the Teaching Space –
# The Role of Hourly-Paid Teachers in a Teaching Community

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## Abstract

Hourly-paid teachers occupy an important role in teaching architecture at the academic level. They represent the different areas of expertise of the profession, and they provide particular content to the degree program. However, their presence in the academic organization is problematic. In this paper I trace some of the challenges hourly-based teachers face in their teaching work. To begin with they have little bearing on the decision-making processes and planning of teaching at the degree program level. In addition, their position is seldom considered when planning work practices or digital teaching environments. Moreover, critical for the community is that there are few channels for them to share the tacit knowledge and experience in teaching they gain in their work with the wider community. Such a structure of the teaching community and the policy of defining the working tasks of the hourly-paid teachers impede wide and open dialogue in the academic teaching community. The structure threatens to slow down decision-making and prevent the organization from learning from itself. Interactive collaboration combined with changes to the structure of the faculty could be a route to a more equal teaching community. Engeström names three different types of collaboration: Coordination, cooperation, and communication. In this article, the three different ways of collaboration and interaction are regarded

from the teaching point of view. Having planning processes of teaching open and making it possible for hourly-paid teachers to participate in them would create an active, open, and rich teaching community.

## Introduction

In the teaching of architecture, "learning-by-doing" is a traditional teaching method besides lectures. The assignments given to students simulate the basic tasks of the profession and work as a marked path towards professional knowing. Teachers walk with the students along this path, tutoring their working processes. They support the students in their individual trials of different problem-solving and working methods.

It is common for professionals outside academia to come to tutor students. They are experts working in the professional field and are connected to the university as part-time teachers. To these part-time teachers, who represent the different professional groups and tasks of the profession, teaching in the Department of Architecture is regarded as a professional merit. They support, in a unique way, the versatility of the university's curriculum and offer the students a great opportunity to get to know professionals working in different parts of the field. Via these part-time or hourly-paid teachers, academia also connects to the surrounding working life in a very concrete way. Yet their role is also troubled. These types of teachers are difficult to fit into the academic organization; they are fundamental and problematic at the same time. How is the need for these inspiring professionals in the education of architecture handled? What consequences do the prevailing practices have for the teacher and for the university? My intention is to observe the reality of teaching and the teachers in it.

Since 2000 I myself have worked as a teacher in the field of history of architecture in the Department of Architecture at Aalto University (formerly Helsinki University of Technology). I started as an hourly-paid teacher, became a university teacher in 2008, and started working again as hourly-paid teacher in 2014. During these periods I have followed and participated in preparing, planning and implementing teaching in different tasks. This article is based on my own observations that I have gathered in the work, and also on discussions that I have had with colleagues in the Department of Architecture and also in the art and design departments at Aalto University. In addition to this, I use secondary material, such as university guidelines and organizational charts, to describe the context of the work of hourly-paid teachers. The focus of my article is the teaching community of the Department of Architecture.

Hourly-paid teachers play a significant role in the implementation of courses at Aalto University's Department of Architecture. During the academic year 2014-15, the regular personnel of the department comprised 13 professors and 10 lecturers. During that period there were about 110 people working as hourly-paid teachers, and in addition to this there were 75 others who were paid fees related to single teaching or assessment tasks. The Department of Architecture also includes a few project researchers and scholars, who are expected to dedicate 5-10% of their annual working time to teaching duties. (Personal e-mail communication, March 2015)

In this article I elaborate on the conditions of work of the hourly-paid teachers in the Department of Architecture at Aalto University as a case. To begin with, I describe the differences in teaching tasks that these teachers have and point out that hourly-paid teachers are not a homogeneous group in terms of their

tasks and positions. Thereafter, I inspect what kind of impact the university's policy on paying wages has on the position of these teachers in the teaching community, and what the conditions of work of the hourly-paid teachers are. I take a look to the organizational structure of the department and compare it to the structure of the personnel within the teaching community. After this, I ponder on how the present structure of the teaching community supports the management of teaching, and in conclusion I suggest ways that could lead the teaching community forward. The main aims of this article are the following: 1) to point out how the administrative guidelines qualify the position of the hourly-paid teachers in the teaching community, 2) to highlight that hourly-paid teachers are not a homogeneous group, even though the administrative guidelines tend to refer to them thus, and 3) by excluding hourly-paid teachers from the processes of teaching management, the department is hindering and slowing down its own operations.

**Hourly-paid teachers – a diverse group**
Teachers at the Department of Architecture have different employment relationships with Aalto University. Some of the teachers have a prior contractual employment relationship with a monthly salary. In this article I refer to them as *faculty*. Their working time is divided between teaching and research, and the relationship between these is defined in the employment contract. A small number of teachers are postgraduate students or researchers who have a small teaching duty (5-10% of their annual working time). In addition to these, there is a significant group of teachers whose main work is outside academia either as independent researchers, employees in private companies or in the public sector, or as entrepreneurs. They work as part-time teachers in contractual employment relationships at regular intervals – and usually for periods of one year at a time. Their tasks are outlined as teaching and their administrative responsibility is relatively small compared to regular personnel. In the "Guidelines on hourly-paid teaching and fees related to teaching and research" (Anonymous, 2012), hourly-paid teachers are described as "teachers with no prior contractual employment relationship with Aalto".

Hourly-paid teachers are administratively regarded as one group. When this is looked at more closely, one can see that this group is very heterogeneous when their teaching roles are being explored. The one extreme (or subgroup) are the teachers who work mainly as a tutor during assignments. Their work is related to (a) specific course(s), and the students can access them during the practice hours that are part of the course. Their connection to the university as a workplace is quite light, and often they do not have any need to utilize services provided by the university, such as IT services. Their tasks are related to the implementation and assessment of the specific course, and to some extent in planning a forthcoming one. In this article I refer to this subgroup as *hourly-paid teachers*.

At the other extreme there are the hourly-paid teachers that are individually responsible for the implementation of a complete course (or courses). They plan the course under the supervision of their professor, teach it, assess the work of the students and forward the marks to the register. They cooperate independently with planning officers and administration, and need the related IT services and support. I refer to these teachers as *course-responsible hourly-paid teachers*. In between these extremes there are various ways in which level hourly-paid teachers commit themselves to the university and various

levels in which they do it. In this article I will largely concentrate on observing the position of the course-responsible hourly-paid teachers in the teaching community and the processes of decision-making.

**The department**

For a range of purposes it is common to illustrate organizations, such as academic departments, as figures. In these figures, different functions are defined as geometric shapes under descriptive titles. The way the forms are positioned and how much they overlap tell us about the connections and the cooperation these functions form with each other. The two-dimensionality of the figure makes it difficult to illustrate common functions, such as the services for teaching and studies or human resources administration. In many cases these common functions are not shown, and one just has to trust that observers of the figure and members of the teaching community know about their existence and role.

Figure 1 below is an example of an organization figure that describes an academic department, in this case the Department of Architecture at Aalto University. It is an organizational representation from 2013 that has been used for internal communication within the university and the department. It describes three things: 1) the topics of the teaching and research of the department, 2) a new operational grouping of the 13 professorships and one research institute of the Department of Architecture, and 3) the emergence of three new professorships at the department. The professorships were grouped under the new focus areas of the Art of Structures and Materials (SMART), the Basis of Architecture (BASE), Landscape Architecture (LAND), and Public and Private Space (SPACE). The aim of the rearrangement of the teaching organization was to develop teaching by opening up the limits of the professorships and enhancing natural cooperation between them. At the same time, there was an effort to increase cooperation in the planning of teaching and to share the control of the use of financial resources.
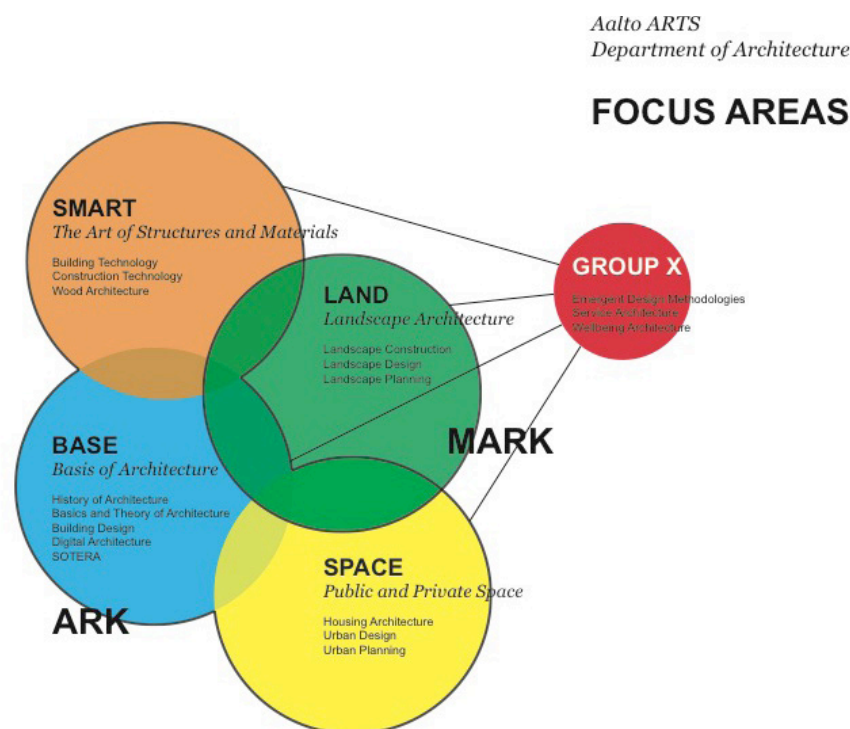


Figure 1. Focus Areas of the Department of Architecture 2013 (Anonymous, 2013).

Figure 1 is a general picture. The former structure of the teaching community has been rearranged in a new pattern, and the professorships are shown as equal in the picture. In order to bring the illustration closer to the implementation of teaching I decided to show the teaching personnel of the Department of Architecture in the same figure. In Figure 2, I have added a new layer: the teaching personnel of the department during the academic year 2014–2015. They are grouped by professorships. The darker circles represent 'regular teachers' the white circles hourly-paid teachers. The new layer on the figure brings the representation a step closer to the real life of teaching: The teaching personnel—the pedagogical interface of the university—become visible.



*Aalto ARTS*
*Department of Architecture*

**FOCUS AREAS**

**SMART**
*The Art of Structures and Materials*
Building Technology
Construction Technology
Wood Architecture

**GROUP X**
Emergent Design Methodologies
Service Architecture
Wellbeing Architecture

**LAND**
*Landscape Architecture*
Landscape Construction
Landscape Design
Landscape Planning

**MARK**

**BASE**
*Basis of Architecture*
History of Architecture
and Theory of Art
Design
al Architecture
TERA

**ARK**

**SPACE**
*Public and Private Space*
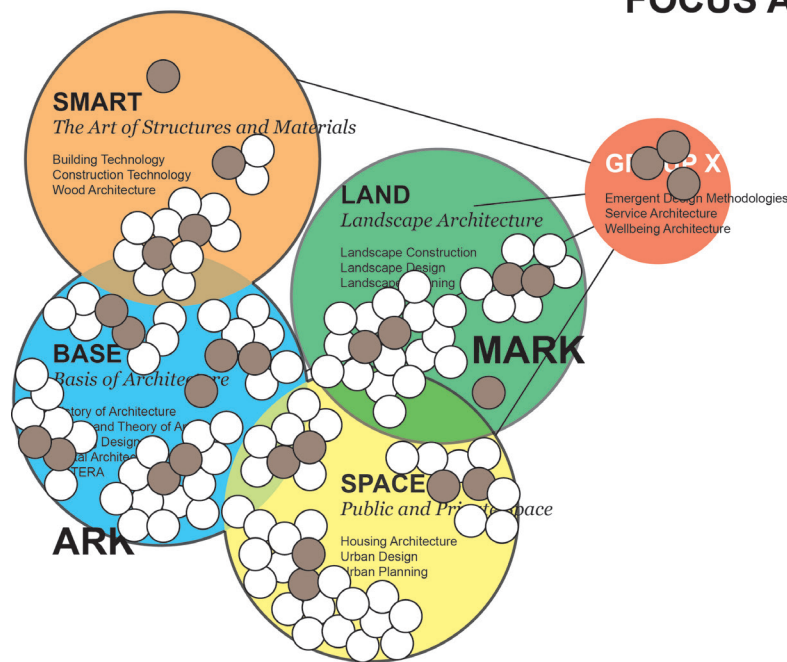Housing Architecture
Urban Design
Urban Planning

Figure 2. The focus areas of the Department of Architecture 2013 (Anonymous, 2013).

The picture becomes more vivid, and some differences between the professorships begin to emerge. It is possible to assume from the picture that there are differences in the fulfillment of the service of a professorship, in the teaching responsibilities, in the amount of completed ECTS credits, in the structure of the personnel, or in the use of financial recourses. On the other hand, some differences, like for example the relationship between teaching and research in different professorships, are not shown. Nor are the two separate degree programs, namely architecture and landscape architecture, brought to the fore. The substance and the learning outcomes of the teaching remain still at the title level. The explanation of the mutual cooperation of the focus areas (the overlaps in the figure) is discussed inside the community; it is often not explained to outsiders, such as the university, the students, or the partners in cooperation—nor to the teaching personnel outside the faculty.

In the next two chapters I will observe this interface, which is the reality of teaching in the Department of Architecture. What are the conditions of working there and how is the teaching work defined?

**Remuneration for work done**

The fees for hourly-paid teachers are defined in the guidelines on hourly-paid teaching at Aalto University (Anonymous, 2012). The teachers' contractual employment starts at the beginning of their course and terminates at the end of the course, unless the teacher has duties such as the evaluation of assignments. In the latter case the agreement can end "slightly later [than the course]". All preparatory work, teaching and evaluation work should be included in the calculation of the total hours, and the preparatory work is not to be paid for separately. (Anonymous, 2012). According to this, the wage of the hourly-paid teacher whose task is to tutor an assignment is rather simple to define. However, what if the teacher is a course-responsible hourly-paid teacher, who will implement his or her course independently? How will his or her wage be defined?

I will start to answer the question by exploring what kind of entity the implementation of an academic course constitutes. During the preparatory phase, the teacher discusses the course with her professor and possibly also with other teachers and partners that are involved in the course. During these discussions, the content of the course is defined, the learning outcomes and assessment criteria are checked, and the methods of teaching are chosen. After this, the teacher starts to prepare the contact teaching, in other words lectures, assignments and tutoring. She is in contact with the planning officer concerning the course information, timetable and booking of the classrooms. She plans the teaching, prepares the lectures and the supporting materials, makes agreements with visiting lecturers, takes care that the required source information and materials are acquired for the exercises, and reserves a possibly needed exhibition space. In addition to this, she is required to take care of the administrative contracts with the professor and the university, and normally to reactivate her IT service user name. The digital learning platform for the course has to be created or at least updated, and if there are some tools that are required, their condition and availability have to be checked. The actual teaching (as well as the payment of her wage) will start at the beginning of the course: lecturing, instructing, supporting the students and keeping an eye on their progress, delivering the supporting material; and at the end of the course designing and building the possible closing exhibition, giving final feedback to the students, and collecting student feedback. After the course has finished, the teacher assesses the students' performances, defines their grades and forwards them to the registrar. Then she reads the student feedback and has a reflective discussion about it with her professor and any co-teachers. Finally, the (possible) exhibition has to be taken down and the teaching material archived.

The above list comprehensively presents the different parts of a teacher's work when implementing a course that is part of the degree programs at Aalto University's School of Art, Architecture and Design. Naturally, each course is a combination of its own parts, and all above-mentioned details do not belong to all courses. It is up to independent professorships as to what kind of courses are put into practice by hourly-paid teachers or by the faculty. There is always a considerable amount of preparatory and

administrative work in teaching, and to some extent this is taken into consideration in the guidelines on hourly-paid teaching at the university, as referred to above. However, the guidelines do not give any precise definitions on the preparation work (Anonymous, 2012). It leaves it to be agreed case by case, which may lead to unequal treatment of the hourly-paid teachers and diminish the position of the novice teachers.

The first implementation of any course is more laborious than subsequent ones. There is a note about this in the guidelines (Anonymous, 2012). To my mind one should not have hourly-paid teachers doing one-off course implementation. By giving teachers an opportunity to teach the course several times, they also get the opportunity to spread the effort involved in creating a new course over a longer time span.[1] Unfortunately, there is great uncertainty in the continuation of contractual employment. According to the above-mentioned guidelines, the agreements of hourly-paid teachers are signed for a single academic term. Any allowances for the next calendar year are revealed at the end of the previous year, which leads to a situation whereby professors cannot guarantee the renewal of the employment agreements for the forthcoming academic term or year. This uncertainty reduces teacher motivation and does nothing to encourage them to develop the course or their teaching.

**The academic working environment**

By observing the number of hourly-paid teachers in the Department of Architecture, the workload of the human resources personnel is also highlighted. The number of employment agreements formulated every academic term is laborious. The passage of the agreements is complex and the documents to be signed circulate through different levels of the organization. Thanks to the complex passage system, it is common for the teachers to start not only their preparation work but also their teaching work before they have a signed agreement.

Hourly-paid teachers have no access to the mutual databases of the department or the disk space on the intranet. Therefore, they cannot access the common material that describes the practices of the department, such as the matrix of the tasks in the service organization. Questions that hourly-paid teachers have concerning this kind of information are answered by the service personnel or by the faculty. The hourly-paid teachers are not visible in the structure of the organization, and therefore no measures are made to support their work or their existence in the organization.

There have been a few attempts to share the common know-how of the working community through an open access forum. Between 2011 and 2014 there was an FAQ web page for the hourly-paid teachers within the History of Architecture teaching community. In order to enable open access to this information, the questions and answers were located on my personal web pages (Kivimäki, 2015). In 2012, research assistant Tervo and I created a handbook for planning a course. It was published as a leaflet. On the teachers' own initiative, an e-mail list of the hourly-paid teachers was also created in 2012. Unfortunately it was not properly taken into use among the department's other lists. The updating work of the list was regarded as laborious, and some hourly-paid teachers complained about the number of

1 For more on how teacher's teaching develops over the years, see Heidi Paavilainen's article in this special issue.

messages they received. The list was taken out of use, which meant that the course-responsible hourly-paid teachers fell back into an information void.

The hourly-paid teachers and the course-responsible hourly-paid teachers have different needs concerning IT technology. Whereas many hourly-paid teachers do not even activate their IT service username, the course-responsible hourly-paid teachers have a need to use the university's computers and printers. In practice, they cannot take advantage of the disk space related to their contract. The existence of the disk space and the possibility to access it is related to their employment agreements, so these services are not usable outside the terms.

At the same time, the implementations of the courses have little by little been connected to different digital platforms and online tools, both in teaching and in administration. The hourly-paid teachers do not have user rights to some of these systems. IT and printing systems, including informing and training related to them, are aimed exclusively at faculty members, and the real structure of the teaching personnel is thus not taken into account in the development work of teaching tools. Nevertheless, the course-responsible hourly-paid teachers have contacts with the IT service personnel – who refer to these teachers using the descriptive nickname *UFO*.

**Consequences for the teacher**

The current guidelines for paying wages to hourly-paid teachers support those situations where the courses do not change. The tasks of the teacher, including preparation work, teaching, and assessment, are defined in the guidelines, but there is no mention of "planning of teaching". This excludes the hourly-paid teachers from the planning work, and makes them dependent on their superior and/or their closest colleagues (and the students) for getting information on the surrounding course structure and teaching work.

Another task missing from the guidelines is "the development work of the teaching". In a roundabout way this impels the staff to sail through teaching in the easiest, most familiar and most economical way. The policy of paying wages and the sharing-out of resources of the university, as well as the continuous uncertainty of the continuation of the work do nothing to motivate hourly-paid teachers in their work. The university gives no reason to assess and develop the teaching methods in use, to acquire didactic or pedagogic know-how to support one's work, or to develop the substance of the course. On the other hand – the hourly-paid teachers can no longer participate in the pedagogical training provided by Aalto University's Learning Service Unit.

The guidelines easily become the norm in the administration. With the policies and guidelines, the university excludes a significant number of its teachers from the development work of teaching. This makes collaborative development work almost impossible. Collaborative teaching development, in my view, is the basis for the creation of the teaching community. In this, the community gets to know its

members and their expertise. The rethinking of one's own work within the community creates both the teaching profession and teaching. The teacher can share her know-how, and she has the opportunity to be heard in her own community.[2]

Without the support of the teaching community, the teacher turns out to be the definer and assessor of her own work. Carrying teaching out alone can easily lead to feelings of being marginalized. This can lead to undervaluing oneself, becoming exhausted and even leaving the teaching community. Can the teaching community afford this? Every time a member leaves the community, their tacit knowledge and experience is lost.

**Consequences for the teaching community**

In the departments, the degree program leaders are responsible for coordinating the planning of teaching. In the four figures in this article, there are no degree program leaders presented. In Figures 1 and 2, the degree program is divided into focus areas that the professors are responsible for. Figure 2 depicts the largest group of teachers in terms of numbers, the hourly-paid teachers. I would like to pose the following question: With what kind of processes is it possible to set learning outcomes, coordinate the structure and rhythm of teaching, the teaching methods or the overall workload of the teaching in the degree program level, if the hourly-paid teachers are excluded from the planning of teaching and the main coordinators of the teaching are not visible in the organizational figures?

Teaching resources are scattered. There are not only hourly-paid teachers in the teaching community but also researchers or faculty members, who have other commitments and are engaged in teaching in a more haphazard way. The Academy of Finland, which is particularly relevant organization to researchers, recommends that 5% of the annual working time of the researchers should be devoted to teaching.[3] However, as academy research fellow Forsman (2010) writes in his blog, 80 hours is not enough to prepare and implement a 2-3-credit unit course – not to mention to build up the course to be part of the degree program. An equivalent case is with the part-time professorship contracts with only 10–15% working time, resulting in about 160–240 annual working hours. How many of these working hours are spent teaching, and how is the teaching connected to be part of the degree program?

The teaching community is not only being explained by presentations like Figure 1. I claim it is also being managed based on the same diagram. The teaching is being put into practice by a vast group of specialists that do not have the opportunity to have their voice heard in the decision-making, and thus, their needs are not necessarily taken into consideration in services, informing and training. Uncertainties related to work may diminish the working motivation of the personnel. The teaching community cannot

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2 During the academic year 2011-2012, two training courses on instructing students for members of the faculty and hourly-paid teachers were put into practice. The initiative behind this training came from Professor Aino Niskanen from the field of History of Architecture. The teachers who took part in these courses represented different chairs of the department and met each other for the first time as teachers. The feedback received from the participants was particularly good. Reflecting on one's own work with other colleagues was regarded as extremely fruitful.

3 At Aalto University, the recommended amount of teaching for doctorate-level researchers is 5-10% of the total working hours (Anonymous, 2014).

cooperate efficiently, because the structure of the community slows down the dialogue. It also prevents the organization from learning from itself.

Could this lead to a situation where it is not possible to make changes in teaching, even though there is a will to do it? How much of the working time of the faculty is spent not on teaching and researching but supporting and tutoring the hourly-paid teachers? How many of the planning officers' working hours are spent not on planning work but on supporting and tutoring the students, because the teachers cannot answer the questions regarding their studies? How much of the administrative personnel's time is devoted to termly employment contracts and other work-related questions posed by the hourly-paid teachers, whose number is five times that of the faculty?

**Questioning the way of operating and learning from it**
The work of the hourly-paid teachers is important to the department. The resources and expertise of the faculty cannot fulfill the demands of the vast degree program. In the professorships of the Department of Architecture, the regular personnel quite often consists of a professor and a lecturer. Thus, there is a strong need for the participation of this numerous group of specialists, at least in teaching – and to my mind also in having an interactive role in the academic organization.

Professor Engeström (2004), who works in the field of cultural-historical activity theory, has pointed out that an organization is not only a formal structure and a social process – it also exists in order to produce something (p. 78-79). I could refer to teaching and research as the products and the students as the customers of the academic organization.  Teaching and research are products with a long life cycle, and students (at least as a group) are long-term customers. In contrast to this there is far less continuity in the employment relationships of the teaching personnel. The conditions of the teaching organization have changed, and there is a great need to reconsider the aims of action and the methods of interaction and collaboration in the academic organization.

Engeström (2004) names three different types or modes of collaboration (p. 106). In all of them the participants interact with the aim of the action, with the manuscript of practices and with each other. Engeström rests his analysis on the three types of interaction originally described by Raeithel (1983): *coordination, cooperation and communication*. Kokkonen (2011a) has located the three types of collaboration into the frames of teaching. In the following I will try to illustrate this a bit further.

The traditional way of planning academic teaching has been close to that of a school system, where every teacher has her own subject or course. The teachers work in coordination: they follow a predefined curriculum and each of them has their own predefined tasks (courses) as aims of their action. The teachers fulfill the tasks without communicating with each other or challenging the manuscript of the action. The form of activity is territorial. There is seldom any common aim of action – nor any attempt to search for one.

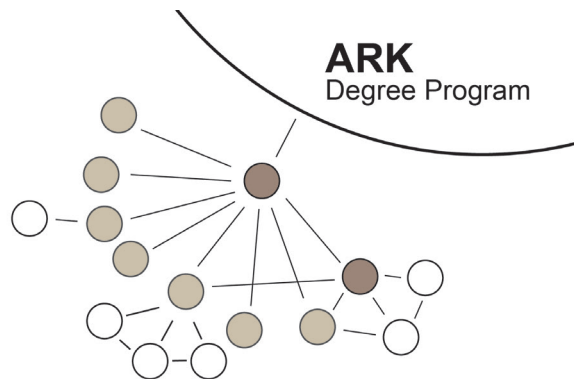Managing the teaching in the mode of coordination can be described by the following figure:



Figure 3. The figure describes a hierarchical and coordinative organization model of a professorship. In the figure the faculty is marked in darker grey and the hourly-paid teachers in white. Some of the hourly-paid teachers are course-responsible, and they are marked in lighter grey. The personnel communicate and plan teaching only through the mediation of the professor.

In a hierarchical structure like that in Figure 3, the hourly-paid teachers are connected to the teaching community and to the degree program only through the faculty of the professorship. The figure illustrates a teaching entity that is composed of the expertise of specialists. The structure, communication and social processes remain simple and the know-how of the teachers is not shared. The borderlines of professorship are clear. The organization structured like this is slow to react to changes.

There is an opportunity to develop teaching activity into a mode of cooperation, and also within coordination. For example, two teachers implementing a course together is an example of this (Kokkonen 2011a, p. 17-18). The teachers start to communicate with each other, and often create new concrete solutions. They start to challenge the limits of the manuscript of practices and observe their own interaction. However, the manuscript is not intentionally being questioned. Therefore, cooperation may remain as a short-term phase in interaction and does not lead to permanent changes in the organization (Engeström 2004, p. 108). Their working methods may be shared, but new inventions rarely lead to permanent change in the system.

On the other hand, in the mode of communication, all members share a common aim of their actions. While working towards it they also pay attention to their own interaction and ways of working. Both the aim of action and the ways of working undergo reflective reassessment and development (Engeström, 2004, p. 109). Engeström talks about community-wide communication, continuous thinking and self-assessment while planning teaching, for example. The continuous assessment of common work and working methods brings them to the fore and assists in their renewal (Engeström 2004, p. 19). By developing a new way of action and taking it into use, the organization learns and expands its knowledge (Engeström, 2004, p. 59).

It is crucial to have learning, assessment and collaborative developing as continuous action. In order to foster the renewal of an organization, Engeström (2004) suggests concentrating on learning, knowledge, trust and social processes instead of traditional leadership and the monopolization of information (p. 77-78). In organizations like that presented in Figure 3, expansive learning is not possible because the social processes are lacking horizontal communicative movement and dialogue. In Figure 4 I attempt to illustrate interactive communication, where the hourly-paid teachers would be brought into the teaching community as active members and the community would expand its knowledge.
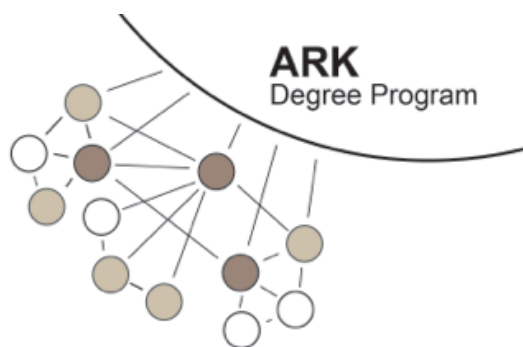


Figure 4. As in the previous organizational model, here the faculty of a professorship is marked in darker grey, the course-responsible hourly-paid teachers in lighter grey, and the hourly-paid teachers in white. The teachers teach cooperatively and they have the possibility to directly communicate with each other. There is a core group in the professorship, which enables broader internal and external communication. The teaching community is smaller because with better communication the overlaps between teaching and administration are easier to discover and solve.

In the ideal scenario depicted in Figure 4, movement and communication within the teaching organization have increased. There is a change in the sharing of the financial resources and in the amount of faculty in relation to hourly-paid teachers. The hourly-paid teachers join the communicative process of planning the teaching. The communication has also increased the mutual knowledge regarding the substance of teaching. This may have narrowed down the overlaps in teaching: it has become more efficient. When the group of teachers gets smaller, there is a decrease in the need for administration. As Engeström (2004) points out: "The most important communicative events take place in the practice of production […], not in any separate 'action of communication'" (p. 106).

**How?**
Members of the teaching community in the Department of Architecture are aware of the organizational problems that exist in the teaching community. The situation has been described using the term "siloed", meaning that the professorships are seen as silos and teaching is being too strongly outlined within them. There are attempts every now and then to lower the barriers between the different professorships. One of

them is described in Figure 1 of this article. The idea of the professorships cooperating is currently being put into operation.

In order to enable dialogue between the professorships, there have been some internal overviews of teaching in the department. The paucity of such (internal) overviews has an effect on the character of the occasions. The gatherings easily become too large for those who are in charge of arranging and those participating. Regular meetings in relation to teaching would be extremely important to the community, and in my view there should be an opportunity for the hourly-paid teachers to join in.[4]

Sharing information and planning collaboratively is important, but it is possible only for very few teachers to reserve time for all the meetings necessary. The idea of developing teaching by communication is hard to carry out if the planning is done alongside the existing work without challenging the methods of both the work and the planning. Kokkonen and Linkola (2011), teachers at the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, have presented an idea of communicative planning of teaching on an open Internet platform. The platform would offer a workplace for the planning of teaching, and bring openness and publicity along with the process right from the start The openness of the platform would increase communicative action in the process and diminish the need to put in the extra effort of informing the teaching community about the work under way. This kind of platform would also give broader tools with which to lead the teaching.

This platform might indeed free up discussion from time and place, bring flexibility to participation and keep the process on the move between meetings. An open process, I believe, would enable a broader group of participants to attend. But most of all, I think it enables new connections and ideas. Participation is possible for all members of the teaching community as well as representatives of stakeholders – and importantly also students (Linkola, 2011, p. 64).

As Kokkonen points out (2011a, p. 19), using open social media as a tool in planning challenges the traditional methods. Having outsiders participating also challenges customary habits and places them under assessment. The online platform enables both the administration of the planning process and the distribution and archiving of information. When the process and the material are open, those who have not been able to participate meetings also have the opportunity to keep track of the process (Kokkonen 2011b, p. 69).

Naturally, this is a very general outline of a process that needs all the supportive structures that any planning process needs, such as a core group in charge and active participants who are responsible for keeping the structure clear. In the process of taking a new way of working or new working space into use, the current tasks of the members of the teaching community should be reconsidered and re-resourced. A new system should not be taken into use side by side with the old way of working. The resources for

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4 A decision was made in spring 2015 to set aside money that year to be able to pay wages to hourly-paid teachers joining these kinds of gatherings (Personal e-mail communication, February 2015).

leading the teaching should be taken into account. A process like this does not happen by order; there should be communicative and open processing going on about how the work will be done before the actual planning starts.

However, the idea of the open planning process and the combination of traditional meetings and the use of an online platform is captivating. In my own teaching work I have enjoyed those moments when I have had the possibility to cooperate and teach with other teachers. I have learned more in these moments and I have also been able to share my own experiences. In teaching together, the sharing of experiences is part of the whole. It would be extremely interesting to enlarge the cooperation and invite the whole teaching community to participate in the planning of one's course. Could we develop our teaching community by opening our teaching up to each other as early as in the planning phase?

**If we had…**
What if we had an online degree program platform, which would be open to at least all members of the department? All courses of each professorship would have a place in this virtual environment, and all actions and discussions would be open. Those interested parties could follow the preparation and planning of the courses. All syllabuses, workload estimations, timetables and financial resources would be visible. The online platform would decrease the need for traditional meetings and enable online meetings. All material could be delivered through and archived in the platform. It would be possible for the hourly-paid teachers, the representatives of the stakeholders and the students to take part in the processes. The platform could work as a route to deliver the know-how of the teachers, and the common awareness of what is going on in the teaching community would increase.

The open degree program platform could turn out to be a preserve of the internal pedagogical know-how of the teaching community. The shared knowledge of projects past, present and future would increase, as well as the knowledge of the strengths and interests of colleagues. There would be a natural place for cooperation across the internal borders in the organization. Opening up the planning process of a singular teacher in an open environment could work as a motivator to other colleagues or give birth to new cooperative processes (Kokkonen, 2011c, p. 10).

Open planning would give the hourly-paid teachers an opportunity to follow the planning of the teaching also participate in it if they wanted. I believe that in an open environment it would be easier to ask questions or request assistance. The needs for training or further education would also emerge, and it would be easier to respond to them.

Teaching is a process that demands clear management and a constant assessment of the interaction or situation in order to proceed. Hourly-paid teachers are a remarkable group of teaching professionals, whose working conditions in the department should be discussed more comprehensively. The university as a responsible employer should examine the position of the course-responsible hourly-paid teachers

and the impact of the present structure of the teaching personnel. To the same degree, the university as a responsible operator in teaching should examine the studying experience of the students. It is a salient point that the majority of the teachers in the department cannot participate in the planning of the teaching and the actions of the teaching community.

The idea that I have presented about the online degree program platform is just that, an idea lacking any technical survey or closer inspection. Regardless of the tool the planning and developing is made from, the work will not bear fruit if all the teachers are not represented in the development work and if the work itself is not done collaboratively. It could be fruitful to ensure by financial resourcing, personnel management and with technical solutions the possibility for hourly-paid teachers to participate in the definition of teaching and the practices of the degree program. By broadening the discussion, we could benefit from a wider perspective in decision-making, better opportunities for making changes, and greater commitment to the decisions made.

Hourly-paid teachers and the conditions of their work is a topic worthy of a closer survey. How do they themselves regard their position and their duties within the teaching community of Department of Architecture? What kind of wishes and needs do they have towards the university? How about the other degree programs – is the strong presence of hourly-paid teachers as common in the departments of art and design? What about the fields of engineering and economics? And then, perhaps what is the most important point of view: How do the students experience learning on the department's degree programs? Let us return to Figure 2 and take a look at the pedagogical interface of the university: the numerous hourly-paid teachers. Is it possible, with the present structure of the teaching personnel, to offer a fluent and effective study path for the students to develop into the experts of the future? Is our teaching organization able to answer to the challenges of the future—do we as teachers and as a teaching organization act as we teach?

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