

# The ADTL role—stepping stone or speed bump?

Craig McInnis (PhillipsKPA)  
and Hamish Coates (MCSHE)



# Overview

- Research evidence base
- Academic workforce
- Leadership implications
- Leading as an Associate Dean
- Questions for discussion

# Research Evidence Base

[Covers of:]

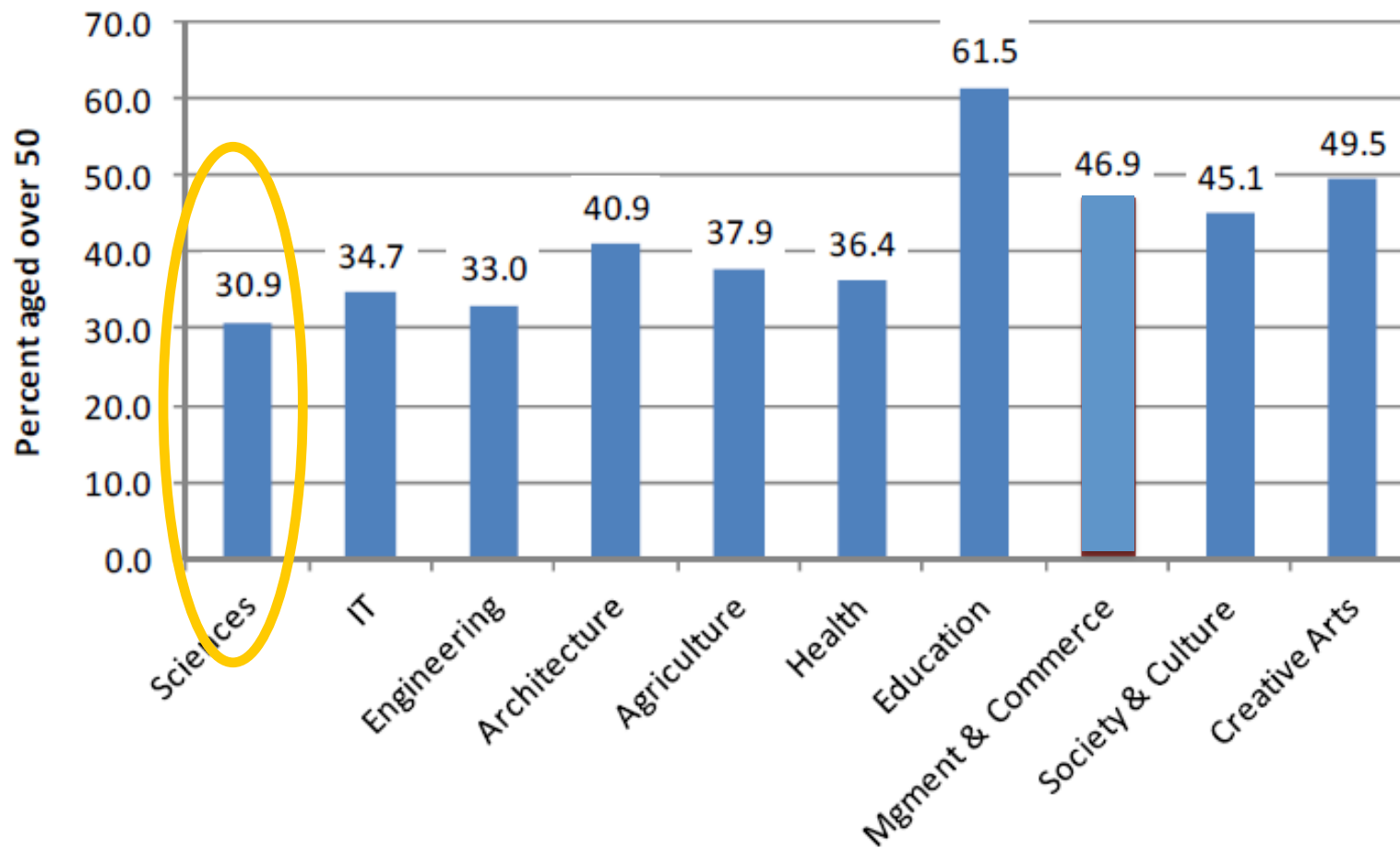
- Executive leadership of learning and teaching in higher education, McInnes, Ramsden, Maconachie (, OLT
- Learning Leaders in times of change, Scott, Coates & Anderson (2008), ALTC, ACER
- Executive leadership of research development, McInnes, Ramsden, Maconachie (2012), OLT
- The attractiveness of the Australian academic profession: a comparative analysis Coates et al (2009) Research Briefing, ACER
- Profiling diversity of Australian Universities Coates et al (2013) Research Briefing, ACER
- Academic and Professional identities in Higher Education, Gordon & Whitchurch
- Job satisfaction around the Academic World, Bentley et al
- Forming, recruiting and managing the academic profession, Teichler and Cummings

# Academic workforce

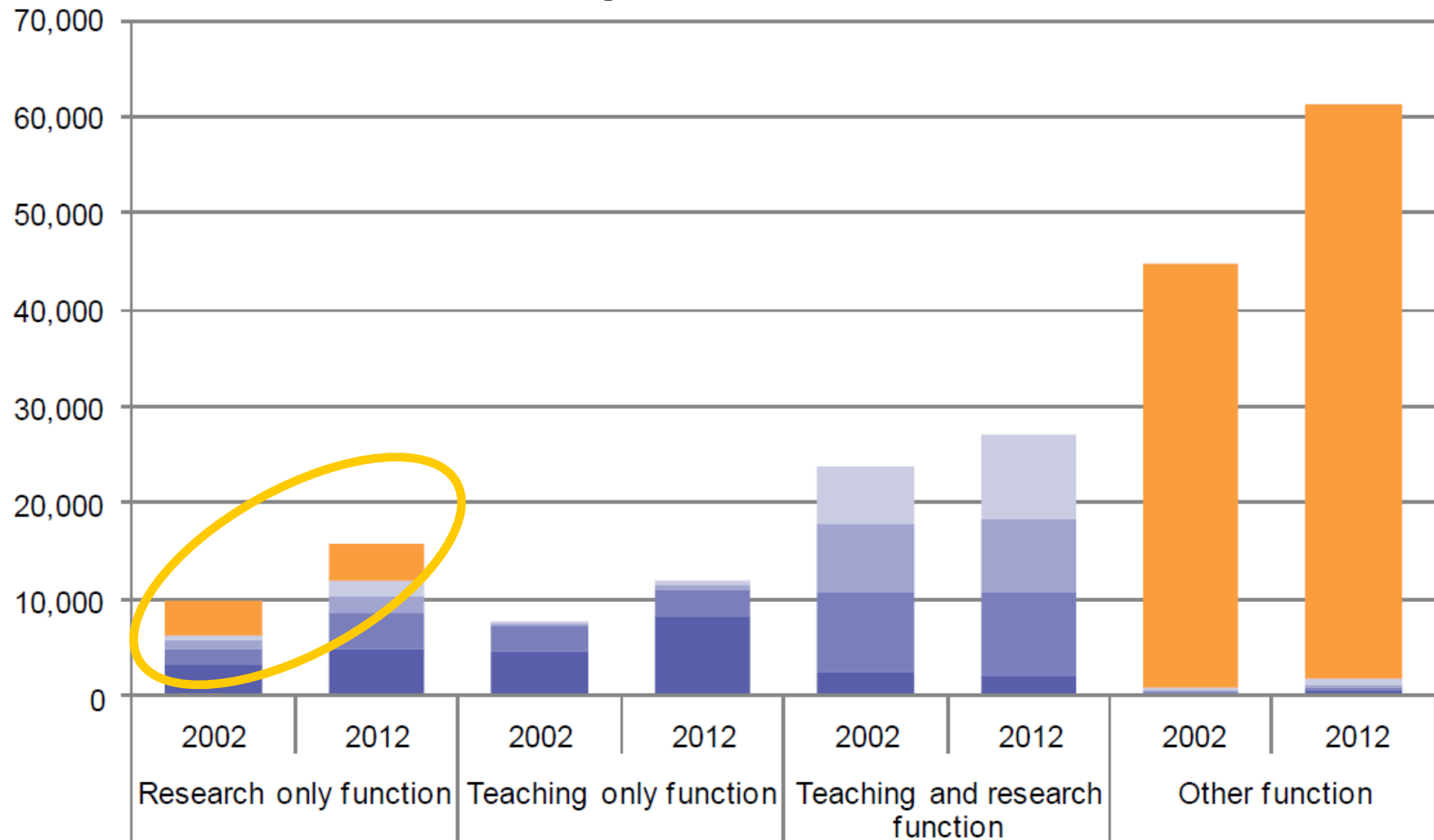
- From data that we have, the **academic workforce** is changing in nature and size
- The nature of **academic work** has changed and will change further—permutations abounding but a **trifurcation** looks likely
- **Future academic work** will involve nuanced arrangements of teaching, research, engagement and management capability

# Aging academic workforce

Academics aged 50+ by field



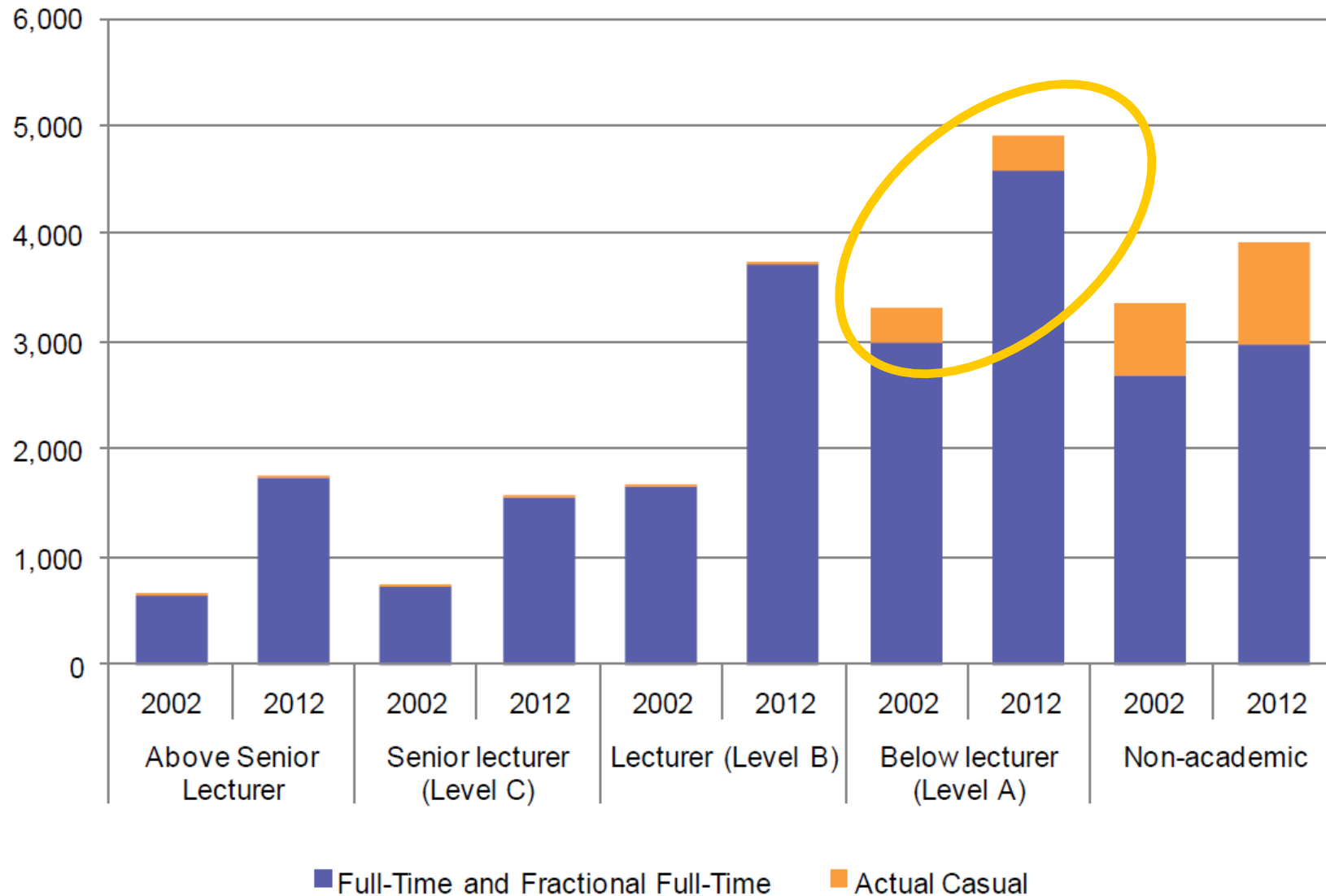
# Staff FTE in public universities



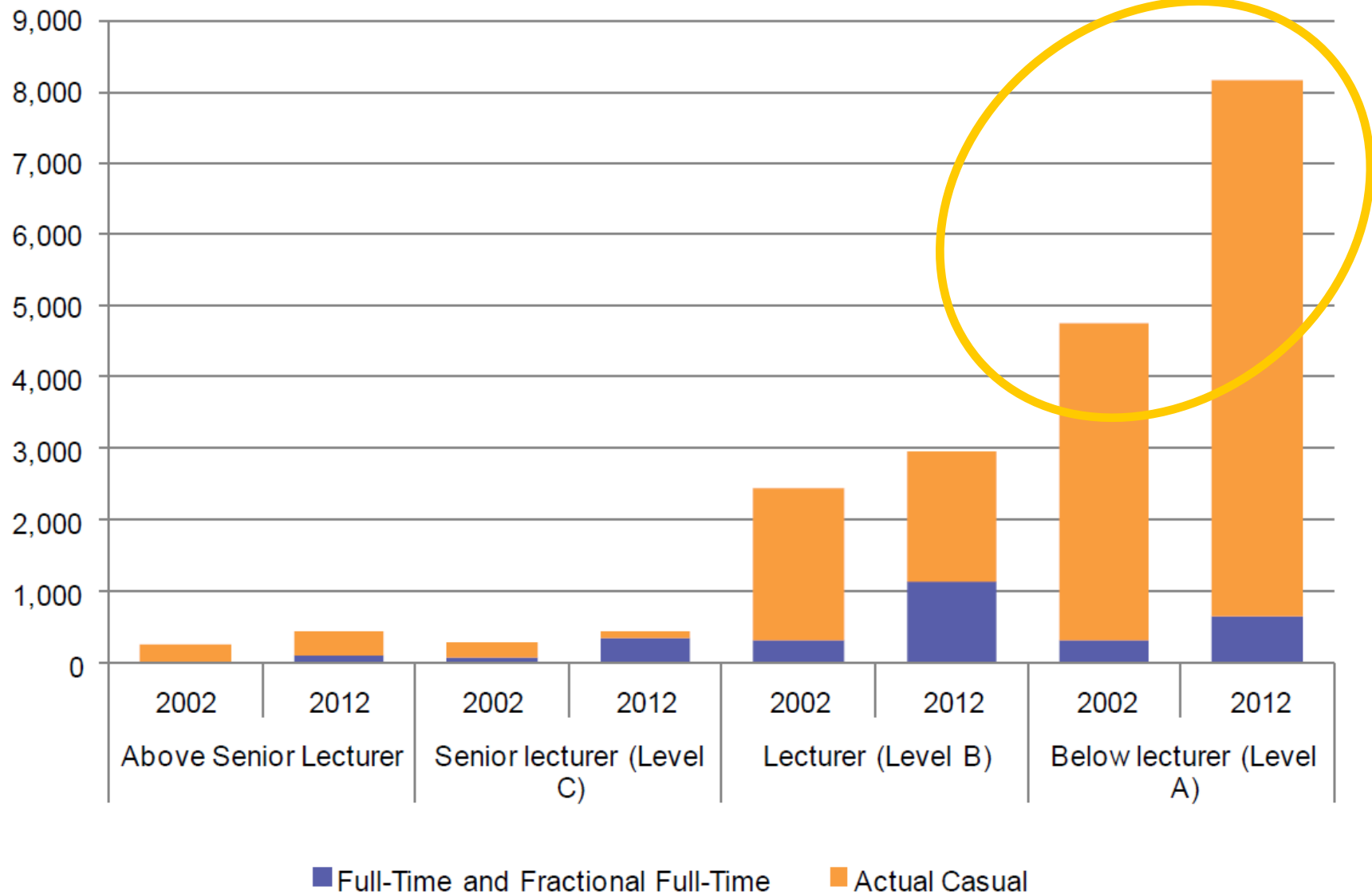
■ Below lecturer (Level A) ■ Lecturer (Level B) ■ Senior lecturer (Level C)  
 ■ Above Senior Lecturer ■ Non-academic

Group of Eight (2014)

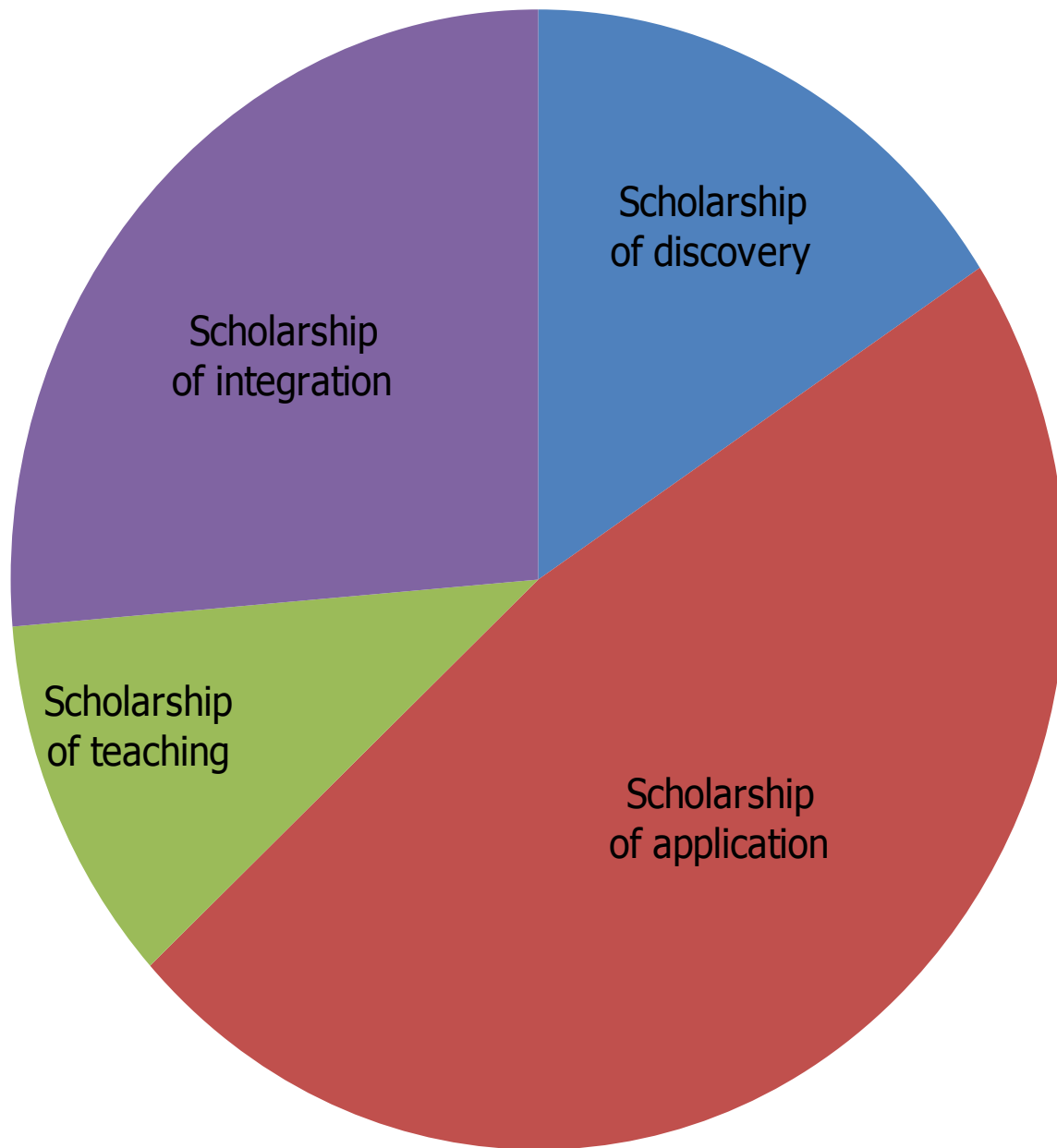
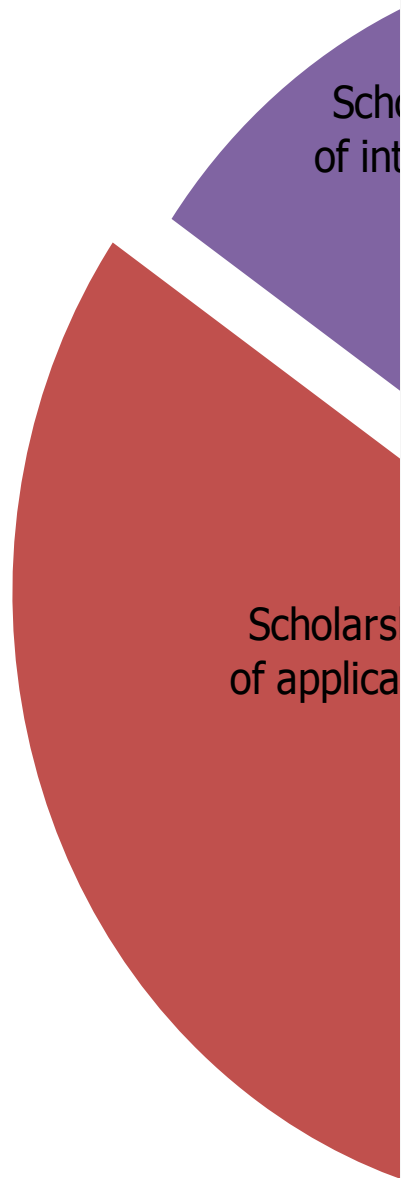
# Research-only staff FTE



# Teaching-only staff FTE







# Imagining classifications

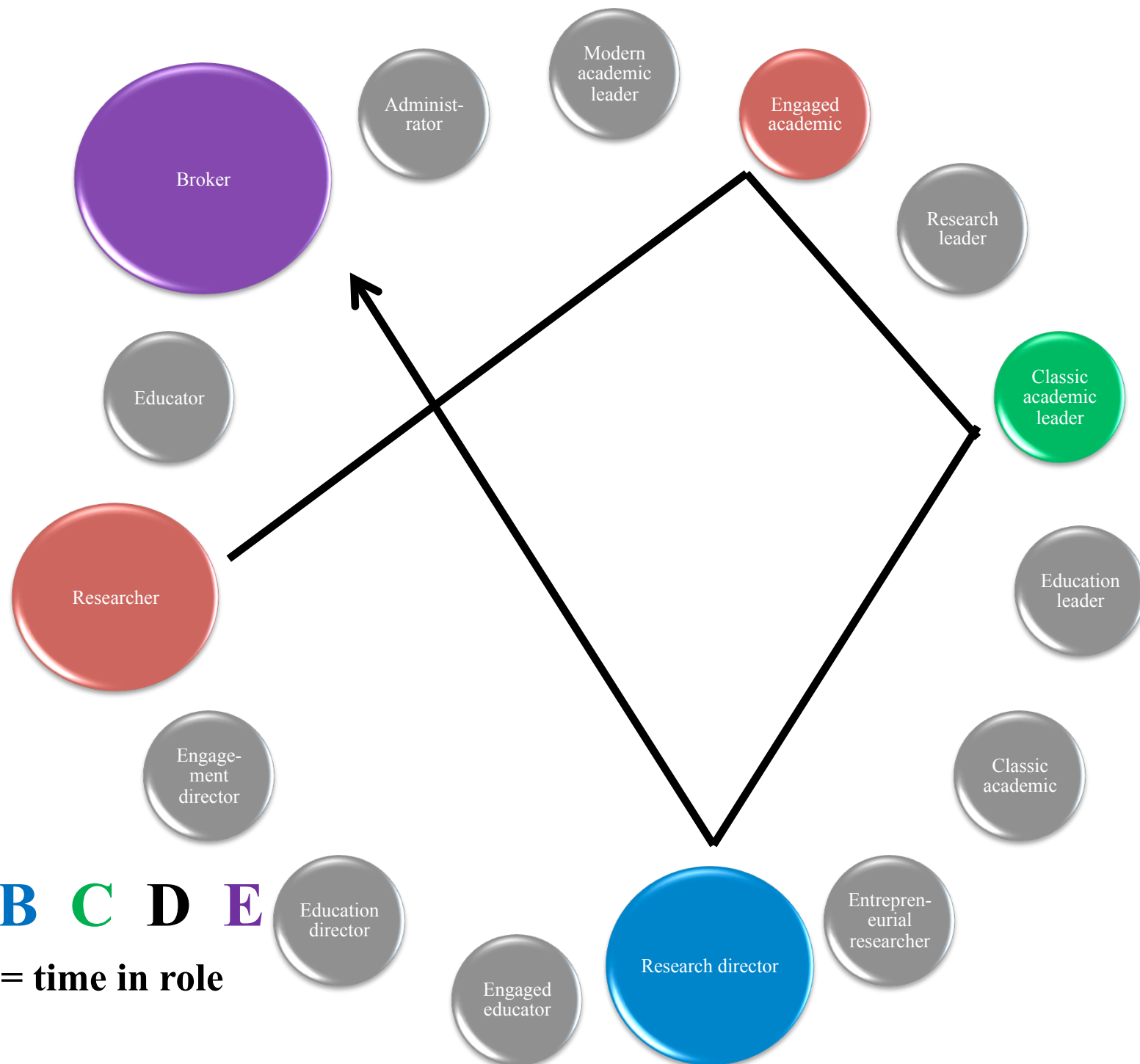
	Research	Education	Industry and community engagement	Leadership and management	Label
--	----------	-----------	-----------------------------------	---------------------------	-------

Research	Education	Industry and community engagement	Leadership and management	Level	Tenure (years)	Role
20%	80%			B	1	Classic academic
10%		90%		B	3	Entrepreneurial researcher
50%	25%	25%		C	6	Engaged academic
33%	33%	34%		C	9	Engaged academic
50%		10%	40%	D	15	Research leader
25%		50%	25%	E	19	Modern academic leader
30%	10%		60%	E	24	Classic academic leader

	X		X	Education director
		X	X	Engagement director
X				Researcher
	X			Educator
		X		Broker
			X	Administrator

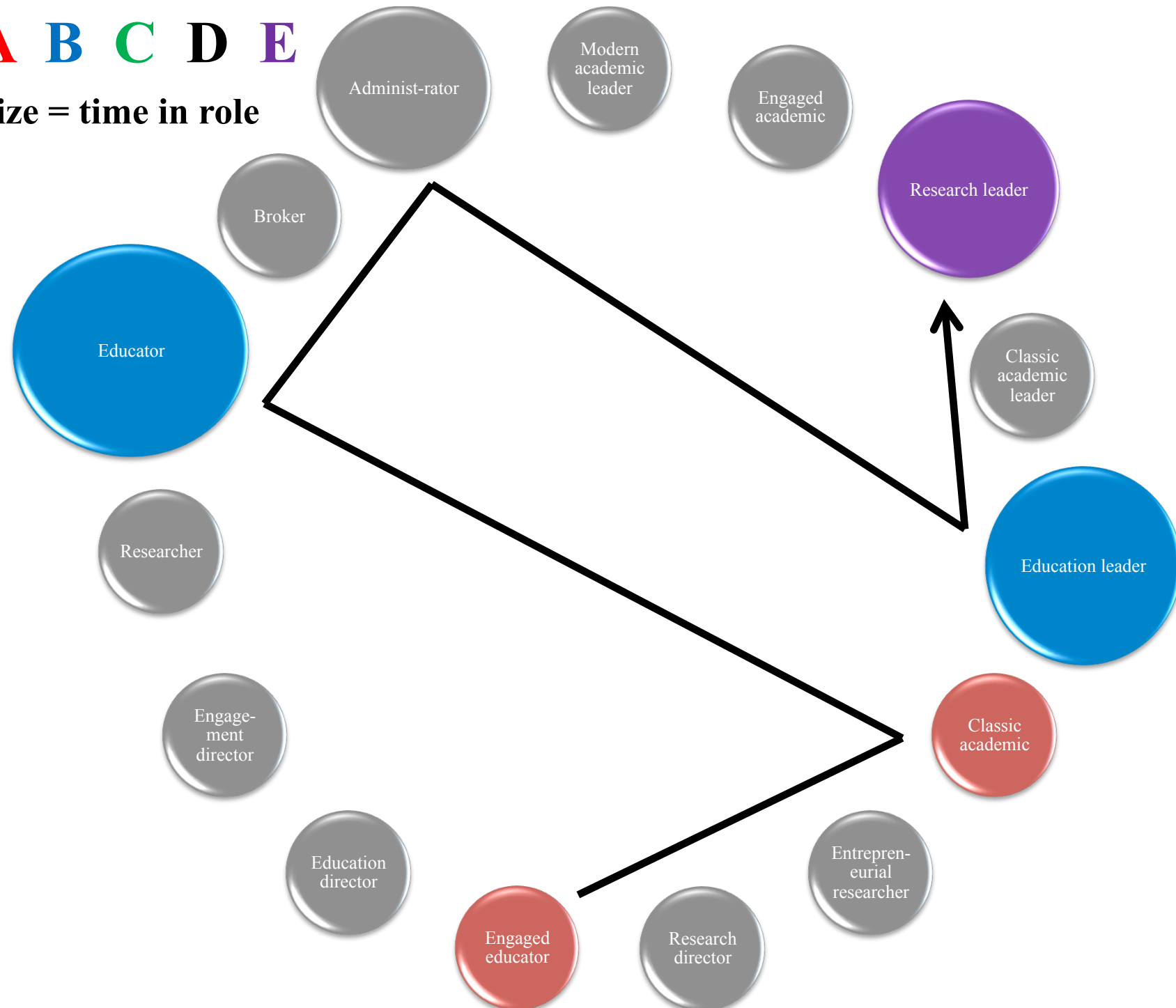


**A B C D E**

**Size = time in role**

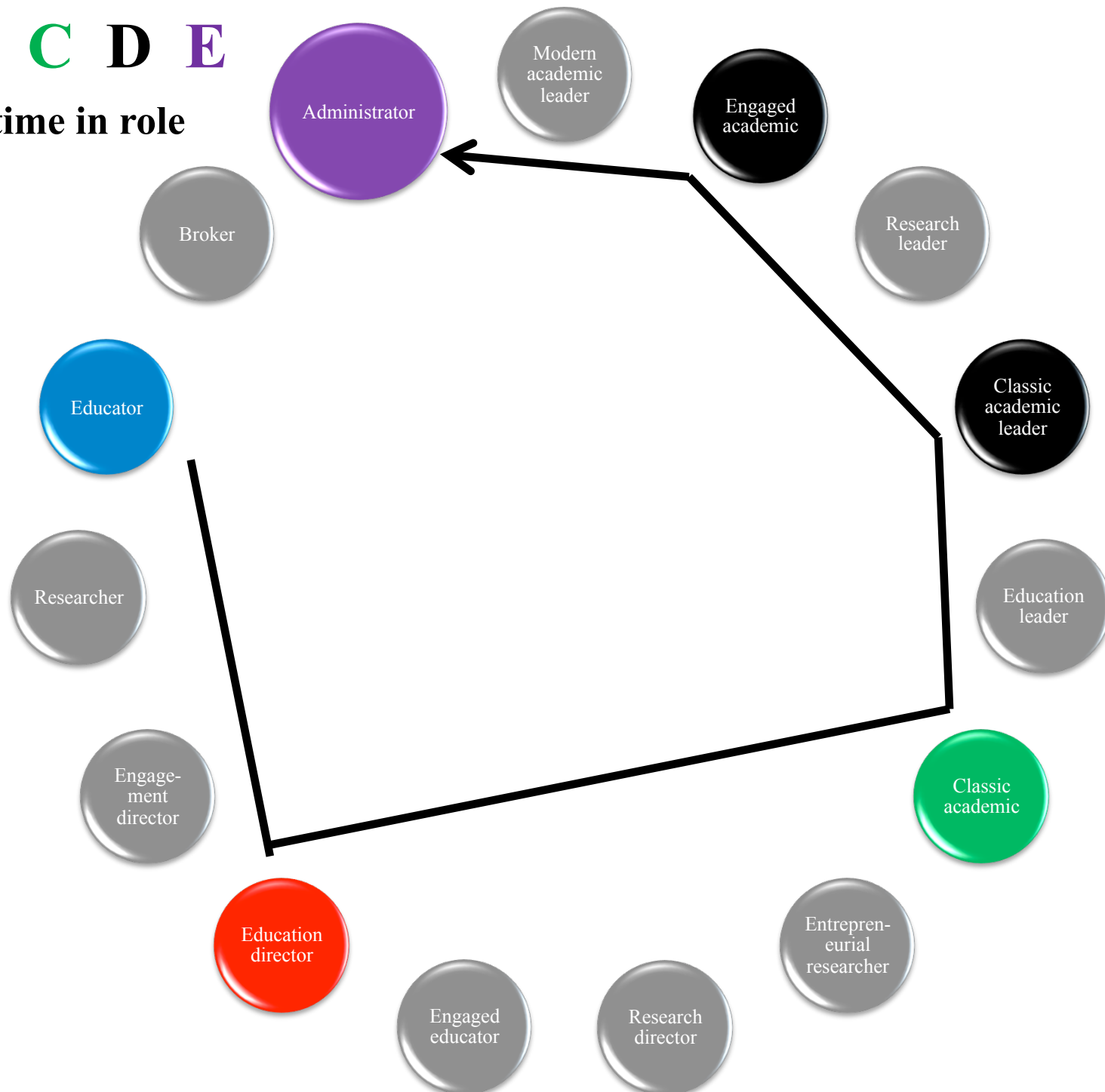
**A B C D E**

**Size = time in role**



**A B C D E**

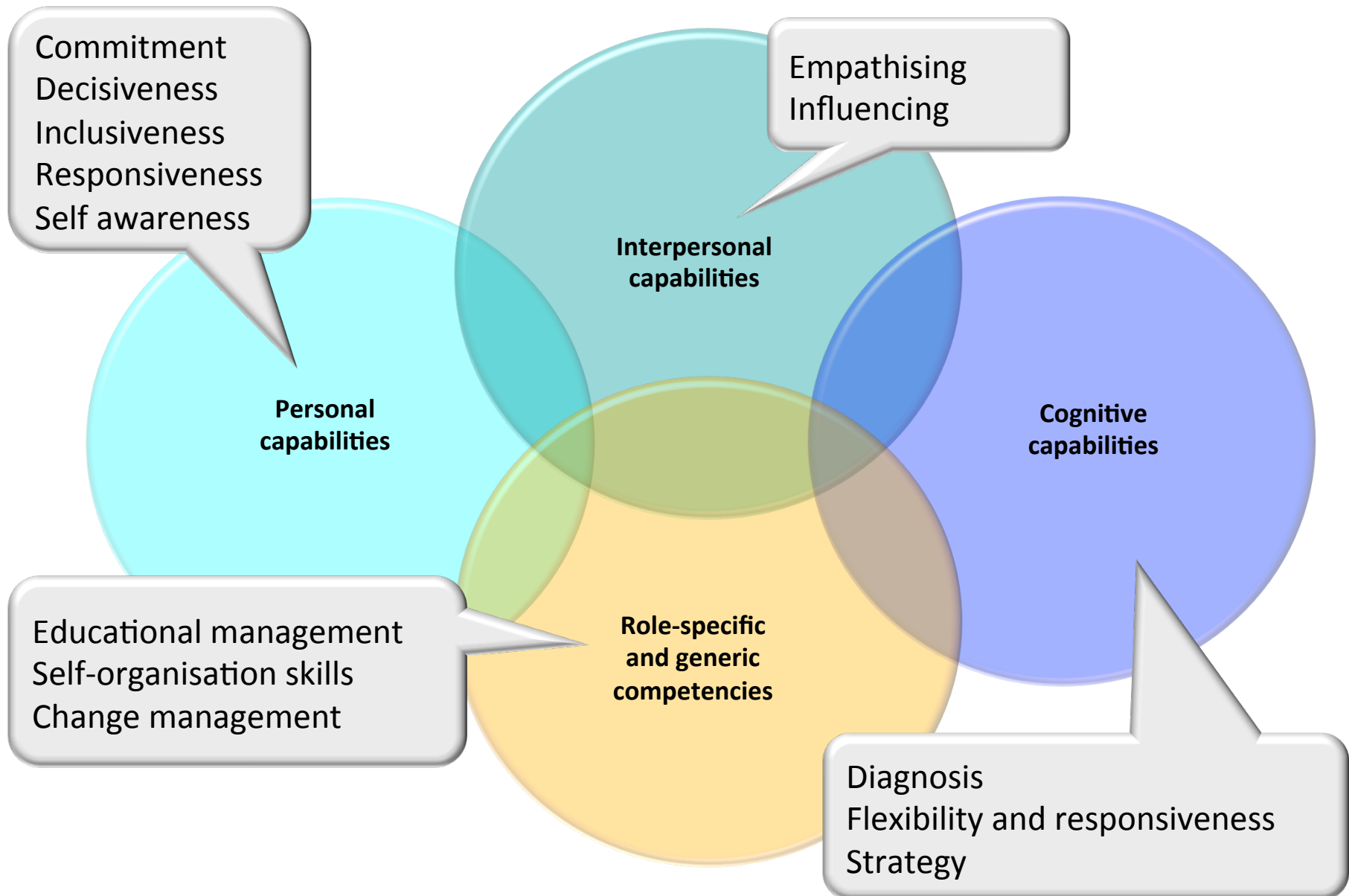
**Size = time in role**



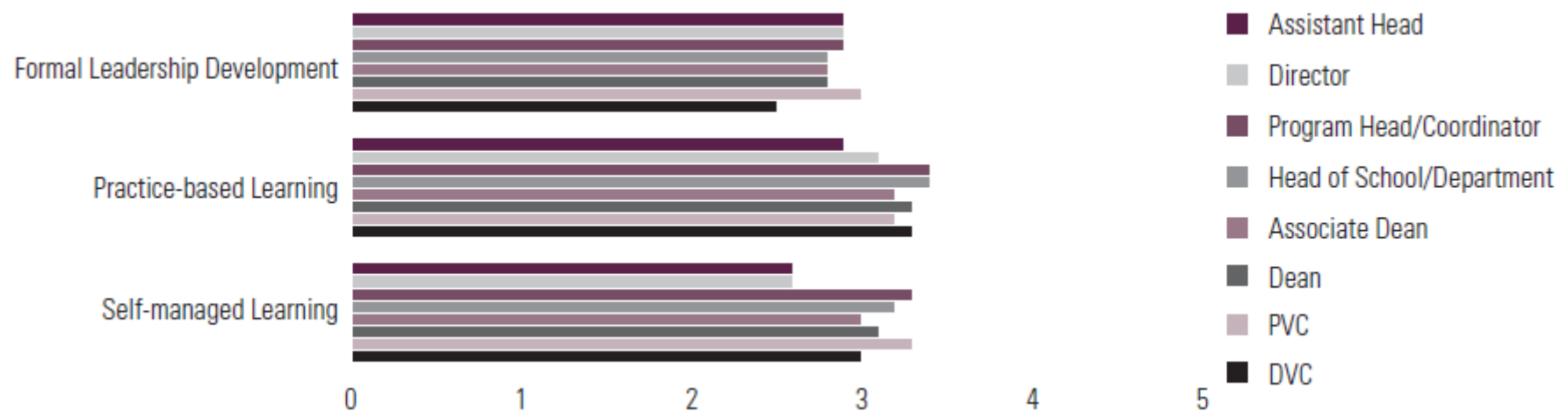
# Leadership implications

- Higher education moving into a much more **complex strategic and operating context**
- Academic leadership requires **specialist entrepreneurial skills**
- Effective academic leadership **can be taught** through mixture of education and experience

# Academic leadership



# Preferred approaches to leadership development





# Leadership metaphors

- Herding cats
- Getting butterflies to fly in formation
- Juggling
- Being a gardener
- Conducting of an orchestra/directing a play
- Keeping a flotilla heading in the same direction
- Being the captain of a sailing ship
- Coaching a successful sporting team
- Climbing a mountain together
- Plumbing a building - essential but no one sees it
- Being a diplomat
- Wearing multiple hats at the same time
- Being the older sibling in a large family
- Working with a dysfunctional family
- Being the minister of a church where only the converted come
- Voting Labor in a safe Liberal seat
- Matchmaking
- Bartending

- Being a small fish in a large cloudy pond
- Being a salmon trying to swim upstream
- Rowing without an oar
- Sailing a leaky ship - faulty bilge pump
- Being the meat in the sandwich
- Wading through a quagmire of bureaucracy
- Pushing a pea uphill with my nose
- Riding a bicycle on a tightrope
- Having a Ferrari with no money for fuel
- Being a one-armed paper hanger working in a gale
- Trying to nail jelly to the ceiling whilst trying to put out spot fires with my feet
- Trying to drive a nail into a wall of blanc-mange - little resistance but no result
- Being in groundhog day
- Living in a medieval castle
- Being a Rubik's cube
- Being in an Escher painting

Scott, Coates & Anderson (2008)

# **ADTLs - Stepping stone or speed bump?**

Only two choices?

“The everyday realities of the academic workplace are pushing collegial governance opportunities to one side as academics are increasingly faced with the prospect of choosing between being involved in governance or being academics.”

# Operational manager - speed bump?

Assisting  
Advising  
Supporting  
Representing  
Coordinating  
Mentoring  
Participating  
Ensuring  
Undertaking.....

# What ADTLs say they do

priorities on the ground

influencer and broker

agenda setter

conversation starter

barrier remover

provider of solutions

leading operational teams

driving change

quality management

gatekeepers

vision setter

direction setter

empowering people

researcher

capability / career developer

# THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER ED

July 14, 2015

[Home](#)[News](#)[Global](#)[Opinion & Ideas](#)[Facts & Figures](#)[Blogs](#)[Advice](#)[For](#)

## Advice

---

[!\[\]\(47734e4656765d20df4fdbd5b7aff048\_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(effba44ea72cb8c77bdc1dac75561f86\_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(08cc52f09689b06e3ee5a48cc9fb5c33\_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(f738747c2b2a497f1616e01908716642\_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(2ce7bf99de2c90afcdce737b5b93893d\_img.jpg\)](#) | [!\[\]\(0e4ab3e26113057c6e09d1cec4e01b1e\_img.jpg\)](#) [Comments \(2\)](#)

November 24, 2014

## How to Be a Dean

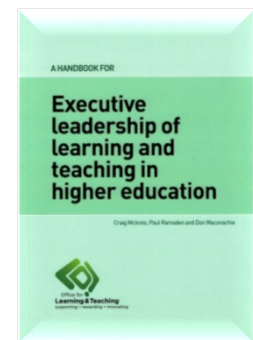
Academic deans are the middle managers of higher education: They juggle the agendas of top administrators and of professors and students. They craft visions for their schools and seek out the money to support those goals. They hire faculty members to fill classrooms and still, sometimes, carve out time for their own scholarship. [They are the faces of their schools.](#)

So what should you be thinking about if you want to become a dean?

# Strategic leadership - stepping stone?

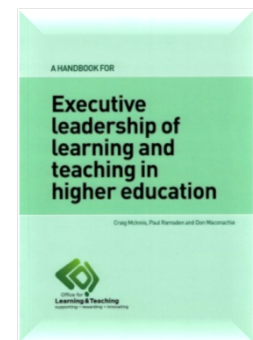
Modelling what successful executive leaders of teaching and learning ACTUALLY DO:

“...leadership is judged not by the leader’s distinction or possession of exceptional skills, but by their impact.”



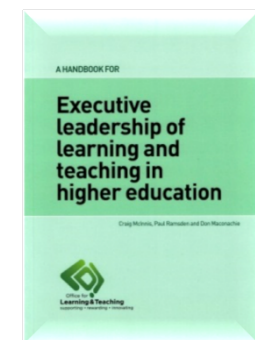
# Strategic leadership - stepping stone?

“Empowering the Associate Deans involved reinventing their roles as a key part of the highly strategic approach to improving teaching and learning.”



# Principle 1. Shape the strategic vision

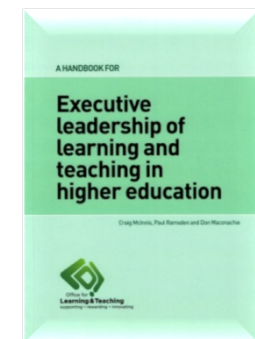
“The concept of good learning and teaching has become vital in the university – a total turnaround in 10 years”





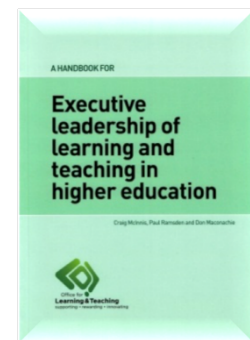
# Principle 2. Inspire and enable excellence

“...you can delude yourself that everyone understands the strategy and buys into it...”



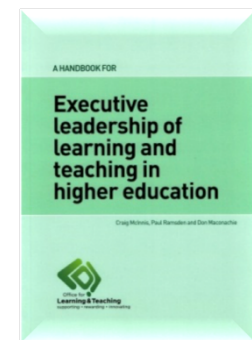
# Principle 3. Devolve leadership

“There are downsides to distributed leadership, such as lack of consistency in the short term, but the advantage is that it leads to ownership of the vision so that alignment and innovation are created from the bottom up.”



# Devolving leadership to ADTLs

“Senior leadership of learning and teaching is only as effective as the people leading improvement, formally or by example, at the local level.”

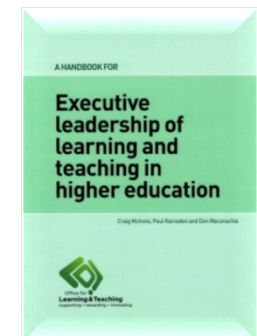


# Ups and downs of devolved leadership

Successful 'stepping stone' ADTLs

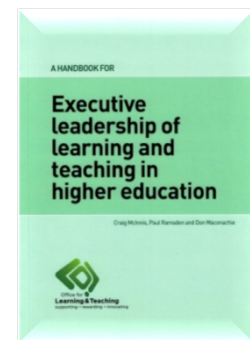
connect up and down. Devolving means:

- comprehensive engagement of staff and students
- faculties and disciplines free to exercise discretion in how they deliver the vision
- unobtrusive senior leadership (the converse of micro-management)
- sufficient authority and resources to contribute



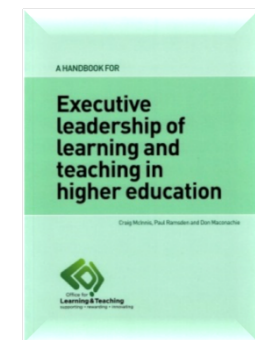
# Principle 4. Reward, recognise and develop staff

“Publicising an institution’s commitment to excellent teaching...has a strong impact on those within the institution who take pride in external recognition and feel acknowledged for their efforts to advance the quality of teaching.”



# Principle 5. Involve students

“Student unions in other places are not as respected by their universities as much as here. The five Associate Deans (Education) are the most student-focused people you’ll ever meet. They are genuine people.”



# Strategic leadership - stepping stone?

- take an assertive-participative approach
- be part of the agenda setting
- turn problems into opportunities
- identify pivotal problems
- use convincing educational and practical rationales
- provide compelling evidence
- consult with key stakeholders
- build a coalition of support



# Reasons to be cheerful

Choices – multiple options?

Leadership Challenges?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Leadership Opportunities?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.