

TIMES AND SPACES OF TEACHER EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SÃO PAULO

TEMPOS E ESPAÇOS DE FORMAÇÃO DE PROFESSORES NA UNIVERSIDADE DE SÃO PAULO

TIEMPOS Y ESPACIOS DE FORMACIÓN DE PROFESORES EN LA UNIVERSIDAD DE SÃO PAULO



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ABSTRACT: This article presents an institutional overview of the University of São Paulo, with the aim of analyzing educational policies over the past two decades. Based on an interpretive and critical reading grounded in historical-dialectical materialism, the study sought to understand teacher education in order to identify directions that align with the neoliberal perspective on education, as well as areas of resistance to this perspective. The research corpus consists of a documentary analysis structured around three axes: state and national regulations and their impacts on institutional teacher education policies at USP; the management of the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies from 2002 to 2025, between the instituted and the instituting; and institutional programs in teaching, research, outreach, student retention, and student inclusion. A retrospective analysis of the policies implemented reveals a complex scenario marked by the duality between institutional advances and persistent structural and political challenges, alongside the advancement of neoliberalism in the consolidation of teacher education degree programs.

KEYWORDS: Teacher education. Institutional policy. Social institution. Neoliberalism.

RESUMO: Neste artigo, é apresentado um panorama institucional da Universidade de São Paulo, com o objetivo de analisar as políticas educacionais ao longo das últimas duas décadas. Com base na leitura interpretativa e crítica, respaldada no materialismo histórico-dialético, buscou-se compreender a formação de professores, a fim de identificar direções que se aproximam da perspectiva neoliberal de educação e focos de resistência a essa perspectiva. O corpus da pesquisa consubstancia-se na análise documental, sustentada em três eixos: normativas estaduais e nacionais e seus impactos nas políticas institucionais de formação na USP; a gestão da Pró-Reitoria de Graduação no período de 2002 a 2025, entre o instituído e o instituinte; e programas institucionais de ensino, pesquisa, extensão, permanência e inclusão estudantil. A análise retrospectiva das políticas implementadas revela um cenário complexo, marcado pela dualidade entre avanços institucionais e persistentes desafios estruturais e políticos, com avanços do neoliberalismo na consolidação das licenciaturas.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Formação de professores. Política institucional. Instituição social. Neoliberalismo.

RESUMEN: En este artículo se presenta un panorama institucional de la Universidad de São Paulo, con el objetivo de analizar las políticas educativas a lo largo de las últimas dos décadas. A partir de una lectura interpretativa y crítica, sustentada en el materialismo histórico-dialéctico, se buscó comprender la formación docente con el fin de identificar orientaciones que se aproximan a la perspectiva neoliberal de la educación, así como focos de resistencia frente a esta perspectiva. El corpus de la investigación se fundamenta en un análisis documental estructurado en tres ejes: las normativas estatales y nacionales y sus impactos en las políticas institucionales de formación docente en la USP; la gestión de la Pró-Reitoria de Graduação durante el período de 2002 a 2025, entre lo instituido y lo instituyente; y los programas institucionales de enseñanza, investigación, extensión, permanencia e inclusión estudiantil. El análisis retrospectivo de las políticas implementadas revela un escenario complejo, marcado por la dualidad entre avances institucionales y persistentes desafíos estructurales y políticos, junto con el avance del neoliberalismo en la consolidación de las licenciaturas.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Formación docente. Política institucional. Institución social. Neoliberalismo.

INTRODUCTION

This study is part of a collective research project entitled “Institutional Policies in Teacher Education Programs at Brazilian Public Institutions: In Search of Counter-Hegemonic Possibilities,” developed within the Study and Research Group on Teacher Educator Education at the School of Education of the University of São Paulo (GEPEFE-FEUSP). Teacher education has occupied an important place in political and educational debates and points to a broader context expressed through research, statistical data, discourses, legislation, among other sources.

The guiding questions were formulated according to the premises of the context and configuration of teacher education programs at the University of São Paulo: What are the times and spaces for teacher education for the final years of elementary school and for high school at the University of São Paulo since 2004, and how are they organized? What conception of teacher education is expressed in the documents and policies produced by the Office of the Provost for Undergraduate Studies from 2002 to 2025? What parameters shape teacher education when considering the instituted and the instituting at the University of São Paulo?

The general objective of the research is to analyze the educational policies and actions proposed and developed by the University of São Paulo over the past two decades in relation to teacher education, in order to identify directions that approximate a neoliberal perspective on education as well as points of resistance to that perspective.

Accordingly, investigating the repercussions and contradictions in the field of teacher education for Basic Education at the University of São Paulo may reveal shifts toward a conception of the Operational University (Chauí, 2003), which moves away from what is constitutive of the university—knowledge and citizenship education—but may also identify signs of resistance embodied in programs, ordinances, resolutions, and guidelines.

The research is an interpretive and critical study grounded in the historical-dialectical materialist method. It seeks to make explicit the policies and contradictions at work in the context of initial teacher education at the University and to grasp the objective movement of the historical process in its multiple determinations (Marx & Engels, 2007). Data collected from the corpus selected for this research indicate that knowledge of reality cannot be limited to what is immediately given, thought, or felt, because the “process of knowledge in historical-dialectical materialism does not occur through the immediacy of thought” (Martins & Lavoura, 2018, p. 226). Thus, documentary analysis (Cellard, 2008) and Marxian analytical categories (social totality, contradiction, and historicity) ground the study in understanding the University

of São Paulo as a historically determined social institution whose configuration is produced by the economic, political, social, and cultural conditions that traverse its historical trajectory.

This article presents an institutional overview of the University of São Paulo. It then describes the research corpus, organized around three analytical axes: state and national regulations and their impacts on institutional teacher education policies at the University of São Paulo; the management of the University of São Paulo Office of the Provost for Undergraduate Studies from 2002 to 2025, between the instituted and the instituting; and institutional programs for teaching, research, extension, student retention, inclusion, and teacher education.

THE UNIVERSITY OF SÃO PAULO AND TEACHER EDUCATION: INTERWEAVING'S AND INTERCONNECTIONS

In recent years, the public university has faced pressures on its social and critical function as a result of its alignment with the “hegemonic horizon for managing social crises” (Safatle, 2025, p. 1), that is, with a neoliberal framework that makes it a “global target.” This entails not only understanding the influence of economic forces within the university but also grasping their repercussions and impacts on the production and materiality of knowledge. As a social institution, the university has “society as its principle and its normative and value reference, whereas the organization has only itself as a reference, in a process of competition with others that have established the same particular objectives” (Chauí, 2003, p. 6).

Along these lines, Teodoro (2013) provides a critical analysis of transformations in higher education on a global scale, examining expanded access, internationalization, and the democratization of the university within the economic, political, and cultural changes associated with globalization. His central argument is that expanding access to higher education, although a significant social achievement, does not eliminate the structural inequalities historically present in contemporary societies.

Druck et al. (2025) note that the crisis of the university is profound for those who understand it as linked to overcoming multiple inequalities within a democratic national project. According to the authors, today's university is not immune to “a new order of capital that engenders new dimensions of the geoeconomics of knowledge” (p. 2), in which governments and policymakers make choices and decisions in specific conjunctures amid the digital world and knowledge production in a universally connected society.

Investigating the University of São Paulo after 90 years of existence, with a focus on teacher education for Basic Education, requires understanding it within a framework of references, contradictions, and asymmetries, permeated by indicators related to its core activities (undergraduate education, graduate education, research and innovation, culture and university extension, inclusion and belonging, and university management), as well as by trends affecting universities: massification, internationalization, successive reforms, and dominant neoliberal discourses that affect student education and academic careers (Laval, 2019, 2025).

Teacher education at USP was organized as the combination of two fields of knowledge: specific disciplinary areas and the pedagogical field. In light of advances in research and discussions concerning teachers' social and political role, the USP Teacher Education Program (PFPUSP) was formulated and approved in 2004 and implemented beginning in 2006 (Pimenta & Almeida, 2021). As the authors point out, the main innovative feature of PFPUSP was its proposal for teacher education as a single, integrated political-pedagogical project, jointly defined and developed by the units responsible for specific disciplinary knowledge and pedagogical education, rather than as a complement to the 3+1 model. In 2023, 20 years after its publication, the PFP was reformulated, preserving important features of the original version while adding new principles and objectives for teacher education, although the discussion process proved asymmetrical with regard to democratization (USP, 2023).

The materiality of USP, influenced by a social, political, economic, and cultural context, as well as by its Humboldtian inspiration, expressed through research and teaching, shaped its identity. The disinterested pursuit of pure science and high culture, aimed at deepening research in order to expand knowledge and its eventual application, fostered the development of a distinctive university, characterized by scientific inquiry and its role as a center of high intellectual achievement⁴.

Currently, USP has 325 undergraduate programs (224 bachelor's programs and 28 teacher education programs) and 259 graduate programs distributed across 42 teaching and research units. Its population of students, faculty, and staff totals 115,477 people: 5,306 faculty members, 12,610 technical-administrative staff, and 88,239 students, including 58,752 undergraduate and 29,487 graduate students (USP, 2025).

However, the University of São Paulo offers relatively few teacher education programs, with 3,121 places available in 2025. This finding is consistent with literature addressing the

⁴ The University of São Paulo (USP) has several placements in international university rankings (QS World University Ranking, Times Higher Education [THE], Center for World University Rankings [CWUR], etc.).

precarization of teacher education programs in its various dimensions, such as Fávero and Mikolaiczil's (2024) discussion of program erosion; the meaning of education between economic development and human formation (Goergen, 2021); and the complexity and contradictions of the socialization and professionalization of teacher education graduates and of teaching work from a critical-dialectical perspective (Almeida et al., 2019).

The contradiction evident in the provision of undergraduate programs is consistent with the broader situation of teacher education programs in Brazil, which are still regarded as second-tier programs even within a public institution historically committed to them.

STATE AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS AND THEIR IMPACTS ON INSTITUTIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION POLICIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SÃO PAULO

This section analyzes the impacts of State Council of Education Deliberations No. 111/2012 (São Paulo, 2012), No. 126/2014 (São Paulo, 2014), and No. 154/2017 (São Paulo, 2017) on USP teacher education programs. Identifying the contradictions in these deliberations makes it possible to contextualize the policies implemented by USP's Office of the Provost for Undergraduate Studies and the programs' responses, while also revealing similarities with federal teacher education policies. Cardoso et al. (2021) argue that these deliberations can be understood as a "rehearsal" for the national counter-reform of teacher education consolidated in the 2015 National Curriculum Guidelines (Brasil, 2015) and, especially, those of 2019 (Brasil, 2019).

The developments initiated by CEE Deliberation No. 111/2012 (São Paulo, 2012) progressively accumulated attempts to interfere in undergraduate programs, prompting resistance from São Paulo's public universities. The three amendments to Deliberation No. 111/2012 provide evidence of this movement of contestation and dispute. CEE/SP Deliberation No. 126/2014, which represented an achievement resulting from the mobilization of the Forum of São Paulo State Universities, succeeded in reinstating Early Childhood Education within Pedagogy programs, after it had been excluded by CEE Deliberation No. 111/2012; Deliberation No. 132/2015 established a minimum workload for "didactic-pedagogical" education (960 class hours), in addition to the supervised internship and practice as a curricular component, whenever the program exceeds the minimum 3,200 hours; and CEE/SP Deliberation No. 154/2017 increased the number of internship hours in the field of educational

management and the allocation of hours to practice as a curricular component (PCC), while establishing a clear connection to the BNCC regarding teacher education for Early Childhood Education and the early years of Elementary Education (Varani et al., 2020, pp. 14–15). It is also worth noting that the first version of CEE Deliberation No. 111/2012 attempted to remove content related to Special Education from Pedagogy programs, contrary to the need to strengthen this area of education within such programs in order to prepare teachers to support Special Education students in mainstream classrooms (Fantacini & Pedroso, 2023) and to work collaboratively in schools (Mendes et al., 2024), thereby addressing the demands of inclusive education.

Drawing on Cardoso et al. (2021, p. 6), we consider that the perspective underlying CEE Deliberation No. 111/2012 (São Paulo, 2012) “aligns with conceptions expressed in the national curriculum guidelines, indicating a clear shift to the right in Brazilian educational policy for teacher education by endorsing principles central to the neoliberal agenda.” In this sense, it would represent “the serpent’s egg” (Cardoso et al., 2021, p. 6), that is, the embryo of a broader process of reformulating teacher education based on a competency-based logic, curriculum standardization, and the subordination of university education to the pragmatic demands of schools, the national reference curriculum, and external assessments, resulting in essentially practice-oriented education, as Zan (2019) emphasizes. Within this logic, practice is conceived not as praxis, but as training aimed at the immediate resolution of everyday school problems. According to Cardoso and Farias (2020), this movement entails a narrowing of the very conception of teaching, which is increasingly understood as the implementation of previously established methods and competencies.

CEE Deliberation No. 126/2014 (São Paulo, 2014) intensifies the CEE’s power relationship and interference in teacher education programs by requiring them to comply with the provisions established in the document, such as compelling them to remove or add specific references to course syllabi (Varani et al., 2020, p. 20). In addition, it establishes content and a required workload for the component designated as “scientific-cultural education,” intended to broaden the education acquired in secondary school and deepen the content to be taught in preschool and the early years of Elementary Education. Likewise, the Council begins to define internship settings and their corresponding workloads, restricting university autonomy in organizing program projects and contradicting research that points to the importance of internships developed as research in public schools and articulated with the program curriculum (Rivas et al., 2022).

Furthermore, CEE Deliberations No. 126/2014 (São Paulo, 2014) and No. 154/2017 (São Paulo, 2017) deepen this process by expanding mechanisms for controlling teacher education curricula and reinforcing the centrality of practice and supervised internships at the expense of the theoretical foundations of education. The emphasis on education oriented toward outcomes, skills, and competencies anticipates national policies later consolidated through the Common National Framework for Teacher Education (BNC-Formação), established in 2019. As part of the efforts to confront and resist the CEE Deliberations, CRUESP submitted a document in April 2014 proposing changes that were accepted by the CEE, representing a certain degree of retreat. In fact, neither the programs nor the Undergraduate Committees (CGs) had any opportunity to take a position; rather, it became evident that what the CEE had proposed from the outset had been accepted by the Office of the Provost for Undergraduate Studies (PRG), which then instructed the programs to implement the changes, as determined by the CEE, in their program projects.

In summary, the three deliberations criticize the education provided by teacher education programs as excessively theoretical and insufficiently connected to practice, while advocating greater emphasis on competencies and skills in teacher education. The reproduction of CEE Deliberation No. 111/2012 (São Paulo, 2012) in CNE/CP Resolution No. 2/2019 reflects an intention to standardize and control teacher education and to prioritize basic knowledge and skills in program curricula. This reveals an instrumental perspective that conceives teaching within a business-oriented logic of educational reform (Freitas, 2018). These regulations also affect the autonomy of São Paulo institutions, particularly through their interference in program pedagogical projects (Lopes et al., 2023).

More recently, USP has also moved rapidly to comply with CEE Deliberation No. 232/2025 (São Paulo, 2025), which establishes Complementary Guidelines for Initial Higher Education of Teaching Professionals for Basic School Education in the São Paulo State Education System, in accordance with CNE/CP Resolution No. 4/2024. The deliberation imposes changes on the organization of mandatory curricular internships, regulates the curricular integration of extension activities, and reorganizes training cores, among other measures. Programs are required to adapt their projects within a short period because compliance with the deliberation will be evaluated in program recognition processes. In this context, since 2012 USP has increasingly subordinated itself to the teacher education project imposed by the CEE and CNE. Consequently, programs lose didactic-pedagogical autonomy and place critical education at risk as they are legally compelled to incorporate guidelines

aligned with neoliberal and privatizing policies under the discourse of innovation and democratization—for example, guidelines that make the BNCC a mandatory reference for teacher education programs.

MANAGEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SÃO PAULO OFFICE OF THE PROVOST FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES FROM 2002 TO 2025: BETWEEN THE INSTITUTED AND THE INSTITUTING

Analyzing the administrations of the University of São Paulo (USP) Office of the Provost for Undergraduate Studies (PRG) between 2002 and 2025 makes it possible to understand the continuities and changes affecting Brazilian public higher education and the institution itself. This context reflects the crises of hegemony, legitimacy, and institutional identity that afflict the university, as Souza Santos (2005) notes, affecting both its material conditions and its values.

When analyzing the policies and programs of USP's provosts for undergraduate studies, it is essential to consider the interplay of forces operating in the social fabric, which is conditioned by economic, social, cultural, and political contexts. Accordingly, our reading of the reports is grounded in conceptions of the university, institutional programs, continuities, shifts, and pedagogical innovations that substantiate the actions of each administration of the Office of the Provost for Undergraduate Studies and its commitment to the University of São Paulo. This study therefore draws on foundational concepts that permeate these administrations, including contemporary capitalism, global governance of higher education, neoliberalism, New Public Management, pedagogical innovation, democratization of access and retention, inclusion and social justice, and teacher education. Nevertheless, as Souza Santos (2005) argues, the university remains a strategic space of epistemological and political dispute and must construct counter-hegemonic alternatives committed to social justice and the democratization of knowledge through instituting practices. Regarding the policies of USP's Office of the Provost for Undergraduate Studies from 2002 to 2025, we identified the following:

a) The period from 2002 to 2005 was marked by expanded access and greater recognition of undergraduate education. Notable developments included increased enrollment places, encouragement of evening programs, efforts to reduce dropout rates, and the creation of the USP Teacher Education Program (PFPUSP) and Pedagogical Support Groups (GAPs).

Although belatedly, discussions of social inclusion and diversity began. Core principles of the public university remained present: critical education, the inseparability of teaching, research, and extension, and commitment to national development. However, the limits of democratization became evident because quantitative expansion was not accompanied by robust student retention policies. As Saviani (2007) notes, this represents a conservative democratization in which increased access coexists with persistent inequalities. In teacher education, the policies established focused on valuing pedagogical spaces and teaching practice through the GAPs and the Teacher Education Program, with the aim of strengthening teacher education programs.

b) The 2006–2009 administration represented an important turning point in the recognition of undergraduate education and teacher education. Programs such as University Pedagogy, Teaching Through Research, the USP Social Inclusion Program (INCLUSP), and the consolidation of PFPUSP stand out. In the pedagogical field, significant pedagogical innovation can be observed based on Cunha's (2008) concept. For the author, pedagogical innovation is understood as an epistemological rupture and a transformation of teaching and learning relationships—that is, a social and human process of change that creates new realities according to the needs, resources, and contexts of each period.

It is important to highlight the Presentation section of the report, as it reveals much more than a simple administrative preface and constitutes a political-institutional position that articulates personal trajectory, academic project, and conception of the public university. Teaching through research, interdisciplinarity, and the valuing of teaching express this movement. During this administration, the valuing of teacher education was expressed through integrated policies addressing funding and strategic actions, including public recruitment processes for faculty working in teacher education programs; selection processes to hire educators as mediators in supervised internships alongside faculty members in these programs; the construction and reorganization of teaching laboratories; the re-equipment of libraries and acquisition of teaching and technological materials; and, above all, the provision of courses for faculty and administrators within the scope of University Pedagogy.

c) The 2010–2014 administration consolidated institutional assessment mechanisms and social inclusion policies. Key developments included improvements to INCLUSP, the USP Serial Assessment Program (PASUSP), and the reorganization of admissions processes. Assessment, inclusion, and meritocracy were therefore constitutive elements of this administration. However, inclusion was often linked to a meritocratic logic. Bourdieu (1992)

demonstrates that the educational system reproduces inequalities through the unequal distribution of cultural capital; accordingly, policies based exclusively on merit tend to reproduce preexisting social hierarchies. The growing centrality of assessment reveals the influence of global higher education governance. Although assessment is important for institutional improvement, indicator-based management can reduce the complexity of university education to quantitative metrics. Teacher education experienced a setback during this administration, as University Pedagogy programs in this area lost space and centrality.

d) The 2014–2018 administration was characterized by expanded access through SiSU/ENEM, strengthened quota policies, and the creation of the Undergraduate Education Congress, Teaching Development Centers (CAD), and the journal Grad+. There was substantial investment in curricular flexibility, internationalization, and digital technologies framed as innovation. The term innovation encompasses multiple meanings and has taken on varied, unequal, and inconsistent forms over time. By associating innovation primarily with technology and curricular flexibility while disregarding the curriculum as a socially and contextually produced construct, the concept appears aligned with market demands and neoliberal principles. Teacher education was embodied in specific courses on technology and active methodologies, approaching the human-capital logic characteristic of educational neoliberalism (Laval, 2019). These initiatives thus reveal tensions between the managerial rationality guiding innovation and the function of the public university.

e) The 2018–2021 administration centered on two pillars: interdisciplinarity and institutional modernization, expressed in academic excellence, innovation, interdisciplinarity, entrepreneurship, and internationalization. Highlights included integration among units and campuses, new learning environments, and the Integrated Teacher Education Complex. Nevertheless, tensions persisted between modernization and the commodification of the university, with new forms of faculty intellectual labor based on performance, indicators, and self-exploitation (Han, 2015), which redefine and shift the meaning of teachers' praxis toward a realigned practiciness within a context of structural crisis of capital (Schiabel et al., 2026).

f) The 2022–2025 administration developed in a post-pandemic context. Key initiatives included the Pedagogical Support Program (PAP), learning recovery measures, curricular flexibility, and the Faculty Professional Development Program (PDPD). The post-pandemic period and faculty professional development constituted structural elements of this administration. The pandemic exposed historical inequalities in student access and retention, reinforcing the need for inclusive policies, which were adopted during this period. At the same

time, pedagogical development for faculty became central, recognizing that scientific excellence does not necessarily imply pedagogical excellence. However, challenges remained concerning evidence-based management, the intensive use of indicators, and pressures from the global governance of higher education. The definition of strategic objectives for undergraduate education at the University of São Paulo through its Office of the Provost for Undergraduate Studies reveals an institutional agenda aligned with global trends in the transformation of higher education, particularly regarding the articulation of academic education, social demands, and pedagogical innovation. Yet these objectives reveal both their relevance and the structural, epistemological, and political challenges involved in their implementation, as well as alignment with a model of the Operational University (Chauí, 2003; Laval, 2025). There is a risk of discursive adherence to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that does not translate into substantive curricular changes, as noted by Ball and Mainardes (2024), and is limited to a superficial incorporation of themes without challenging traditional educational paradigms or confronting the structural inequalities that characterize Brazilian higher education.

Analysis of the different administrations makes it possible to identify institutional continuities: valuing undergraduate education, the inseparability of teaching, research, and extension, teacher education and faculty development, internationalization, and commitment to the public university. Pedagogical innovations are evident in the revision of the University of São Paulo Teacher Education Program (PFPUSP/2004), the revision and continuation of the Teacher Education Program (PFPPUSP/2023), the Faculty Professional Development Program (PDPD), and the Faculty Development Space. Throughout the period analyzed, a fundamental continuity can be observed in the institutional defense of the inseparability of teaching, research, and extension, along with important advances in democratizing access, pedagogical innovation, and teacher and faculty education. However, the realization of these principles has been strained by the growing hegemony of research as the main criterion of academic prestige, relegating undergraduate education and teaching to secondary positions, as well as by the emphasis on internationalization. Tensions are likewise evident between the public university and neoliberal rationality, inclusion and merit, humanistic education and market demands. From the perspective of historical-dialectical materialism, the university is part of the social relations of production and, as such, is embedded in disputes between antagonistic societal projects. USP's undergraduate policies therefore express tensions between the defense of public education as a social right and the growing incorporation of managerial rationalities characteristic of contemporary capitalism.

INSTITUTIONAL PROGRAMS FOR TEACHING, RESEARCH, EXTENSION, STUDENT RETENTION AND INCLUSION, AND TEACHER EDUCATION

The impact of the various academic programs developed by the Office of the Provost for Undergraduate Studies over the past 25 years is reflected in two areas: student education and faculty development. Analysis of the calls for applications that operationalize undergraduate programs and policies and offer student scholarships from 2002 to 2025 indicates advances in inclusion, student retention, and the valuing of undergraduate education, whether through expanded student-retention assistance (which exceeded 15,000 grants in 2025), different pathways for university admission, or the allocation of funds to modernize teaching spaces in academic units.

Nevertheless, contradictions remain in the implementation of the Teacher Education Program (USP, 2023) and scholarship programs, between a perspective of humanistic, democratic, and emancipatory education and a tendency toward the preparation of practice-oriented teachers influenced by the neoliberal model.

Despite recent investments in infrastructure and improvements to teaching spaces, deficiencies in the infrastructure required by teacher education programs remain, especially in evening programs. These include unavailable services in undergraduate offices because of staff shortages, limited food options in academic units after the university restaurant closes, difficulties related to program organization, insufficient space for supervised internships, and the absence of cultural and academic events during evening hours. This indicates greater recognition of daytime undergraduate programs to the detriment of evening teacher education programs. Administrative, financial, infrastructure, and service management bodies are therefore not prioritized during this period, limiting the comprehensive education of preservice teachers.

Programs aimed at undergraduate teaching, particularly those exclusively for teacher education programs, are few and relatively recent. During the period analyzed, the Teaching Through Research Program, which ran from 2007 to 2014, sought to encourage faculty and students to research issues related to the challenges of teaching and learning in undergraduate programs. Research projects could address multiple possibilities and aspects, including the classroom environment, the program itself, curricular issues, face-to-face or distance teaching and learning modalities, curricular or professional internships, different teaching technologies, learning outcomes, graduates' professional integration, and dropout, among others. The

Undergraduate Teaching Incentive Program (PEEG), in effect since 2011, seeks to foster undergraduate students' interest in teaching through monitoring activities in practical classes of regular courses under the supervision of the course instructor. The Teaching Initiation and Development Program (PIAD), launched in 2024, aims to support the achievement of objectives and/or development of skills necessary for students to successfully follow undergraduate courses.

The Unified Scholarship Program (PUB), launched in 2015, replaced Teaching Through Research and promotes student engagement in undergraduate teaching, research, culture, and extension activities in order to contribute to civic, academic, and professional education. The Teaching Initiation and Development Program (PROIAD) responds to demands related to preparation for teaching: language teaching and language dissemination in a multilingual university context; work in school education at the early childhood, elementary, and secondary levels; work in educational sectors of different museums; work in hospital settings with patients undergoing prolonged treatment, involving didactic and pedagogical activities associated with play; and scientific and pedagogical support aimed at university retention.

The Pedagogical Support Program (PAP) is a tutoring program launched in 2022 to support the achievement of objectives and/or development of skills necessary for students to successfully follow undergraduate courses. In addition, programs such as PIBID and the Teaching Development Program (SEDUC) provide scholarships exclusively for students in teacher education programs.

The most recent calls for applications, such as PAP, PROIAD, and SEDUC, propose teacher education as an activity for managing social demands and demands of the state of São Paulo, structured through contracts (scholarships), productivity targets, and technical supervision. In doing so, they move away from the ideal of the university as a center of autonomous and critical thought, undermining the model of the university's intrinsic value in favor of operational management (Chauí, 2003; Pimenta & Almeida, 2021). When calls for applications follow neoliberal principles, they tend to undermine student education by treating knowledge as a commodity and by embedding competitiveness and academic merit in student selection models, thereby reinforcing individualism and technical rationality. Student education programs ultimately encourage competition among faculty and students, focus on academic merit as a criterion for obtaining scholarships, and transform research and extension into a competition for shares of the budget.

The SEDUC call for applications positions the university as a provider of external services in response to demands from the São Paulo State government and makes the learning conditions of preservice teachers more precarious. Its focus on learning recovery and leveling among public-school students evokes the idea of educational efficiency. By aligning itself with these neoliberal government policies, the university ultimately adopts the same logic in the education of preservice teachers, positioning them as promoters of education as a commodity rather than as a social right and a means of human development. Subjecting students to this internship model runs counter to the Teacher Education Program itself.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS: WHAT DO THE DATA REVEAL?

A retrospective analysis of the policies and programs implemented by the University of São Paulo (USP) Office of the Provost for Undergraduate Studies (PRG) over the past two decades reveals a complex scenario marked by the duality between institutional advances and persistent structural and political challenges in consolidating teacher education programs. The management reports of the University's provosts for undergraduate studies from 2002 to 2025 point to divergent conceptions of the university. During the 2002–2005 and 2006–2009 administrations, a critical conception of the university as a social institution prevailed, materialized in the emphatic defense of a free, high-quality public university associated with social inclusion and the democratization of access. In subsequent administrations through 2025, conceptions of the university were increasingly shaped by its crises and by the influence and participation of international and multilateral organizations. These changes involve processes such as decentralization, deregulation, and commodification, among others, aimed at redefining relations between the state and civil society through reductionist views of the university's true role—that is, as a provider of utilitarian services to the market from the perspective of the Social Organization model.

Analysis of the São Paulo State Council of Education Deliberations—especially CEE Deliberations No. 111/2012, No. 126/2014, and No. 154/2017—reveals a process of reconfiguring teacher education policies in the state of São Paulo that was subsequently incorporated into national teacher education guidelines, particularly CNE/CP Resolution No. 2/2015 and CNE/CP Resolution No. 2/2019. The state documents express a conception of education centered on technical rationality, the valuing of competencies and skills, and the

increasing centrality of practice and supervised internships at the expense of the theoretical, critical, and political education of future teachers. State regulations thus anticipated trends later consolidated in the National Curriculum Guidelines and BNC-Formação, becoming an important reference for understanding the direction of national teacher education policies. This movement reveals the state of São Paulo as the “rehearsal” and the “serpent’s egg” of a project that would later become a national reference.

As a consequence, the didactic-pedagogical autonomy of programs is weakened, curriculum-development processes become fragmented, and critical teacher education risks being hollowed out. Moreover, unease can be observed within teacher education programs, generated mainly by the pragmatic, productivist, and privatizing relationship that guides program management and imposes a relationship of obedience and subservience of the university to the State and National Councils. In short, the prevailing logic is simply “comply.”

The analyses therefore reveal a hybrid approach to the conception of the university, particularly in the 2022–2025 administration, insofar as there is a pact between the university and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a strong appeal to social transformation. This model reconfigures the university’s threefold mission (teaching, research, and extension) to address local and global systemic problems, strengthening social responsibility and the 2030 Agenda. However, institutional and academic culture, as well as issues of time and space, have strong repercussions, and rhetoric becomes evident. Guidelines aimed at valuing undergraduate education, social inclusion, curricular reform, and teacher education oscillate between innovative policies that articulate actions to improve teaching, integrate it with research, support infrastructure, and promote faculty development, and restrictive, instrumental policies.

On the one hand—and this reinforces the hybridization of university management—there has been a significant movement toward democratizing access and valuing undergraduate education, materialized in the expansion of places, the creation of new evening and daytime programs, and substantial financial investments in modernizing and adapting teaching spaces and laboratories. Successive administrations have also structured student-retention and teaching-incentive policies, although these remain insufficient to meet the needs of students from public schools. A pattern of discontinuing calls and programs can be observed—from Teaching Through Research to broader initiatives such as the Unified Scholarship Program (PUB), as well as recent specific programs such as PROIAD and SEDUC—which, under each administration, produce some improvements but also setbacks, particularly through the

reduction of formative programs for students and the expansion of scholarships focused solely on student retention.

Inclusion policies have evolved, but student-retention policies still need improvement so that students coming from basic education can complete their studies with dignity and mental well-being. These students are in the university, yet they remain in a continuous struggle for a place within the logic of meritocracy. Although the need to diversify the student profile and expand access for public-school graduates is recognized, resistance or slowness in adopting more assertive policies for teacher education programs reveals tensions between the principle of academic merit and the promotion of equity. The research shows that infrastructure investments have not been sufficient to overcome historical asymmetries. A concealed precarization persists in teacher education programs, particularly in the evening, manifested in shortages of continuously available technical-administrative staff, limited basic food services, and scheduling obstacles to carrying out supervised internships.

Another aspect requiring further investigation is the relationship between teacher education programs and basic schools. Through mandatory internships and scholarship programs such as SEDUC and PIBID, this relationship may indicate the quality of student education and its contribution to improving basic education. The trajectory of these programs at USP oscillates between strengthening institutional support and submitting to external agendas shaped by market logics and teacher deprofessionalization. Teacher education at the University therefore transcends a strictly technical or budgetary dimension and constitutes a field of political-institutional dispute that demands continuous self-evaluation, resistance to inertia, and a firm commitment to ensuring that the inseparability of teaching, research, and extension genuinely sustains the valuing of teacher education.

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