

2020 European Learning & Teaching Forum

Balancing tradition and change

13-14 February 2020, hosted by Utrecht University, Netherlands

Breakout session abstracts

Each breakout session consists of a choice of one workshop or focus group of 90 minutes, or two consecutive paper presentations of 45 minutes each. The list below includes the names of the authors and information about the presentation proposals accepted for the Forum. Not all authors will necessarily be present at the event.

Paper presentations

A transdisciplinary project-based learning approach: Setting the ground for the launch of the Ovidius University Center for Innovation and Technology Transfer

Mihai A. Gîrțu, Daniela Dumitra Căprioară and Maria-Elena Muscan (Ovidius University of Constanța)

This presentation highlights an initiative to improve teaching effectiveness by means of transdisciplinary projects involving students from different study programs, working in teams to solve real problems, originated from the community. The initiative is part of a wider effort to transform education, research and engagement with the community, an endeavour to which Ovidius University of Constanta is committed. To address this strategic goal, the university has decided to establish a Center for Innovation and Technology Transfer and has applied for financial support from European structural funds to implement it. Aside from building the infrastructure and creating a platform for communication between the university and the community, another key task, the training of the academic staff in project-based learning, is underway. In this session, we will report on the design and implementation of the teacher-training course on active learning technologies.

Developing a national, student-centred understanding of student success in Irish higher education

Lee O'Farrell and Terry Maguire (National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education)

Student-centred learning and student success both act as lenses for reframing institutional activity with a core focus on the needs and values of individual students. While there is significant crossover between the values of these two paradigms, their ultimate objectives, however, do not fully overlap. Student-centred learning prioritises the learning and engagement of students, whereas student success focuses on the broader aspirations of students including personal and social growth, work-readiness and engagement with the broader student experience. This paper looks at work currently underway in Ireland to develop a shared national understanding of student success and to identify the key enablers of student success both within and beyond the classroom.

Enhancing digital capacity in teaching and learning in Ireland: a national approach

Sharon Flynn, Lewis Purser and Nora Trench Bowles (Irish Universities Association), Julie Byrne, David Hamill and Kevin O'Connor (Trinity College Dublin), Rob Lowney and Suzanne Stone (Dublin City University), Kate Molloy (National University of Ireland), David Moloney (University of

Limerick), Morag Munro (Maynooth University), Marian O'Connor and Mairéad O'Reilly (University College Dublin), Tom O'Mara and Clíodhna O'Callaghan (University College Cork)

“Enhancing Digital Capacity in Teaching and Learning in Irish Universities” is a three-year project that aims to mainstream digital approaches in teaching and learning across the seven Irish universities by addressing the professional development of all who teach. The sectoral project is underpinned by national and European policy objectives and social and economic needs. The direction and activities of the project are based on four underlying principles: that there is substantial existing work and activity in each of the participating universities which should be built upon; that engagement at the level of disciplines is key for meaningful and sustainable change to the practices of individuals and to have an impact on learning; that pedagogy must be privileged over technology; and that student partnership is essential.

A pilot phase of the project runs from June to December 2019, during which staff who teach have the opportunity to reflect on current digital competences, avail of consultation, support and training from the embedded programme supports, and to plan improvements and teaching interventions for the future.

Transforming university education: The UC3M Way

Carlos Delgado Kloos and Carlos Alario-Hoyos (Universidad Carlos III de Madrid)

The exponential change in IT inevitably forces a transformation of all industries in an unprecedented way. Learning and teaching at universities are no exception. For a millennial old institution that is very regulated, this imposes many challenges. What is the right direction to follow, when there is no right direction and the context (inside and outside) tends toward perpetuation of traditions? What is the right balance between following hype without reflection and not acknowledging the opportunities and risks that lie ahead? The technological “cheese” is being moved and each university has to find its way. In this paper, we present some of the initiatives carried out at Universidad Carlos III de Madrid in this respect. Some of the principles that have guided our strategy include awareness, experimentation, support, teaching the teachers, participation in international initiatives, sharing, incentives, and more. Our objective is to share ideas and to spark discussion.

A new approach to existing challenges: addressing student mental wellbeing from a learning and teaching perspective

Stef Black (sparqs/Student Partnership in Quality Scotland)

The challenges around addressing student mental health and wellbeing are not new. In recent years the number of students disclosing a mental health conditions in the UK has increased: 47 625 more students disclosed a mental health condition in 2015-16 compared to 2007-8. Student support and counselling services are at capacity across the sector and student mental wellbeing is one of the most prevalent areas of discussion amongst student officers and institutions. Yet the traditional approaches employed by institutions to tackle this area are not enough anymore; they are fire-fighting and struggling to meet demand. This session will explore a new project developed in partnership with the sector over the last year that encourages institutions to look at student wellbeing through a learning and teaching lens, offering an alternative and new approach to addressing the existing challenges around student wellbeing.

Student-centred learning: approaches to quality assurance

Anna Gover, Tia Loukkola and Helene Peterbauer (EUA/European University Association)

The session presents the results of a recent EUA report titled *Student-centred learning: approaches to quality assurance*. Ample evidence suggests that even though student-centred learning is a topic of great interest and benefit to universities across Europe and beyond, difficulties in addressing the concept in practice are widespread, mostly due to its broad scope. The report presents the status of student-centred learning in Europe's universities and offers considerations for the role of quality assurance processes in ensuring that education provision is geared towards student learning and success. It argues for an approach to student-centred learning that is underpinned by a common institutional understanding of the concept, aligned to the institutional and disciplinary context.

Workshops

Study programme development – Building a bridge between tradition and innovation – An unusual approach

Susanne Lippold (Ruhr University Bochum, Germany), Jutta Rach (Münster University of Applied Sciences, Germany), Andreas Fritsch (Greifswald University, Germany)

Study programme development is one of the most challenging processes at universities since all faculty is involved. And in our experience, the redesign of already existing programmes seems to be even more difficult: Whereas innovative forces want to pick up new trends (e.g. digitalisation or other new teaching concepts) more conservative forces emphasises on values and refer to existing experience with current concepts. Both positions are important and contextually right. Thus, the presented format provides a gradual framework to bridge the gap between both sides in an interactive and creative process. Both sides are invited to negotiate the best possible result by using an unusual approach for university discussions, the benefit analysis method known e.g. from economics. After the negotiating activity, it should be obvious that a change of perspective is also helpful, if not necessary, to create a new or updated study programme. The practiced approach helps as well to recognise which limits for study programme development remain when visionary ideas are measured against reality.

Instructional design for formative peer assessment

Nuria Lopez (Copenhagen Business School)

The quality of instructional design greatly influences the efficiency of peer assessment exercises as formative practices and therefore has a significant impact on the learning benefits obtained by students. The instructional design of peer assessment activities is complex. It involves not only planning a well-aligned and structured activity but also including elements that guide students in evaluation and feedback provision and support the development of their self-assessment skills. The purpose of this workshop is to design a peer assessment exercise that participants can use in one of their own courses, bearing in mind best practices and research-based recommendations.

Staff development as a strategic imperative for embedding internationalisation across the institution

Karen M. Lauridsen (Aarhus University), Joanne Pagèze (University of Bordeaux), Jeanine Gregersen Hermans (Zuyd University of Applied Sciences)

In this workshop we intend to share – using an interactive format – the outcomes of the EU-funded project “Educational Quality for inclusive international Programmes” (EQUiiP). Participants in this workshop will engage in some example activities that have been developed within EQUiiP. In subgroups participants will explore the opportunities and challenges of the international classroom and reflect on these from an international, intercultural and language perspective. Jointly these

perspectives address the complexity of designing and teaching inclusive international programmes. The session will conclude with a plenary discussion on the strategic imperative for continuous professional development in support of internationalisation at programme, departmental and institutional levels.

Self-determination theory made easy: how to motivate your students

SSL Mol (Julius Center for Health Sciences and Primary Care, University Medical Center Utrecht) and FJM Grosfeld (University Medical Center Utrecht)

The main objective is to learn how to organise one's lessons in such a way that students are optimally motivated, using Ryan and Deci's Self-determination Theory (SDT) as a theoretical framework. Participants will learn to differentiate between the stages of motivation and gain insight into which degree the three basic psychological needs that contribute to intrinsic motivation – autonomy, relatedness and competence - are met. They will then be able to apply this knowledge to optimise their own teaching practice.

We alternate theory with practical exercises in four cycles. The first exercise is about getting to know one another as an example of the importance of "relatedness". In the second exercise we use case vignettes of students to understand a student's stage of motivation. Then participants learn to recognise which psychological needs are met in vignettes of teaching methods we present. Finally, participants apply the SDT-knowledge to a self-selected lesson.

The European Maturity Model for Blended Education (EMBED): a hands-on experience

Wiebe Dijkstra and Bea de los Arcos (Delft University of Technology)

Blended learning is a hot topic in the world of higher education. A lot of institutions are implementing or experimenting with blended learning. But how can you take this to the next level? How can you make sure that you keep improving blended education in your institution?

During this workshop, participants will find answers to these questions. Created in partnership by six European universities, the EMBED framework is a reference model for developing and implementing blended learning at all levels of an institution: the design of a blended course; organisational aspects such as support and training; and institutional leadership, advancing policies and strategies in support of continuous innovation.

The aim of this workshop is to guide participants in exploring and applying the EMBED framework as they assess the state of blended education in their own institutions and gather ideas that will help them progress towards a higher level of maturity.

Letting go of the limiting classroom: Rethinking your learning spaces

Jasper van Winden and Frans van Dam (Utrecht University)

Redesigning learning spaces has been a key trend in higher education for five years in a row now, according to the renowned Educause horizon reports. Many institutions are looking for formal and informal learning spaces that better facilitate – and act as a driver for - modern didactics than the traditional classrooms and lecture halls.

In this workshop we will demonstrate a method for raising awareness and creating internal support for learning spaces followed by the engagement of teaching staff in challenging the status quo of the design of learning spaces. Participants will learn how to use design principles to stimulate creativity and discussions within their universities, while still being aligned with their institute's vision on education.

Participants will experience how rapid prototyping with LEGO can sharpen a collective vision of what Future Learning Spaces might look like.

In addition to these breakout sessions, the following lunch-time session is scheduled.

Learning and teaching in the Bologna Process: update from the Advisory Group

Tessa Bijvank (Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science) and Michael Gaebel (EUA)

In the Paris Communiqué (May 2018), the European Ministers responsible for higher education committed to “develop new and inclusive approaches for continuous enhancement of learning and teaching across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)”, in close cooperation with the European higher education community, and in full respect of academic freedom and institutional autonomy.

It also emphasised the need for more exchange and collaboration, as “the success of the European Learning and Teaching Forum [...] demonstrates the value and potential of collaboration in learning and teaching”.

Subsequently, the Bologna Follow-Up Group tasked an Advisory Group to propose a set of principles for governments to support learning and teaching in higher education across the EHEA. By doing so, the Advisory Group was created to explore topics such as the further development of student-centred learning in the context of lifelong learning, the interconnection between education and research, the impact and potential of digitalisation, and teaching enhancement through continued professional development and support to teachers. It will also report back to the next Bologna Ministerial conference in Rome in June 2020.

In this lunchtime session, members of the Advisory Group will discuss the preliminary results of their work with Forum participants, with the view to elicit a direct contribution from the higher education sector to European policy making.

Abstracts of the Thematic Peer Group focus groups will follow in mid-December.