

Call for papers – Special issue

Cultivating a culture of experimentation in higher-education teaching and learning: Evaluation of recent experiences and transfer to the new-normal

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Introduction

The 2020s started off with a bang in tertiary teaching and learning: A global pandemic forced higher education institutions across the globe to change their everyday teaching and learning practices towards remote, online modes of instruction. On the one hand, the emergency-remote approach (e.g., HODGES et al., 2020) ensured continuing teaching and learning in 2020, however in some places and situations with a loss in teaching and learning quality (as indicated, e.g., by the loss of a sense of community among students, e.g., MEANS et al., 2020). However, the situation in spring 2020 offers a proof of concept that change in higher education, rough or not, is possible. Many instructors, study program representatives and educational developers were forced to spontaneously develop new online or hybrid course formats. Most institutions reacted fast, they made fundamental and large-scale digitalization efforts, and in hindsight, the changes were largely adaptive (e.g., MARINONI, VAN'T LAND, & JENSEN, 2020). Thus, this experiment resulted not only in enhanced infrastructure but also in innovative new course concepts using for instance, flipped classroom or blended learning approaches. These experiences and research on change and development in higher education (e.g., BRAHM, JENERT & EULER, 2016; EULER & SEUFERT, 2007) lead us to explore and think further: Do the big changes in higher-education teaching and learning necessitate external forces? And how can we foster an environment of experimentation and trying out new ideas under conditions of the new normal?

Up to now, what is left widely open is a systematic review and evaluation of recent experiences in order to harvest insights for future changes in higher education. To address these open questions, we are happy to invite researchers and practitioners in the field of Educational/Faculty Development and Higher Education Research across national borders to contribute to this special issue.

In our view, some of the perspectives relevant to these issues may be (not an exhaustive list):

- How can past, current and future teaching and learning practices be systematically be evaluated, for instance, using the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) and similar approaches?
- How can curriculum and study program-related development activities be institutionalized?

- What are institutional strategies and leadership approaches to foster a culture of experimentation?
- What do teaching and learning cultures in higher education look like and how did they change in the light of the recent changes in teaching and learning?
- What educational and faculty-development practices including the Scholarship of Educational Development and similar approaches are supportive of an innovation-oriented culture?
- Which approaches to change and innovation are relevant for higher-education teaching and learning?

We would like to invite contributions that use these perspectives to explore and further develop the culture of experimentation in higher-education teaching and learning. We are in particular looking forward to contributions connecting different perspectives.

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Guidelines regarding the journal

The ZFHE is a peer-reviewed online journal that publishes scientific contributions of practical relevance concerning current higher education development issues. The focus is on didactical, structural, and cultural developments in teaching and learning. Topics that are innovative and still regarded as open in respect of their design options are preferred.

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Submission information

English contributions may be submitted in two possible formats:

Scientific contributions within the main theme should comply with the following criteria:
The contribution...

- presents innovative perspectives, arguments, problem analyses etc. on the key topic;
- focuses on essential aspects of the key topic;
- is theoretically supported (i.e. it offers a clear connection to the scientific discourse of the topic under discussion);
- provides scientific insights with added value at least in some parts;
- clearly elucidates the methodology used to acquire knowledge;
- follows the relevant citation rules consistently (APA style, 6th edition);
- comprises up to 33,600 characters (incl. spaces, as well as cover page, bibliography and author information)

Workshop reports comprise the instructional presentation of practical experience, good practice examples, design concepts, pilot projects, etc. Workshop reports should comply with the following criteria:

- demonstrates potential for knowledge transfer;
- describes illustrative aspects and factors for the purpose of theory formation;
- systematically and transparently presented (e.g., no incomprehensible clues to details in an area of practice);
- follows the relevant citation rules consistently (APA style, 6th edition);
- up to 21,600 characters (incl. spaces, as well as cover page, bibliography and author information).

Submission and review schedule

April 30, 2021 – Submission deadline for complete articles:

Please upload your contribution(s) to the ZFHE journal system (<https://www.zfhe.at>) in the corresponding section (scientific contribution, workshop report) of ZFHE 16/3 issue in anonymous format. To do so, you must first register as an author in the system.

July 23, 2021 – Feedback / Reviews: Scientific contributions and workshop reports are evaluated in a double-blind process (see below).

September 15, 2021 – Revision deadline: Where necessary, contributions may be revised according to feedback and recommendations from the reviews.

October 2021 – Online publication: In October 2021, the finalized contributions are published under <https://www.zfhe.at> and also made available in print.

Review Process

All submitted contributions will be examined in a double-blind peer review process to guarantee scientific quality. The editors of the current issue propose the reviewers for the respective theme and allocate individual contributions to the reviewers; they also determine which contributions will be accepted. The selection of reviewers and the review process for each thematic issue are always supervised by a member of the editorial board.

Formatting and submission

In order to save valuable time with the formatting of the contributions, we kindly ask that all authors work with the template from the beginning. The template can be downloaded from the ZFHE website under the following links:

https://www.zfhe.at/userupload/ZFHE_16-3_TEMPLATE_en.docx

Since we must be able to edit the texts, they must be submitted unlocked/unprotected in in Microsoft Word (.doc), Office Open XML (.docx), Open Document Text (.odt) or Plain Text (.txt) format. Please do not submit any PDF files! Submissions in the “Scientific Contribution” and “Workshop Report” categories must first be made in anonymous format in order to guarantee the double-blind review process. Please remove all references to the author(s) of the document (including in the document properties!). Upon a positive review result, this information will be re-inserted.

Questions?

If you have any questions regarding the content of the issue, please contact Robert Kordts-Freudinger (robert.kordts-freudinger@unisg.ch).

For technical and organizational questions, please contact Michael Raunig (office@zfhe.at).

We look forward to your submissions!

**Robert Kordts-Freudinger, Dietrich Wagner, Claudio Sidler, Karen Tinsner-Fuchs,
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