Call for papers – Special issue
Sustainable higher education teaching – Sustainable higher educational institution

To the main topic

The concept of sustainability and its education has become very popular in recent years and has also been used in many different ways. Current world political as well as climate events (wars, distribution of natural and scarce resources, environmental disasters, global warming, etc.) show the central importance of the topic of sustainability. The university has a special responsibility here as a research institution, teaching and educational institution, but also as an employer. Universities contribute to the further development of the concept of sustainability and are pioneers and initiators of ideas and strategies for sustainable development in society. It is their task to promote these areas of competence (RUESCH-SCHWEIZER et al., 2018). The changes and efforts towards sustainable development at educational institutions result in new challenges for the university, for its scientists and especially for university teaching. For the realization and implementation of the ESD goals formulated by UNESCO (17 globally valid goals for education for sustainable development, Agenda 2030), for example, a sustainability-oriented university teaching is needed. This should serve as a model and provide the tools that can lead to a change in societal thinking (KLEIHAUER & FÜHR, 2018).

However, changes in one's own actions by all parties involved (institution of higher education, teachers and students) are subject to long-term processes, which is why it is imperative that education for sustainable development is anchored in the curricula of all educational areas so that future generations can be guided towards sustainable action (HILF & BERKER, 2020). In addition to teaching specialized knowledge, the challenge is to enable a transfer of knowledge on how responsible action can be anchored and implemented in the long term with the available resources. In doing so, it is necessary to reflect on routines practiced so far and the respective actions on the macro level (educational institution university), the meso level (study programs, employees, student representatives) and the micro level (courses, teachers and students) and to question them in relation to the ESD goals. As a result of this change, teachers are faced with the challenge of expanding their understanding of their role to meet changing requirements, such as the issue of sustainability (MÜLLER-CHRIST et al., 2018). For teaching at universities, this means that students not only have to acquire competencies to deal with scientific knowledge and to be able to check information regarding its validity, but also to generate new knowledge themselves and to be able to question the role of their own discipline in relation to (non-) sustainable developments (BELLINA et al., 2018, KOHLER & SIEGMUND, 2021). Thus, more than ever, competencies such as critical thinking, reflection skills, and ethical and moral decision-making skills are required (STROBEL & WELPE, 2017; HIPPLER, 2007). ESD is thus understood as "enabling learners to recognize non-sustainable processes and to realize the concepts of sustainable development" (HILF & BECKER, 2020, p. 108). Above all, the

acquisition of competencies in sustainable development is to be promoted, which goes far beyond pure knowledge.

In the last three decades, there have been many efforts at universities to anchor sustainable development and to promote it (LOZANO et al., 2015), for example through the inclusion of ESD in target agreements and the anchoring in university laws, but also mergers of universities such as the Alliance of Sustainable Universities in Austria. However, an effective process for anchoring the guiding principle of ESD, such as the integration of ESD into the curricula of universities, has so far been the exception (OBERRAUCH et al., 2021), and so concrete concepts for sustainability in teaching have also been rather rare. Sustainable teaching can be understood in terms of four dimensions/perspectives, among others (adapted from KOLLER et al., 2009):

1. the <u>content dimension</u> addresses subject-specific and cross-disciplinary sustainability topics in the context of courses and focuses on imparting specialized knowledge.

2. the <u>higher education didactic dimension</u> deals with the primarily sustainable planning, development and design of teaching-learning processes and environments and related areas of competence.

3. the <u>reflexive-scientific-critical dimension</u> focuses on one's own subject and one's own teaching activities against the background of critical examination, reflection, and openness to alternative ways of thinking and new perspectives on individual subject areas.

4. the <u>institutional dimension</u> can be seen against the background of interdisciplinary approaches and networking possibilities.

In this context, it is important to revise the planning, monitoring and evaluation of study programs, curricula, and courses with regard to the topic and to develop concepts for the implementation of ESD at all levels of the educational institution of higher education. Within the framework of the call, the topic of sustainable teaching, especially in German-speaking countries, is to be examined from a wide variety of angles and perspectives. In doing so, we present the following, but by no means exhaustive, guidelines for discussion that can guide empirical as well as theoretical contributions:

• How can the implementation and long-term anchoring of sustainable development at universities / curricula / courses succeed?

• How and where does ESD have to be anchored in the educational institution of higher education in order to enable and promote sustainable teaching at the meso level (study programs, staff, student representatives) and micro level (teachers, students, courses)?

• What effects do these changes have on the understanding of teaching and the role of teachers?

• What demands must sustainable teaching meet?

- How must teaching evaluations be designed to target aspects of education for sustainable development and to capture sustainable learning and action in a disciplinary and interdisciplinary way?

- What competencies are required of teachers in order to design sustainable teaching and to promote sustainable learning and action on the part of students?

- How can university teachers meet these developments and change processes?

- How must competence-oriented teaching be designed in order to provide students with competences for sustainable thinking and action in the sense of the goals of ESD?

- What teaching-learning concepts and approaches and/or best practice examples exist for the different dimensions?

- What is the importance of digitalization for sustainable development in teaching?

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We are looking forward to contributions that illuminate and elaborate on the topic of sustainable teaching - sustainable educational institution of higher education from as many different angles and professional perspectives as possible.

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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.

The ZFHE is published by a consortium of European researchers and funded by the Austrian Ministry for Science, Research and Economics. For more information, see https://www.zfhe.at.

Submission information

German or English contributions may be submitted in two possible formats:

Research contributions should meet the following criteria. The paper:

- addresses a systemic question in transdisciplinary, interdisciplinary or subject-specific contexts;
- has a research gap as its starting point;
- is extensively embedded in current scholarly discourse;
- has a robust methodological approach;
- includes reflection on the author's own work;
- explains the research methodology;
- employs a method that is suitable for answering the research question;
- presents the scientific discourse in a reflective manner;
- makes a clearly recognizable contribution to answering the research question or to the research discussion;
- consistently follows relevant citation rules (APA style, current edition);
- comprises between 20,000 and 33,000 characters (with spaces, including cover page, bibliography and author information).

Research-driven development contributions should meet the following criteria. The paper:

- features a higher education development perspective with a sound research base;
- discusses and differentiates a systemic problem in teaching development;
- is an academically grounded "institutional research" contribution;
- is supported by a literature review;
- meaningfully addresses the interaction between science and praxis and/or the link between the two poles of "research and development"
- consistently follows pertinent citation rules (APA style, current edition);
- comprises between 20,000 and 33,000 characters (with spaces, including cover page, bibliography and author information).

Development contributions should meet the following criteria. The paper:

- deals with a concrete problem in higher education development in the (author's) higher education institution;
- addresses a practical need;
- is embedded in the scientific discussion and literature (without claiming to provide an overview of the literature);
- offers suggestions for teaching and university development, with recommendations for action (if applicable);
- offers a systematic and transparent discussion (e.g. no incomprehensible references to specifics or details in a field of practice);
- elaborates on generalisable aspects relevant to theoretical development;

- addresses considerations related to the transfer to practice;
- mentions possibilities for further research;
- consistently follows relevant citation rules (APA style, current edition);
- comprises between 20,000 and 33,000 characters (with spaces, including cover page, bibliography and author information).

Submission and review schedule

June 23, 2023 – Submission deadline for complete articles: Please upload your contribution(s) to the ZFHE journal system (https://www.zfhe.at) in the corresponding section (research contributions, research-driven development contributions, development contributions) of ZFHE 18/4 issue in anonymous format. To do so, you must first register as an author in the system.

September 4, 2023 – Feedback/Reviews: Scientific contributions and workshop reports are evaluated in a double-blind process (see below).

October 16, 2023 – Revision deadline: Where necessary, contributions may be revised according to feedback and recommendations from the reviews.

December 2023 – Online publication: In December 2023, 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:

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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 Ines Deibl (ines.deibl@ph-ooe.at), Maria Tulis-Oswald (maria.tulis-oswald@plus.ac.at) or Patrick Warto (patrick.warto@plus.ac.at).
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We look forward to your submissions!

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