

## Call for papers – Special issue *Student Participation*

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### To the main topic

In its “Recommendations for a Sustainable Design of Study and Teaching”, the German Science and Humanities Council advocates, among other things, for “exchange and participation formats for active co-creation” (p. 49). Students “should be involved in the planning and quality assessment of study programs as responsible co-creators of their learning processes and should also actively participate in this process” (p. 50). This requires, for example, the elimination of structural barriers which might limit a student’s participation or providing targeted information about the opportunities and added values of engaging oneself (p. 51–52). In this sense, participation would primarily refer to aspects of co-creating teaching contents. This is reminiscent of the Latin concept of *universitas magistrorum et scholarium*, which denotes the *Universitas* of being a community of teachers and students, or in other words, a pre-modern, self-governing community of teachers and scholars. It also reminds us of the discussions and negotiation processes of the higher education reforms in the 1960s and 1970s. Lastly, “active co-creation” presents a concept that, at its core, challenges the contemporary metaphors of “students as customers” and teaching as a service, which are summarized in the English-language discussion in the postulate of “students as partners”. In this sense, participation in education and higher education, as well as studying itself, is currently returning to a more conscious state: Current social developments (e.g., the corona crisis, care/work obligations) demonstrate that student participation is challenging when interactions are absent or when students increasingly live at home and/or no longer participate in university and higher education due to socio-economic reasons, as foreseen in a concept of academic education.

Given these different approaches to the topic of student participation, several questions interest us, such as: How does a partnership between students and teachers, which typically refers to an interaction between lecturers and students in education and science policy documents, materialise? Is participation linked to the involvement in research projects or in the shaping of the university through the associated committees? And in particular: How is student participation in teaching structured? The first forms quickly come to mind: for example, when students give presentations and, in the meantime, take on the role of teachers. Or when students act as tutors and are given the opportunity to choose teaching contents and/or methods; or are involved in what are known as formative forms of teaching evaluation. But how can such partnerships be systematised? What is the added value and for whom is it for? How is participation realised and which addressing, and power relations are implicitly reinforced? And: Is it really about participation, or do pseudo-participative conditions exist in which students are formally involved but not taken seriously? What do students themselves say about this, and do they see options for participation in universities?

Therefore, we are looking for theoretical, empirical, and conceptual contributions that place student participation at the center of their discussion and, in this context, inquire about the options, possibilities, limits, and potential crises at universities and other higher education institutions.

Welcomed are (theoretical, conceptual, empirical ...) inputs, which:

- present an orderly system for this variety of initiatives and measures,
- discuss the impact of selected programs and measures,
- trace and analyze controversies around specific proposals,
- give students a voice (e.g., in the context of discussions about participation and normality),
- discuss the conditions for successful development,
- or discuss these issues in relation to the specifics and differences of the fields of study and/or types of higher educational institutions.

## 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

**May 27, 2024 – 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 19/3 issue in anonymous format. To do so, you must first register as an author in the system.

**July/August 2024 – Feedback/Reviews:** Scientific contributions and workshop reports are evaluated in a double-blind process (see below).

**September 2, 2024 – Revision deadline:** Where necessary, contributions may be revised according to feedback and recommendations from the reviews.

**October 2024 – Online publication:** In March 2024, 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\\_19-3\\_TEMPLATE\\_de.docx](https://www.zfhe.at/userupload/ZFHE_19-3_TEMPLATE_de.docx)

[https://www.zfhe.at/userupload/ZFHE\\_19-3\\_TEMPLATE\\_en.docx](https://www.zfhe.at/userupload/ZFHE_19-3_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 Peter Tremp ([peter.tremp@phlu.ch](mailto:peter.tremp@phlu.ch)), Mandy Schiefner-Rohs ([mandy.rohs@rptu.de](mailto:mandy.rohs@rptu.de)) or Sandra Hofhues ([sandra.hofhues@fernuni-hagen.de](mailto:sandra.hofhues@fernuni-hagen.de)).

For technical and organizational questions, please contact Elisabeth Stadler ([office@zfhe.at](mailto:office@zfhe.at)).

**We look forward to your submissions!**

Peter Tremp, Mandy Schiefner-Rohs & Sandra Hofhues