

Teaching, learning and student engagement

Teaching and learning: a journey from the margins to the core, *Cristina Sin (Centre for Research in Higher Education Policies (CIPES) - Portugal)*

The meanings of student engagement: implications for policies and practices, *Paul Ashwin (University of Lancaster- UK) and Debbie McVitty (NUS UK - UK)*

How do we know the effects of higher education on students? On the use of student surveys, *Manja Klemenčič (University of Harvard – US and University of Ljubljana – Slovenia) and Igor Chirikov (National Research University - Higher School of Economics - Russia)*

Understanding the quality of learning in digital learning environments: state of the art and research needed, *Bernadette Charlier (University of Fribourg- Switzerland); Laurent Cosnefroy (Ecole Normale Supérieure Lyon- France); Annie Jézégou (University of Lille 1 science and technology - France); Geneviève Lameul (University of Rennes 2- France)*

Assessment of learning outcomes, *Hamish Coates (University of Melbourne - Australia)*

Giving voice to nontraditional students “walking” the narrative mediation path - a tool for developing reflexive function. An interpretative phenomenological analysis, *Dan Florin Stănescu, Elena-Mădălina Iorga (National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest, Romania); José González Monteagudo (University of Sevilla, Faculty of Education Sciences, Sevilla, Spain)*

Teaching and learning: a journey from the margins to the core, *Cristina Sin (Centre for Research in Higher Education Policies (CIPES) - Portugal)*

This paper analyses how the topic of teaching and learning has evolved in the political discourse of the Bologna Process and of the policy actors who shape European higher education policy. This exercise is particularly stimulating because learning and teaching evolved from a topic of little significance to a forefront concern and a dimension presented as capable of making the difference for the success of the intended reforms. It is the rise in prominence, the underlying rationales and the dimensions of teaching and learning that the paper intends to disentangle and illuminate. Based on an analysis of the central policy documents of the Bologna Process and the key reports of other influential supra-national actors, a proposition is put forward that attention to teaching and learning became focal when this began to be perceived as critical to ensure that higher education served the mission assigned to it by policy-makers, primarily of a utilitarian and economic nature. In making this claim, it suggests that this evolution has been largely determined and driven by the European Commission (EC) and the OECD as prominent supra-national agents and vectors of globalization.

The meanings of student engagement: implications for policies and practices, *Paul Ashwin (University of Lancaster- UK) and Debbie McVitty (NUS UK - UK)*

Student engagement has increasingly been positioned as a defining characteristic of high quality teaching and learning in higher education. This is because as a concept it can comfortably serve the purposes of various stakeholders across learning and teaching, institutional management and national policy contexts. However, as many commentators (for example, see Vuori 2014; Zepke 2014) have pointed out, its meaning is not clear. In this chapter, we argue that this is not, as some suggest (Zepke 2014), due to a lack of criticality on the part of researchers or because engagement is poorly defined (Kahu 2011) but rather because student engagement has many meanings. We argue that by analysing the focus and level of student engagement, it is possible to address the problems associated with the apparent vagueness of student engagement. This conceptual ground clearing allows us to ask more challenging questions about the relations between different foci and levels of student engagement and explore the implications of these questions for future research and policy initiatives related to student engagement.

How do we know the effects of higher education on students? On the use of student surveys, *Manja Klemenčič (University of Harvard – US and University of Ljubljana – Slovenia) and Igor Chirikov (National Research University - Higher School of Economics - Russia)*

How do students experience higher education? How do they engage in educationally purposeful activities? These questions are of central importance to the quality of higher education provision. Student surveys have become one of the largest and most frequently used data source for quality assessment in higher education. Students are perhaps among the most surveyed populations world-wide. This chapter first discusses the policy context in which student survey research has proliferated. The main argument here is that focus on quality for enhancement and accountability drive the use of student surveys. This trend is accelerated by the increased competition for students in market-driven higher education systems. The chapter offers an overview of the most influential student survey designs

and discusses their limitations. We argue that student surveys can serve as a helpful screening instrument to assess institutional practice, but in view of the limitations suggest complementing these with other data sources. Given the technological advances and student use of social media, we see opportunities for adapting qualitative methods of data collection to digital use, which will in turn yield more contextualized data on students in large volumes and high velocity. Approaches, such as digital ethnography, have exceptional potential for discoveries, but several challenges need to be resolved in terms of ethical issues and big data analysis. There are ample avenues for future research on students, both basic and applied, and research directly involving students. Such research would help to meet the needs of institutional decision makers and policy makers, and, therefore, they should seriously consider supporting it.

Understanding the quality of learning in digital learning environments: state of the art and research needed, *Bernadette Charlier (University of Fribourg- Switzerland); Laurent Cosnefroy (Ecole Normale Supérieure Lyon- France); Annie Jézégou (University of Lille 1 science and technology - France); Geneviève Lameul (University of Rennes 2- France)*

Over the last decade, the practice of higher education in Europe has become highly diversified and more complex. Among the visible phenomena related to the organization of studies that have appeared are new forms of teaching and learning linked to digital learning environments. Faced with these developments, sometimes called a revolution, actors - policy makers, teachers, students - have very little in the way of scientific results to rely on. Such practices are still relatively new and research done in this area rarely goes beyond feedback from experiences, case studies and satisfaction surveys. As such, research has not yet produced sufficient knowledge to provide a solid basis for decision-making.

This chapter aims to start to address the current lack of scientific work in this area. More specifically, its ambition is to provide a theoretical framework based on the state of the art as well as research trails to answer to two major questions:

- 1. How do student characteristics and those of digital learning environments interact?**
- 2. What are the configurations emerging from these interactions that can lead to quality learning?**

The overarching outcome will be to make new forms of teaching and learning linked to digital learning environments in higher education more intelligible.

Assessment of learning outcomes, *Hamish Coates (University of Melbourne - Australia)*

In most countries university education is in demand like never before. Yet many traditional approaches to university education do not scale well, challenging the quality and productivity of supply. Meeting increased demand requires new and different ways of doing core educational business. As higher education expands and diversifies, more energy must be invested in ensuring that sufficient learning has been achieved to warrant the award of a qualification. Yet assessment would appear to be one of the final frontiers in the contemporary reconfiguration of higher education. This chapter responds to a growing need to do more and do better in this core area. The chapter starts by analysing imperatives for improving the assessment of learning outcomes. It introduces a model for reviewing progress in the field, and applies this model to several case study initiatives. This exercise yields findings that are

distilled into recommendations for advancing the assessment of higher education students learning outcomes.

Giving voice to nontraditional students “walking” the narrative mediation path - a tool for developing reflexive function. An interpretative phenomenological analysis, *Dan Florin Stănescu, Elena-Mădălina Iorga (National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest, Romania); José González Monteagudo (University of Sevilla, Faculty of Education Sciences, Sevilla, Spain)*

The growing phenomenon of disadvantaged and non-traditional students increases the risk of educational underachievement and drop-out in universities in Europe within the European funded project INSTALL (*Innovative Solutions to Acquire Learning to Learn*) researchers developed a qualitative methodology - *Narrative Mediation Path* (NMP) - consisting of a group training process targeted to disadvantaged students. NMP, based on the psychological concept of ‘mentalization’, also known as ‘reflexive competence’, combines into one methodology four discursive modules: Metaphoric, Iconographic, Written and Bodily.

The use of a “multidimensional” narrative promotes a progressive cognitive and emotional involvement of the student; a gradual transition from the exploration of the entire university experience to a specific and individual experience and a gradual evolution from a reconstructive function of the formative experience to a planning function that allows students to act in an effective way in academic settings.

In this chapter, we introduce the concept of mentalization, NMP qualitative methodology and findings from an evaluative study about how participating students experienced the NMP training process. The evaluative study employs the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), a qualitative approach that combines the dedication to understanding the lived experience of the participant with the recognition that achieving such an understanding requires interpretative work on the part of the researcher. Verbatim transcripts of five interviews served as raw data for the study.

The results suggest that the use of different discursive modules supports the students in developing their reflexive competence during a formative experience which enables them to better adjust to the university context. Several propositions are made as to how NMP methodology can be integrated in institutional context.