



**EAN 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**  
SHARING STORIES OF EMPOWERMENT:  
CREATING NEW STRATEGIES FOR DIVERSITY  
AND INCLUSION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

**Abstracts**

**Plenary Session 1**

**Wednesday 12:45 - 2:10 pm**

**Insights into the Process of Developing a National Strategy on the Social Dimension of Higher Education in Austria**

*Martin Unger, Senior Researcher at Higher Education Research, Institute for Advanced Studies in Vienna, Austria*

➔ **Aula**

In 2015, ministers responsible for higher education decided at their Bologna Conference in Yerevan, that each member state should develop a national strategy on the social dimension in higher education. Not many countries seem to follow that decision, but Austria recently published its first national social dimension strategy. Following the guidelines from the Bologna Process, the strategy identifies underrepresented groups in higher education and provides an overview of existing national and institutional measures. In accordance with the Bologna Process, the strategy does not only focus on access, but also on completion. Goals are set for three dimensions (widening access, preventing dropouts and increasing completion, framework conditions and political measures) which consist of three action lines each. Several quantitative targets are set as well.

Several workshops with a total attendance of around 800 stakeholders have been organised to develop the objectives and to formulate the goals. In addition, a survey among HEI's collected existing measures at institutions and good practices were discussed. As such, the process itself was the nucleus for a more institutionalised way of peer learning and network-building within the respective professionals at the HEI's. Moreover, the process itself raised awareness for the topic on institutional level and strengthened the role of employees engaged in improving the social dimension of students. Finally, the national Bologna day 2017 was devoted to the social dimension and the new strategy.

Our research team was involved in the developing process of the strategy and thus our presentation will briefly describe the contents of the strategy but will mainly focus on the process and its positive side-effects such as raising awareness and building networks between the institutions. Furthermore we will present the next implementation steps as well as ongoing discussions such as the possibility to integrate the social dimension in the university funding system.

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## Diversity in higher education: Who needs to join the conversation?

*Ged Lerpiniere, LEAPS*

*Terry C. Lansdown, Heriot-Watt University*

*Scotland, UK*

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### ➔ Aula

LEAPS is a partnership between schools, universities, local authorities and Skills Development Scotland. The programme seeks to advise, encourage and inform potential applicants considering higher education. It provides impartial advice, raises awareness regarding widening access, and challenges assumptions regarding admissions criteria.

In 2016 a paper was presented at the 25th EAN Conference reviewing the programme's progress over the previous 20 years in facilitating widening access. Additionally, initial findings from a programme evaluation were presented. This paper provides an update summarising findings from the project. In outline, tracking of students from LEAPS to University was highly effective, school exit grades were found to be predictive of degree outcome, and LEAPS students could not be differentiated from non-LEAPS students by exit qualification. However, with respect to the Strand 4 theme of the conference, 'who needs to join the conversation?' the paper will additionally focus lessons learned concerning higher level outcomes. For example, structural and organisational questions for Higher Education institutions and policy makers; seeking to evaluate widening access projects.

As public and institutional funds are committed to many widening access endeavours, it is right and proper they receive regular and robust evaluation. If we are to be serious about the widening access agenda, then we must understand not only how students enter higher education, but also what happens to them during their higher studies. To meet this commitment, investment should be made to support policy-driven longitudinal studies. However, to ensure these are effective, we must be aware of the potential limitations in process and policy between stakeholders.

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## Mentoring and teacher education – how mentors and mentees of HoPe (Hochschulperspektiven für alle) improve their diversity competence

*Katharina Graalman, Judith Lagies, University of Osnabrück, Germany*

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### ➔ Aula

By referring in an exemplary manner to the mentoring project HoPe (Hochschulperspektiven für alle – “Higher Educational Perspectives for all”) at the University of Osnabrück, we will look into the question in which way such a mentoring project can contribute to the professionalization of prospective teachers. For this purpose, we will present the interrelation between some tasks of teachers with regard to the core curriculum, Teacher Education and professionalization in form of an overview. Subsequently we will present an extract of the empirical data collected by the concomitant research group of HoPe. In order to find out the participants' view of the outcome of the project, we had group and silent discussions with both mentors and mentees, each group in separate turns and also asked one cohort to give us their personal statements individually in writing. The analysis of all these self-disclosures may serve as an indicator that mentoring can be implemented in Teacher Education in a beneficial manner. Considering the results of the project HoPe, we assume that mentoring in general and this project in particular may be a suitable form for making student teachers more receptive to diversity and may support them in their professionalization. In view of diversity and inclusion in higher education it appears that the stronger emphasis recently put on the reflective competences of the students, based on experimental learning, as well as an increased transfer of theory and practice may be part of the solution or at least a step into the right direction. In addition, it might be helpful to implement mentoring as part of Teacher Education in accordance with the students' needs in order to raise their awareness of and competence for dealing with diversity and inclusion.

## Parallel Workshop Session

Wednesday 3:30 – 4:30 pm

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### Workshop 1

#### Let's talk: Creating spaces of engagement at the university

*Dr. Aminata Cairo, Rector for Inclusive Education, The Hague University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands*

➔ **Room 232 (Biologischer Hoersaal)**

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Engaging diversity remains a challenge. People are willing, but feel incapable or flat-out scared to start the discussion. In the academic arena especially where power differentials, and adherence to emotion-free neutral spaces reign, to have true engagement around issues of diversity remains problematic.

Aminata Cairo has developed talking circles where different members of the campus community come together (students, staff, Faculty) to learn how to listen to each other and truly connect with someone's story who seems so different from themselves. As part of these circles she provides actual guidelines and facilitates discussion. The Let's Talk circles are designed so that participants eventually will start these type of talking circles on their own.

Let's Talk was developed at Leiden University, the oldest university in the Netherlands, and the first university to implement a diversity officer. Let's Talk has become very successful. It works best when used in small groups.

During this workshop participants will be guided through a Let's Talk workshop. They will be introduced to the philosophy behind it and after the experience will engage in reflection as to why and how this could be useful at their own respective institutions.

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### Workshop 2

#### Staffing Needs 101: 'How to' recruit, hire, and train staff to serve and work with a diverse student population

*Lucia Delgado, College Access, Colorado State University*

*Joseph Aguirre, Director, TRIO Student Support Services, Northern Wyoming Community District, US*

➔ **Senatssaal**

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Coaching students to reach their fullest potential starts with hiring and training the best Access and Opportunity staff to work within diverse areas and with diverse students in these programs. Having the right staff on a team and effectively training them to connect with students can be the key to successful program implementation. A diverse student body doesn't always equal embracing diversity, and a lack of staff that mirror students or have the competencies to understand issues of diversity can lead to less effective outcomes.

This workshop will equip attendees with tools to identify staffing needs by examining programmatic goals and weighing those needs against existing student body participants. Using models of recruitment and training from two-year and four-year public institutions in the United States as a guide, workshop attendees will take part in building a staffing recruitment & training plan that can be implemented at their home institutions.

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### **Workshop 3**

#### **Lessons from engaging First Year Initial Teacher Trainee (ITT) students in co-creating curricular that embed equality and diversity**

*Maxine Greaves, Sheffield Hallam University, England, UK*

*Wal Warmington, Birmingham City University, England, UK*

#### **➔ Room 315**

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With regards to student engagement and belonging, UK Higher Education Institutions (UKHEI's) face a range of challenges as they attempt to relate to, retain and support students on their courses (Thomas, 2012; Warmington, Hodge, Sela & Kainth, 2013). For those studying to teach within a multi-racial society developing an understanding of equality and diversity is critical if, once trained, such societal educators are to positively influence the education of others. For trainee teachers this is particularly acute given the challenge of weaving such issues into their lived experiences and emerging pedagogical practice. For students to do this successfully it also requires staff to be aware of developing their own ideas and practice in the area of equality and diversity.

If staff and students are involved in co-creating specific aspects of curriculum design, a range of equality principles can be embedded and strategically aligned to module learning outcomes. These learning outcomes can be furthered as students develop an understanding of learning processes, critical self-reflection, action planning and goal setting that demonstrate how diversity adds value to their personal and professional practice.

This workshop will enable participants to reflect on and share their understanding and experiences of equality and diversity.

Participants will also share ideas within group activities that identify elements of good practice, relating to attitudes, skills, and actions required to successfully support all HE students when examining equality and diversity issues. Therefore the main outcome from this workshop is that participants will leave with a range of ideas and activities that could be used within their institutions when working with students and staff.

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### **Workshop 4**

#### **Changing perspectives on diversity through organisational mindfulness – how everybody can learn from high reliability organisations**

*Tammy Schmack, Hochschule Rhein-Waal, Germany*

#### **➔ AUB 1**

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In recent years, research on the social processes of collective mindfulness has grown rapidly. Weick and Sutcliffe (2010) studied diverse high-reliability organizations (HRO) that must maintain performance in uncertainty, where the potential of errors can lead to horrifying catastrophes. They state, that collective mindfulness enables the organizational system through specific action – and communicational pattern to (1) concentrate on failure, (2) be sensitive to operations, (3) to reject simple interpretations, (4) commit to resilience and (5) respect situational expertise. These pattern, e.g. to reject simple interpretations through diverse teams, could be focused recruiting processes, specific on-boarding-programs and more. Some trends in research lead to the suspicion, that these five specific processes could be applied to any type of organization.

To raise awareness for and change the perspective on diversity-connected topics, collective mindfulness can help widen the view by questioning the status quo sustainably. Mindful organizations strive to scrutinize shared mental models by implementing permanent constructive scepticism through, e.g. democratic feedback processes. Different organizational groups can view the same organizational phenomena from different points of view.

By defining diversity as a strategic value, we can benefit by its multiple positive outcomes and learn from its negative side effects (e.g. higher potential for task-related and interpersonal conflicts in teams).

Diverse teams tend to achieve more creative and innovative processes and solutions, concerning the challenges of demographic change, digitalization or constant change. Honesty and open-mindedness are crucial components to realize the obstacles of diversity like facing stereotypes (Frey & Bierhoff, 2011; Fiedler, 2000) prejudices or higher financial or social costs (Kinne, 2016).

Based on the results of semi-structured interviews with leaders and executives and an explorative content analysis of collective mindfulness, this workshop will use a mixture of design thinking techniques to develop specific ideas to give a holistic view on the facets of diversity and discuss potential ways of implementation.

The participants learn to understand and apply the five core processes of collective mindfulness to diversity-related topics of their own specific work environment by working on authentic scenarios.

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### **Workshop 5 (Strands 1 & 4)**

#### **Supporting higher education graduates' early careers. How mature are we?**

*Katarina Pazur Anicic, FOI, University of Zagreb, Croatia*

#### ➔ **AUB 2**

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Enhancing the employability potential of young people is among the most important goals at the level of European Union in the upcoming period. Key strategic documents set at least 40% of 30-34-year-olds completing third level education until 2020, raising employment rates but also reducing poverty and social exclusion as the main goals. Higher education institutions (HEIs) have an important role in supporting the achievement of those goals and may contribute by improving their practices focused on widening access, supporting retention for all students, specially underrepresented and unprivileged, as well as enhancing the employment capability of their graduates. In that context, it is important that HEIs provide comprehensive support for their students.

This workshop presents the developed maturity model for supporting graduates early careers within HEIs taking into account diversity of student body. The final model was developed based on the case study research at four HEIs in Europe, inputs from different higher education stakeholders (teaching and non-teaching staff, students, alumni, employers, policy makers etc.) and testing at four HEIs in Croatia. The final model contains 65 practices within 4 key process areas: 13 within strategic planning of graduate employability, 26 within curriculum design and delivery, 16 within student support and 10 within provision of extra-curricular activities. Each of the practices within model is described with textual descriptors at five maturity level: not practices, initial, partially adequate, largely adequate and fully adequate. During the workshops, participant will have an opportunity to use the model and assess the maturity levels of their own institutions according to the proposed key process area. Using the model, participants will immediately see the potential for improvement of certain practices as well as suggested activities to enhance. Moreover, workshop participants will be able to benchmark their results with other institutions using the online assessment tool.

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### **Workshop 6**

#### **Grassroots work for inclusion and diversity in higher education**

*Christian Müller, PhD student & Scientific Staff Member, Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg Student's Council, Germany*

#### ➔ **Aula**

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The vast field of higher education generally stands for open-mindedness and tolerance. But when it comes to recognise individual differences and how they affect the way someone learns, studies, works, or lives, it tends to be a very different kind of talk. Universities, their staff and students, are commonly seen as a homogenous

group with the same or similar educational and social background and similar goals in life. With these assumptions as a backdrop, the different potentials of non-traditional students tend to be overlooked, homogeneity is aimed for and not equality despite differences. For a long time, diversity has very often been seen as a threat to the integrity of the educational framework. Especially in Germany, where there is an established three tier educational system, which tends to discriminate difference very early on. Children are very early separated for roughly three types of education, that will foreshadow their paths of life. This decision is hardly reversible in later life, which is especially true for students with no academic background, who have a family or who are disabled. The field of diversity and inclusion is, right now, in a developing stage, with much room for growth and lots of opportunity to get involved into the discussion and make a difference that can change the opportunities for those which do not come from a privileged background.

The short-workshop will show why and how everybody should get involved in the subjects of inclusion, diversity, and social justice. It will introduce you to how to build up an interest group in changing the possibilities for those, which are not part of the traditional recruiting ground for colleges and universities, to live out their potentials and get the education they deserve.

## **Parallel Paper Sessions 1**

**Thursday 9:45 - 10:25 am**

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### **Session 1.1**

#### **Climbers and pragmatics: A typology of First Generation Students**

*Dr. Janika Grunau, Post Doc Researcher, University of Osnabrück, Department of Vocational Education and Training, Germany*

➔ **Room 232 (Biologischer Hörsaal)**

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In recent years, First Generation Students have become a target group of numerous political and research activities. The paper examines the practice and behavior of these students and their acculturation in academic institutions. Moreover, it focuses on the question of the impact of the family and school socialization. The study draws on Pierre Bourdieus sociocultural theory of the Habitus (Bourdieu 1987 [1979]) and on the concept of Social Milieus (Bremer 2007).

The empirical research is based on a qualitative interview study with fifteen master students and their school and academic biographies. The interviews were analyzed with the Documentary Method (Bohnsack 2014). By the means of empirically validated typing, two distinctive ideal-types of First Generation Students emerge: Educational Climbers and Pragmatists. The Climbers strive hard to acculturate in the academic milieu and thus move away from their milieu of origin. In contrast, the Pragmatists can be characterized as situation-oriented and pragmatic, managing the synthesis of their original and the academic milieu.

Finally, I will discuss the consequences of the study results for academic counselling structures as well as the benefits of diverse student biographies for academic learning.

## Session 1.2

### Fostering Diversity: what about small is beautiful?

#### Mature students' progression in a small and highly competitive Scottish institution.

*Joanna Fry, Education Liaison Officer (Lifelong & Flexible Learning)*

*Dr Laurence Lasselle, Senior Lecturer, University of St Andrews, Scotland, UK*

#### ➔ Senatssaal

This paper examines the institutional factors contributing to the overwhelming success of a new access route for mature full-time students in a small and highly competitive Scottish Higher Education institution in which young full-time first-degree students compose the vast majority of the student population.

This alternative access was created in 2013 thanks to additional funding from the Scottish Government. Students from further education colleges are encouraged to apply for the full-time three-year degree programme with the understanding that they can move onto a four-year degree at the end of their second year if desired and academically possible. The completion rate of the first cohort of twelve students is 92%. Seven of them have already graduated with a four-year degree and a further three by June 2018. Subsequent cohorts of twenty students each are following a similar successful progression.

Mature students are not the dominant population among full-time first-degree entrants in Scottish universities. They face a large spectrum of barriers from financial constraints to child care issues to their entry to higher education. The same barriers explain why they are more likely to drop out.

This access route was considered as a first step towards promoting greater diversity within the institution. However, integrating this "new" population was perceived a risk. The institution has developed its own solutions to facilitate the integration of these access students as the route was growing.

This paper will highlight how the institution has changed its perception towards this population by ensuring that every aspect of its institutional elements could be adapted to reflect the needs of this new population. It will reflect on the lessons arising from the route and emphasise which institutional factors could be adapted and augmented in other institutions to reproduce this success.

## Session 1.3

### Spotlight on Western Balkans: Joining the European Dialogue in tackling exclusion in Higher Education

*Kristela Cicko; Juliane Fuge; Bernd Gössling; University of Paderborn, Germany*

*Anika Werner, Regional Coordinator, ArbeiterKind.de, Germany*

#### ➔ Room 315

In a joint effort, the University of Paderborn and [ArbeiterKind.de](http://ArbeiterKind.de) have set-up an international partnership project on widening access and participation at three universities in the Western Balkans: University of Niš (Serbia), University of Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and South East European University Tetovo (FYR Macedonia).

By establishing a peer-mentoring program targeted at underrepresented students at the respective higher education institution, it is intended to increase awareness of discriminating practices, make study programs more inclusive and narrow achievement gaps. Special features of this program are full integration in the study curriculum, quality assurance through intensive training of prospective peer mentors and collaboration with local NGOs advocating for marginalized groups. When the project consortium was created, account has been taken of the fact that member universities serve majority communities which are minorities at the other universities as a means to support mutual understanding and learning.

The project makes extensive use of a narrative approach in order to foster exchange of individual life stories. This is meant to increase awareness of one's self-image, understanding of others and inspire for action through self-actualization.

The presentation will be used to share experiences during the course of the project. Excerpts of the public parts of the narrative exercises will be also used to illustrate effects of the program. Current challenges for widening participation and access are discussed in view of the special conditions of the local communities.

We also wish to gain feedback of the EAN community in order to support the project efforts during this critical stage of its implementation.

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#### **Session 1.4**

##### **Implementing National Access Policy to Integrate and Mainstream Equality of Access in Irish Universities – through the Lens of Inclusive Design**

*Dr Anna M. Kelly, Director, UCD Access & LLL, University College Dublin, Ireland*

#### ➔ AUB 1

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This paper outlines a study of the implementation of the national access policy objective to mainstream and embed equality of access into everyday life of higher education institutions. The research population comprises the senior university and student union leaders in Ireland's seven universities.

The theoretical field within which this study is located is the field of Inclusive Design for Education, engaging between the fields of Higher Education Policy Access Policy, Policy Implementation and Higher Education Practice. It draws on the work of Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) to focus on the 'disposition of implementers', and uses the lens of inclusive design to assess the awareness and understanding of the implementation of access policy.

This study found early signs of mainstreaming and embedding equality of access. It also found an absence of institution-wide policies and practices to foster and inculcate inclusion and diversity on a university-wide basis.

Irish Universities are slowly evolving into inclusive institutions; pockets of good institutional practice are evident. In this study, the term 'inclusive design' refers to a design approach to ensure that equality of access is infused and embedded throughout higher education institutions and, as a result, is promoted, supported and the responsibility of all. Despite the early signs of mainstreaming and embedding equality of access; national access policy remains to be fully realised.

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#### **Session 1.5**

##### **Quality Management and Diversity – Targeting Social Mobility in Higher Education**

*Dr. Mathis Heinrich, Project consultant in quality assurance, Philipps University Marburg, Germany*

#### ➔ AUB 2

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Quality management (QM) is an emerging area that in the course of Bologna reforms and a professionalization of accreditation procedures increasingly enters higher education practices today. So far, quality management in higher education is very much focused on service quality in studies and teaching as well as on output quality in research and knowledge. However, while different types and styles of QM-Systems are already well established in private businesses, many universities and educational institutions are still at the beginning to define their understanding of quality, quality targets and the best practices to achieve it. This opens up the chance to produce new ideas and strategies of quality management in higher education, including the involvement of social mobility – i.e. the movement of people in between different social strata in society – as an important aspect and target of quality in teaching, learning and knowledge production.



The paper aims to evaluate common quality management systems and procedures in higher education institutions in Germany in terms of their diversity strategies, with a special focus on the recognition of social diversity and inequality. As such, it will give an overview of existing QM activities and share practical experiences with existing procedures of quality assurance in German universities. Build on those insights, the paper will then introduce a total quality management approach (TQM), which is well suited to include society and societal needs into an innovative framework of QM. As such, it argues that social mobility should emerge to an important quality target in higher education, which could also contribute to perceive diversity rather as a solution than a problem.

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### **Session 1.6**

#### **Master without Bachelor: Pilot project at Brandenburg University of Applied Sciences**

*Dr. Christine Tschöll, Katharina Lenz, Researchers, Brandenburg University of Applied Sciences, Germany*

#### ➔ **Aula**

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The aim of the project MasterPlan is to design a target-group-oriented procedure for the examination of the suitability for job-qualified applicants without a first university degree for a master's degree course and to test them in a pilot phase.

In 2016 and 2017, within the framework of the project, in the pilot study course "Security Management (M.Sc.)" a procedure was developed to identify the professional and interdisciplinary competences that a bachelor's graduate should have in order to study successful in a master's degree course. Based on the identified competences an entrance examination for target group of qualified professionals without a higher education degree was designed. This is not an examination in the actual sense, but rather the applicants demonstrate their abilities for studying within a bridge semester. Preparatory courses for scientific work, as well as IT and network basics, prepare the students for their studies. The final exam is a subject-specific written work with a supplementary interview. Enrolment in the Master's degree course is possible in the following academic semester after passing the entrance examination.

The practical phase started in May 2017 and prospective students can apply for the entrance examination until 01/09/2017 in order to pass and test the theoretically defined procedure. First results will be presented at conference and discussed together with participants.

The MasterPlan project is conducted and supervised by the Centre for Permeability and Dual Courses at Brandenburg University of Applied Sciences. It is sponsored by the Ministry for Science, Research and Culture from the European Social Fund and the Federal State of Brandenburg between 2016 and 2018.

## **Parallel Paper Sessions 2**

**Thursday 10:30 - 11:10 am**

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### **Session 2.1**

#### **A whole new world? Transitions of First Generation students**

*Dr. phil. Miriam Buse, Research Assistant, University of Osnabrück, Germany*

#### ➔ **Room 232 (Biologischer Hörsaal)**

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This paper focusses on the challenges for first generation students, i.e. students with non-academic backgrounds, at university admission. This introductory phase at the university is looked upon from a transition-theoretic perspective.

Admissions in an educational biography – such as the admission to higher educational system – are regarded as crossroads at which educational inequalities arise and accumulate. German research on inequalities at university admission has repeatedly shown that admission to higher education is more difficult for students from non-academic families in comparison to students with an academic background. This paper highlights the current state of research on the participation of first generation students during the introductory phase to higher education. It also illustrates how a transition theory can serve as a theoretical framework for research of admission to higher education. With reference to the transition theory, the specific challenges that arise for first generation students are highlighted with a focus on success stories. Why are some students capable of adapting to their new environment while others are not? Based on the answers to this question, I argue that an educational system must learn from the successful strategies of first generation students to cope with their challenges to pave the way for other nontraditional students.

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## **Session 2.2**

### **Diversity Paradigm Revisited: Where Higher Education Logics and Corporate Action Meet**

*Dr. Martina Gaisch, Head of Diversity Management & Higher Education Researcher, University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria, Austria*

#### **➔ Senatssaal**

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While diversity management has been of topical interest in Anglo-Saxon multiethnic societies since the 1960s, it has only recently reached mainland Europe, particularly with the aim to leverage diversity as a competitive business strategy. Hence, over the last ten years the concept of diversity has spurred European scholarly debate, and in contrast to the US-American way of affirmative action, the European approach seems to be more proactive.

Unsurprisingly, the vast majority of diversity approaches derives from US corporate policies and practices that reach from anti-discrimination over access and legitimacy to learning and effectiveness, and more recently, also social corporate responsibility. This contribution revisits these paradigms and seeks to relate them to a higher education context. In doing so, it is attempted to shed light on contextspecific particularities of two different institutional fields but also to explore potential differences and commonalities between them. Further, the so-called HEAD (higher education awareness for diversity) Wheel is presented to provide a holistic perspective of diversity management at the tertiary level and account for this inherently complex, contextually bound, and dynamically intersecting phenomenon. By drawing on five interconnected diversity segments (demographic, cognitive, disciplinary, functional and institutional diversity) it is sought to depict the broad variety of diversity that is ubiquitous in higher education institutions.

In addition, it is argued that a further approach needs to be adopted; one that goes beyond either-or categories but states that in view of an increasingly diverse and complex world a more pluralistic and eclectic perspective is required. This claim is reinforced by a qualitative study conducted among diversity managers of eight Austrian higher education institutions. The findings suggest that diversity management is seen as a context-sensitive commodity with underlying rationales that can be driven by departmental needs, organizational and strategic outlook but also by some kind of bandwagon effects.

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## **Session 2.3**

### **Access to success and social mobility through higher education: A Curate's Egg?**

*Prof. Dr. Stuart Billingham, Professor Emeritus of Lifelong Learning, Spain/UK*

#### **➔ Room 315**

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(This collection of original articles, Edited by Professor Stuart Billingham, will be published by Emerald Publishing in their *Great Debates in Higher Education* series late Summer/early Autumn 2018)

This “presentation” will take the form of a conversation between the facilitator and delegates around the following questions:

- What can we do to support changes in the structures and dominant cultures within which we work in order to create sustainable change in patterns of student participation in higher education? [as opposed to supporting a “deficit model” which we know involves implicit if not explicit stigmatization, and which we also know can only ever produce piecemeal and short-term gains]
- What can we do to ensure that even within policies and practices built upon a “deficit model”, we do not lose sight of those groups and communities historically ignored – or at best marginalised - in widening participation policies and strategies? (for example, those in rural and coastal communities; those recovering drug and alcohol addicts; adult learners needing part-time, flexible, learning opportunities; those who use mental health services; estranged students; and others)
- What can we do to challenge the dominant discourse of social mobility which disempowers those it claims to be trying to help, and serves mainly to help those who mostly do not need it?

The facilitator will draw not only on examples and perspectives which will appear in the above book, but also provide examples from his own 40 years experience working in universities to promote wider access to success. DELEGATES ARE ASKED TO BRING EXAMPLES FROM THEIR OWN WORK, OR CONTEXTS, TO SHARE WITH REGARD TO THE THREE QUESTIONS ABOVE.

## Session 2.4

### Writing\_Talents – Diversity, Talent Development and Written Language Promotion

*Dr. Lena Kreppel, PhD.; Angelika Dorawa, MA. Westphalian University of Applied Sciences, Central Dept. of Talent Development, Germany*

#### ➔ AUB 1

At the writing center Writing\_Talents the conception and implementation of our offers are based on a strength-based approach where the diversity of the participants is acknowledged as a resource. Our presentation aims to illustrate the approach as well as the teaching method within a structured basic level language programme which promotes the diverse cultural and written literacy among our students. Concluding the writing center's teaching methods and approach are put up for discussion.

A high proportion of the students at the Westphalian University of Applied Sciences (WH), located in the northern Ruhr area, come from university-remote, low-income families or families with a migrant background. Furthermore, two-thirds of the students are graduates from vocational schools. Therefore, diversity is displayed in study and teaching at the WH. Since the diverse student body is displaying different written German language skills, diversity also plays a major role in the work at the writing center Writing\_Talents, which offers subject-specific courses, workshops and consultation hours for its students. While the aim of our work includes providing the best possible support for the participants in their career, so that they can fully develop their potential, it additionally contribute to the equality of opportunity and the educational justice of non-traditional students (not only) in our region.

At the writing center Writing\_Talents the conception and implementation of our offers are based on a strength-based approach. On the one hand, the attitude of the teachers towards the students is characterized by appreciation and the perception of the participants as talents. The term "talent", which is also used in the name of our program deliberately, underscores this approach and, at the same time, points out that we are distancing ourselves from a deficient approach that associates low literacy competences with overall abilities. On the other hand, due to the awareness of the different knowledge in the area of writing competence, the teaching is constructively designed with regard to the diverse backgrounds of the students. The diversity of the participants is acknowledged as a resource where students can contribute to the course culture with their personal experiences, interpretations and ideas.

In our presentation, we will illustrate the strength-oriented approach of the writing center Writing\_Talents, put our teaching methods up for discussion and thus give a practical example of diversity in higher education in reference to Talent Development and Written Language Promotion.

## Session 2.5

### Diversity as Strength

*Sinje Schuck, "Open University Access", University of Hamburg, Germany*

#### ➔ AUB 2

In Hamburg the Department of Socioeconomics is a unique example of how diversity in Higher Education enriches a degree program and fosters its students' prospects. With the support of the Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Sciences the Department of Socioeconomics creates opportunities for social and educational mobility. Both for students without the traditional university entrance qualification or with a migration background the Department of Socioeconomics has been a good place to start their academic or professional careers.

- 40% of the program's places are reserved for students without traditional university entrance qualifications (e.g. Abitur)
- 2016 about 1/5 of Hamburg's Freshmen without Abitur took up their studies here
- With about 2.600 students it is one of the largest bachelor programs in Hamburg
- The program is interdisciplinary. The four disciplines Business Management, Economics, Sociology and Law open up many avenues for its students
- High percentage of students with a migration background
- Access to the entrance exam for refugees
- Criteria of Eligibility: three years of vocational training (time periods of childcare or care work are recognized as work time).

As the Department of Socioeconomics recognizes the strength that the diversity of its students' body represents, active measures are taken to foster diversity as well as create opportunities where students can benefit from combining their different experiences and skill sets. Advertisements, networking in the field of educational mobility and a substantial revision of both the entrance exam and administrative procedures are geared towards attracting more diverse students. Already existing support classes such as 'Introduction to Mathematics', 'Basic English' and 'German as an Academic Language' are complemented by a recently submitted grant proposal to fund peer-to-peer tutorials aiming to create experiences of empowerment as students learn to cooperate and tackle difficult situations together with their peers. The students' success stories will be presented.

## Plenary Session 2

**Thursday 1:15 - 3:30 pm**

**Transitions from Bachelor to Master programs: Do immigrants holding a German high school diploma still have disadvantages?**

*Sebastian Lang, Research Associate, DZHW, Germany*

#### ➔ Aula

Against the backdrop of a strong immigration unequal chances in education are of major interest at the moment. The hope to attract skilled and highly skilled workers only will fulfill oneself if there are appropriate chances of access to higher education. While current surveys focus on immigrated refugees in particular, there

is still a research gap about the educational opportunities of foreign students, especially first and second generation migrants, who earned their higher education entrance certificate in Germany, however. Focusing on tertiary education it can be noted that in previous studies no general discrimination of migrants or persons with migration background has been determined. Though, the introduction of the Bachelor's/Master's system created a new transition event respectively selectivity barrier. Are there new inequalities within the German higher education system due to this new barrier? And if so, by which processes can these inequalities be explained, respectively, do these processes differ between social groups?

Possible mechanisms can be derived for social background, academic performance and educational aspirations in this context. It is particularly interesting, whether the transition opportunities differ between German students ("natives"), people with migration background holding German final secondary-school examinations ("in Germany educated immigrants" from first or second generation) and people with a foreign higher education entrance qualification ("international students"), especially as the latter often come to Germany for the purpose of study.

The contribution at hand examines these questions using data from the Graduate Panel of the German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (DZHW). This analysis is possible for the first time with the graduate cohort of 2009, as noteworthy proportions of this cohort already had studied in a Bachelor's program. Moreover, the graduate cohort of 2013 will be included in the analyses; therefore, it is also possible to identify any cohort effects.

## Parallel Paper Sessions 3

Thursday 4:00 - 4:40 pm

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### Session 3.1

#### Equal Opportunities for Doctoral Students in the Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes (German Academic Scholarship Foundation)

*Dr. Guy Tourlamain; German Academic Scholarship Foundation*

➔ **Room 232 (Biologischer Hörsaal)**

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The challenges faced by "first-generation" students who embark on a Ph.D. programme are the subject of ongoing discussion among educational-scientists and policy-makers alike. Drawing on the success of this group in the Studienstiftung's doctoral programme, this paper will consider opportunities and strategies in the provision of support for "first-generation" students during their doctoral studies. It will focus on two areas: First, it will explore the elements needed to ensure a fair and open selection procedure, which assesses prior academic achievements and extra-curricular engagement against the biographical background of individual doctoral students. Second, it will examine the components of our scholarship programme that, alongside the financial support we provide, ensure equal success for all our scholars.

The selection strategies developed by the Studienstiftung correspond with our mission to support academically outstanding students who demonstrate potential to make a particular contribution to society, regardless of their political, religious and ideological position on the democratic spectrum. An alumni survey in 2016 showed that "first-generation" students who go on to complete a Ph.D. with the support of the Studienstiftung achieve the same results as their peers from families in which at least one parent gained a degree from a higher education institution, and this in spite of the fact that on average this group achieved lower marks in their bachelor and master degrees.

The same group is equally successful professionally. With regard to the large number of Studienstiftung scholars who remain in academia, this result is particularly surprising given that "first-generation" students who go on to pursue an academic career are, according to the available statistics, disadvantaged in the system. The

paper will, therefore, also explore possible explanations for the success of the Studienstiftung scholars and the possible lessons that can be learned for the academic system as a whole.

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### **Session 3.2**

#### **Students' view of the academic and social proficiencies and the implications on their success in a multi-cultural college in Israel**

*Dr Bruria Schaedel, Senior Lecturer and researcher, Faculty of Education, Western Galilee College, Israel*

##### ➔ **Senatssaal**

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Increased demand for Higher Education (HE) among traditionally underrepresented groups such as females, new immigrants, adult students, students of low socio-economic status, and minorities, coupled with liberal government policies that encourage diversity in HE, resulted in the 90's in the development of regional colleges throughout the Israeli periphery.

These liberal policies caused the colleges to lower the achievements entrance requirements of the students, yet correspondingly they had to attend to students' deficiencies in the academic and social aptitudes that are required for successful college education. This caused the colleges to transform their physical, psychological, and educational environments and assist students' learning interactions with the administrative and educational staff to facilitate the personal and academic attainment needed for successful learning. Equally, the colleges were determined to minimize dropout rates, improve retention, and overcome the cultural, ethnic, and national backgrounds, which result, for many, in social isolation, prejudices, and lack of aptitude to overcome these barriers.

This study examines the perceptions of 800 Jewish and Arab students in a multi-cultural college. The students voice their opinions related to their satisfaction with their learning, teaching, and administrative environments and their self-efficacy. These factors are instrumental and supportive for their cognitive and social growth and motivation to succeed.

The quantitative and qualitative analysis will underline the similarities and differences of the diverse groups of students and the desired policies needed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century for the advancement of marginally underprepared students in order to promote and advance the success of diverse groups of students in Higher Education.

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### **Session 3.3**

#### **Paths to a diversity-friendly university: development and implementation of demand-oriented and subject-specific measures**

*Phillip Cinkul, MA Student at University of St Gallen*

##### ➔ **Room 315**

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The innovation and quality funds of the federal state Baden- Württemberg, Germany supported the development of diversity measures at the University of Konstanz with 420,000€. With that support, the university initiated the project "paths to a diversity-friendly university: development and implementation of demand-oriented and subject-specific measures." The aim of the project was to improve study success of disadvantaged groups of students, especially of those with different cultural backgrounds, rise the sensibility for different needs of the heterogeneity of groups of students, reduce prejudices, and strengthen competencies in dealing with diversity groups. The University of Konstanz is in the process of strategically embedding a diversity monitoring with the goal of establishing a diversity-friendly climate throughout the organisation.

During the project duration (2013-2016), various data has been gathered in a number of different departments including in economics, linguistics and informatics to get a better understanding of the situation, resources, and needs of the diversity groups the project targeted at. In this presentation, we will present results of a descriptive analysis of this data. The aim of our presentation is to show the salience of diversity dimensions, especially educational background and migration background/nationality in our study population and to relate

them to important questions such as decision to pursue a university career, financing university studies, thoughts about quitting university education, and average grades. The data results provide insights into individual requirements and structural conditions that influence university admission and academic success.

Finally, we want to discuss the use of surveys and statistical data to establish a diversity monitoring at universities in order to establish measures so that diversity groups can live up to their potential to be successful. Last but not least, we want to discuss with help of our results how diversity can be leveraged as an advantage in higher education.

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### **Session 3.4**

#### **Organizing Diversity in HE: Going Beyond “Diversity Mainstreaming” and “Diversity Management”**

*Lisa Schmidt, M.A. Helmut-Schmidt Universität, Germany*

#### **➔ AUB 1**

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Rooting in North-American sociological realms, Diversity, considered a new understanding of social integration, was expected to introduce a major turn: away from single-sided assimilation demands and urges for conformity towards an understanding as equal economic, legal and political participation of all citizens in essential goods of society, aiming to establish equal opportunity and remove discrimination, also to overcome normative, functional and epistemological limitations of the somewhat “flopped” *Multiculturalism*-attempts. But even before academic education could establish Diversity in its richness of transdisciplinary and conceptual approaches in an integrative and structural manner, the economy was quick to turn it into an HR concept. Almost fully divested from ethical and social demands, Diversity has been coupled to organizational development in order to increase benefits and by maximizing utilitarianism.

My paper will introduce this ambiguous status in order to strengthen the notion of Diversity as a (self-)reflexive approach. Firstly, a summary of the conceptual origins of Diversity in intercultural philosophy will be given. This implies the linkage of *Kritische Theorie* as constructivist approach with postmodern references on society as ever-transforming and (semantically) constructed element. From this contextual basis, “culturalization” will be discussed and problematized. As key concepts to overcome the culturalization-“trap”, plurality of identity constructions on the one and multidimensionality of social power and inequality relations on the other hand will be referred to.

Finally, the approach of intersectionality, considered an aspiring interdisciplinary methodological primacy, will be put forward. Taken together, these three approaches should sustain the main argument: If not neglected a spawn of neo-liberal optimization task forces, Diversity, particularly in HE contexts, can – and should – be refocused on its essential commission: serving as an ethnological, yet integrative approach to change that bears and cultivates the potential to transcend meritocratic rationality.

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### **Session 3.5**

#### **College as crossover: Open access to higher education**

*Nadine Köcher, Jördis Vasiliou, Potsdam University of Applied Sciences, Germany*

#### **➔ AUB 2**

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In Germany, the number of non-traditional students entering universities is increasing. They have opened access to a broader range of people. Simultaneously, the dropout rate is rising. In 2014, 29 % of all bachelor students abandoned their studies. Existing structures might no longer meet the needs of all students.

Within the last ten years, universities try to homogenize students into existing structures but also change arrangements of its academic institution. They have partly established further qualification programs for students before studying or within the first semesters. Some call it college and it can take up to one year of additional study time. This particularly comprises counseling, preparatory courses and study support for all sorts of demands.

In Brandenburg, the aim is to establish a college-structure for all higher education institutions. In 2016, the ministry for science, research and culture started a college structure for five universities funded by the European Social Fund.

FHP-Kolleg is one of them and we started our work in May 2016 at the FH Potsdam, University of Applied Sciences. Our goal is to utilize the different biographies of learners and support their process. With 4 staff members and 11 student assistants, we accompany students through their studies, counselling and qualifying them to organize and succeed at their higher education institution:

- Coaching and mentoring programs: Motivating and supporting students to understand their own talents. Learning by sharing experiences in peer groups.
- Key skills: Working on softskills and learning about study-strategies.
- Tutor Certificate: Qualify students didactically to teach freshmens.
- Study support: Preparatory courses especially for mathematics, with the support of computer aided technologies.

Our contribution will present our work from the previous year and introduce our student-centered approach. Furthermore, we will try to sketch a vision of how a college structure could meet the real diverse needs of all first-year students.