Community engagement for building bridges between cultures, disciplines and generations

International Colloquium 2016 – July 13th –15th

Universities as a part of societies are increasingly confronted with global and social challenges which reach far beyond the usual scope of education and research. This includes the dissolving of borders; the consequences of migration, segregation, immigration, and many more. One possibility of universities to contribute to the solving of such challenges is presently debated as community engagement of universities. This conference aims at the development of an applicable agenda for an increase of community engagement in Germany, an agenda that helps to approach relevant stakeholders and players in the academic field.

All participants will be given the chance to contribute and reflect on their own experiences and develop ideas how universities can respond to needs in diverse social communities outside of the academic field. The expected learning outcome is to support to develop ideas of community engagement.

The conference schedule reflects three major challenges of community engagement:

1. The challenge to bring different academic disciplines together, in order to solve complex social problems in a meaningful and cooperative way (applied interdisciplinary science).

2. The challenge to make a productive use of diverse ideas about what universities are and what roles they should play in society, especially in times of increased migration within Europe and between its neighboring regions (cultural diversity and history of universities).

3. The challenge to communicate and work with people from diverse and very different social and educational backgrounds. This also implies the chance to open universities to non-traditional students (lifelong learning across generations and biographies).

The International Colloquium addresses academics from Germany and beyond as well as everyone who is interested in thinking about the possibilities of community engagement of universities. The Colloquium runs for three days (one afternoon, one full day, one morning) and combines lectures, discussions, and workshops, covering the three topics as outlined above. The conference language is English. The conference is free of charge.
The International Colloquium takes place in the Gebrüder Schmid Zentrum, a house where people of different generations living together. Furthermore the open-door café is a chance for homeless, lonely persons and immigrants to get in contact with the society. So this location is also a statement of integration and support a loving togetherness.

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<td><a href="#">zlw</a> workshop</td>
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<td>Moderated reflection: ’What are our experiences with community engagement so far?’</td>
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<td>July 13(^{th}) 5:45 pm</td>
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<td><strong>Lifelong learning across generations</strong></td>
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<td>July 14(^{th}) 5:15 pm</td>
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<td><strong>Follow-up Workshop</strong></td>
<td>Plenary discussion (moderated) Developing solutions / ideas / agendas for community engagement</td>
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<td>Friday, July 15(^{th}) 9:30 am – 12:30 pm</td>
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*Please tell us if you want to join us at the brewery*
Description of the workshops

Community engagement at the Marburg Center for Near and Middle Eastern Studies – an introduction (Dr. Leslie Tramontini)

The Center for Near and Middle Eastern Studies (CNMS) at Philipps-Universität Marburg is an interdisciplinary research and teaching center with the self-proclaimed aim of taking actively part in current political and social discourses. Internationally well connected, the Center provides insight into its research topics to students and a broader public in general, striving to have an impact on society and raising intercultural sensitivity and awareness. Based on these facts, the Center has developed a concept of community commitment which embeds this engagement on one side in the curricular spectrum and on the other functions in close cooperation with German agencies, institutions and NGOs. This presentation will provide facts and insight into the Marburg concept, its problems and challenges.

Cork learning city: Building a community wide learning environment (Dr. Séamus O’Tuama)

Cork city engaged in a two-year consultation ahead of launching a vision for the city over a ten year horizon called Cork 2002-2012: Imagine our Future. Imagine our Future included a ‘theme’ on ‘Cork as a Learning City’, with an orientation towards an all-encompassing flexible learning model. This plan established a Cork City Learning Forum representative of a wide range of stakeholders. Its most significant legacy was the establishment of the Cork Lifelong Learning Festival. This festival was launched in 2004 and steadily grew in scale and reach into the community to a point where there are now in the region of 500 discrete activities offered by all types of providers non-formal, informal and formal in an annual week-long festival. All activities are free and are open to the public. The participation of ordinary citizens during the festival is impressive. It emerged into a very fertile environment in a city that was already extensively networked and led to a 2015 UNESCO Learning City Award. The community wide learning environment is an exciting mix of local innovation and participation and engagement with global networks of cities.
Pécs Learning City-Region forum. New Roles for Higher Education (Dr. Balázs Németh)

The presentation will provide an introduction to the establishment and evolution of the Pécs Learning City-Region Forum and its three workshops in:

- Atypical forms of Learning in Partnerships with Museums, Libraries, etc.;
- Environmental Education through Collaborative Actions;
- Platform for Teachers Helping Young People with Learning Difficulties, e.g. Autists.

The presentation will reflect to some challenges to and perspectives for Learning Communities to call, moreover, for a new mission(s) for Higher Education with more social dimension(s).

COMMIT: Social responsibility in Universities by strengthening academic lifelong learning (|zlw)

The university of Stuttgart is one of twelve project partners of the EU Project COMMIT: „Committing to the social dimension in universities“. The main goal is to strengthen the social engagement of universities by supporting lifelong learning strategies and activities. By the end of this project we’d like to inform university members, policy makers, academic staff and the public about COMMIT and its outcomes. The focus will be put on the theoretical frame and on the four tools developed in the project for analyzing the strategic work of the universities in the field of lifelong learning.

In the workshop we will first shortly present the theoretical frame and the tools and then get your opinion about the tools by all participants. The different perspectives of participants coming from different academic and non-academic fields will give us a broad view on the quality of the tools and can serve as an inspiration for anyone thinking about organization development.

You can find more information about COMMIT following this link: http://www.uni-stuttgart.de/zlw/lebenslangeslernen/unsberbeitrag/projekt_commit.html

Intergenerational learning – a way to initiate community engagement? (|zlw)

The concepts of community education and community engagement and terms as transactional learning, empowerment, social capital and active citizenship are compatible with the idea of intergenerational learning.

Intergenerational learning can be defined as planned teaching/learning processes and activities that intentionally connect various generations with the goal of exchanging their experience, knowledge, skills, norms and values, sensitivities and perspectives in relation to inter-generationally shared concerns, problems and challenges. Inter-generational learning enables a non-hierarchical communication, interaction and collaboration between various generations as they learn and work together as equals and are involved in the teaching/learning process as both, teachers and learners. Based on this definition inter-generational learning – as a goal-
oriantated and community-based learning – can be seen as grounded in the principles of community engagement: fairness, justice, empowerment, participation and self-determination.

The International Colloquium aims at developing ideas on how universities can respond to current demographic, social and economic changes and which issues need to be considered when designing and implementing community engagement processes.

Starting point for a successful design and implementation of community engagement processes can be the creation of opportunities for inter-generational learning as it can illustrate the significance and the impact of diverse generational perspectives, knowledge and skills on discussing and challenging shared community concerns, problems and goals and as it can promote individual emancipation and commitment as well as reflective and meaningful community engagement.

**Motherhood as a Complex Process of Work-Life-Balance – Some New Demands to Biography, University and Welfare State (Professor Hans-Rolf Vetter)**

In using the example of employed mothers the paper will discuss the increasing problems of work-life-balance. Referring to current states of the art and political disputes it will launch broader targets of social policy, staffing policy and biographical career planning by incorporating new findings and considerations from an interdisciplinary point of view.

It can be shown that the concept “community” will reduce in-house differences. Relating to knowledge-based interdisciplinary empathy the concurrent problems of institutional and biographical development will be mediated as well as mutual respect will be fostered.

**Interdisciplinarity, Community and the Future of the University (Dr. Michael Reder)**

Beyond workers with specific disciplinary skills and knowledge, what do universities have to offer the greater communities in which they operate? And what can universities learn from the community and its diverse members? This interactive discussion will address the value of interdisciplinarity and the role of liberal learning in future of an inclusive democracy.
Introducing our speakers

Dr. Leslie Tramontini

Dr. Leslie Tramontini is currently working at the Center for Near and Middle Eastern Studies in Philipps-Universität Marburg as coordinator and executive manager. She studied Arabic and Islamic Studies, Semitic Languages, and Philosophy at Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, Kuwait-University and Baghdad University and specialized in modern Iraqi poetry with a PhD-thesis on Badr Shakir al-Sayyab. She has lived in the Middle East for 17 years, working and doing research in Iraq, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, Saudi-Arabia, Iran, and Lebanon. Her research interests focus on the nexus between literature and politics. Right now she is coordinating the Center’s activities and community commitment concerning the integration of refugees into the German context.

Dr. Séamus O’Tuama

Dr. Séamus Ó Tuama is Director of ACE (Adult Continuing Education) at the University College Cork, Ireland’s oldest university centre for the delivery of lifelong learning. He is also senior lecturer in political science at the Department of Government, UCC. He previously managed the Centre for European Social Research, at the time the largest non-governmental social research centre in Ireland. His research is aimed at redefining the political in the context of a posttraditional reality. His PhD drew on critical social theory and examined human rights under the Irish constitution. His current research pursues three strands viz. Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy. In terms of human rights his more recent work is heavily influenced by the concepts of respect, recognition and human dignity; in terms of citizenship his main focus is on post-national identity and cosmopolitanism; and in democracy on deliberative processes and public engagement on science and technology. He is increasingly interweaving these three strands with the challenges of lifelong learning. He is currently the External Evaluator of the EC H2020 project COMMIT – Committing to the social dimension in universities, which is coordinated by EUCEN. He has extensive experience of evaluation for the European Commission and at national level for governmental agencies in both Cyprus and Poland.

Dr. Balázs Németh

Dr. Balázs Németh is a researcher in European adult and lifelong learning policy development and comparative adult education. He is an Associate Professor and Reader in Adult Learning and Education at the University of Pécs. He is also a founding member of the Hungarian Universities Lifelong Learning Network (MELLearN) and represents the University of Pécs in the European Universities Continuing Education Network (EUCEN) and in the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA). Further research topics of his are: Politics and Adult Education; Comparative Adult Education; History of Modern European Adult Education from 1850 to 1950.
Professor Hans-Rolf Vetter

Professor Hans-Rolf Vetter is a researcher in the fields of engineers, mothers (occupational), biographies, life course and mediation and held the position of head of the quin academy Straubing for four years. Prior to his retirement he occupied the professorship of „Sociology, esp. Sociology of Work“ at the Faculty of Education of the University of Bundeswehr Munich (1993-1997) and of „Social Policy & Management of Social Services“ at the Department of Human Sciences of the University of Bundeswehr Munich (1997-2008). Furthermore he held continuous functions as member of the board of faculty/department, as dean, dean of studies, senator, speaker of the Institute of Social Sciences and vice chairperson of the Academic Senate.

Moderator: Dr. Michael Reder

Dr. Michael Reder is the Director of the Joy Shechtman Mankoff Faculty Center for Teaching & Learning at Connecticut College. He teaches contemporary literature & culture, focusing on issues of identity, agency, and power, in the college’s First-Year Seminar Program and the Department of Literatures in English. Among his areas of interest are effective teaching and learning, using writing and other active teaching techniques to enhance student (and faculty) learning, and the creation of faculty teaching and learning programs at small colleges. Michael currently serves on the POD Core Committee (the Executive Board) and was the inaugural chair of the POD Small College Committee. He has served on the faculty of Institute for New Faculty Developers (INFD) in 2005, 2013, & 2015, as well as on the faculty of the Harvard Graduate School of Education’s Management Development Program (MDP) for academic administrators (2007). Michael’s work on improving teaching and learning has been published in To Improve the Academy, AAC&U’s Peer Review, Essays in Teaching Excellence, and A Guide to Faculty Development 2nd ed. He runs workshops at a variety of national conferences, and works regularly with small colleges and universities who are increasing their support for faculty teaching & learning. Michael is a Senior Teagle Scholar working with the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education, and recently guest edited a special issue of the Journal of Centers for Teaching and Learning focused on improving teaching and learning at smaller institutions. He can be contacted at reder@conncoll.edu.
Contact and registration

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Venue:

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Registration until 29th June, 2016:
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How to arrive

By bus:

From Main Station Stuttgart please take the bus line 42 (destination Erwin-Schättle-Platz) and get out at the terminal stop Erwin-Schöttle Platz.

By train

From Main Station Stuttgart please take the U-Bahn line 14 (destination Heslach) and get out at the terminal stop Erwin-Schöttle Platz.