

**INNOVATIVE APPROACHES  
IN PEDAGOGY FOR HIGHER  
EDUCATION CLASSROOMS**

# INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND LEARNING

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AND LEARNING VOLUME 42

**INNOVATIVE APPROACHES  
IN PEDAGOGY FOR HIGHER  
EDUCATION CLASSROOMS**

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# **SERIES EDITORS' INTRODUCTION**

## **INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The purpose of this series is to publish current research and scholarship on innovative teaching and learning practices in higher education. The series is developed around the premise that teaching and learning is more effective when instructors and students are actively and meaningfully engaged in the teaching-learning process.

The main objectives of this series are to:

- 1) present how innovative teaching and learning practices are being used in higher education institutions around the world across a wide variety of disciplines and countries,
- 2) present the latest models, theories, concepts, paradigms, and frameworks that educators should consider when adopting, implementing, assessing, and evaluating innovative teaching and learning practices, and
- 3) consider the implications of theory and practice on policy, strategy, and leadership.

This series will appeal to anyone in higher education who is involved in the teaching and learning process from any discipline, institutional type, or nationality. The volumes in this series will focus on a variety of authentic case studies and other empirical research that illustrates how educators from around the world are using innovative approaches to create more effective and meaningful learning environments.

Innovation teaching and learning is any approach, strategy, method, practice or means that has been shown to improve, enhance, or transform the teaching-learning environment. Innovation involves doing things differently or in a novel way in order to improve outcomes. In short, Innovation is positive change. With respect to teaching and learning, innovation is the implementation of new or improved educational practices that result in improved educational and learning outcomes. This innovation can be any positive change related to teaching, curriculum, assessment, technology, or other tools, programs, policies, or processes that leads to improved educational and learning outcomes. Innovation can occur in institutional development, program development, professional development, or learning development.

The volumes in this series will not only highlight the benefits and theoretical frameworks of such innovations through authentic case studies and other empirical research but also look at the challenges and contexts associated with

implementing and assessing innovative teaching and learning practices. The volumes represent all disciplines from a wide range of national, cultural, and organizational contexts. The volumes in this series will explore a wide variety of teaching and learning topics such as active learning, integrative learning, transformative learning, inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, meaningful learning, blended learning, creative learning, experiential learning, lifelong and lifewide learning, global learning, learning assessment and analytics, student research, faculty and student learning communities, as well as other topics.

This series brings together distinguished scholars and educational practitioners from around the world to disseminate the latest knowledge on innovative teaching and learning scholarship and practices. The authors offer a range of disciplinary perspectives from different cultural contexts. This series provides a unique and valuable resource for instructors, administrators, and anyone interested in improving and transforming teaching and learning.

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PART I

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION TO INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN PEDAGOGY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION CLASSROOMS

Enakshi Sengupta and Patrick Blessinger

### ABSTRACT

*Higher education has recently experienced an advancement in teaching and learning methods. Academics are experimenting with innovative techniques in using e-learning due to the global pandemic which has given a new dimension to classroom teaching. Hybrid teaching is becoming the new norm for classroom teaching which includes both face-to-face and online modes. Smart gadgets and technology are being used to design classroom delivery, assessment, and evaluation of students. The use of innovative teaching and learning methods becomes crucial to motivate and teach a spirit of learning. The development in the information and communication technologies (ICTs) sector has led to knowledge-intensive, interdependent and internationalized societies exploring and experimenting with opportunities for the design and delivery of education. ICTs are opening up new horizons to facilitate the exchange of creativity and intercultural dialogue. This book volume highlights case studies and innovative teaching methods used by academics across the globe. It talks about how teaching staff should stimulate students' active engagement in their own learning processes leading to transformative student learning. It discusses the in-class approach of implementing high-quality project-based learning activities that integrate learning in an authentic real-world manner. Chapters*

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*are dedicated to experiential learning which encourages critical thinking and creative problem-solving skills in students which is the essence of innovative teaching-learning methods. Academics are applying these methods to ensure that the student learning process is free flowing and stimulates students toward role-playing and mastering problem-based learning.*

**Keywords:** Innovation; teaching and learning; classroom setting; problem solving; critical thinking; creativity; knowledge intensive and active engagement

## INTRODUCTION

The concept and meaning of education has undergone several changes in the recent past. It is not adequate to deliver lectures alone but academics have been bestowed with other responsibilities and the critical one among them is to develop students to meet the current needs of society. The role of faculty is now multifaceted and the use of innovative teaching methods is crucial not only to improve education but also to help empower students. The term paradigm shift in education has been used to denote the fundamental changes in the basic concept of teaching and usage of innovative pedagogy. It is essential that modern means of technology is being used to fill the gap between desirable learning objectives and the actual learning outcomes of students. The picture may not be promising in all cases, and there lies a struggle between paperless classrooms, the traditional methods of learning and use of technology. The gap maybe quite evident in economies that are unable to sustain and invest in innovative methods of learning. To compete and survive in this world riddled with complex problems, old and traditional methods of teaching need to be upgraded and utilization of innovative methods of learning is becoming imperative for improvement and enhancement of education.

Recent pandemic and closing of university campuses have revealed the need to have an alternative mode of learning and that is an online learning environment. The concept of online teaching is very different from the existing traditional methods and requires much effort to keep students engaged and motivated while delivering the required course content and a nonjudgmental and safe learning environment. Academics are required to display educator-facilitated activities, student-centered learning processes, allowing students to remain accountable for their active participation and self-directed learning while balancing the role to enhance the learning process. The method also requires collaborative learning space, proper and timely feedback, independent working and a proactive learning environment (Garrison & Anderson, 2003; Rogo & Portillo, 2015).

Developing complex reasoning skills in students with a personal and professional ethos is an important aspect of innovative learning (Chadha, 2017; Hacekt & Evans, 2018; Peisachovich, 2016). Emphasis is laid on students translating their knowledge into a real work environment. Learning should be able to transform students and provide them with the opportunity to critically analyze their own value judgments and integrate new thought patterns with the help of

collaborative work and sharing of ideas, thus translating knowledge into practice. Faculty work as facilitators in integrating innovative teaching and methods, use of technology and giving adequate opportunities to students for capacity building. Academics need to be cognizant of the new programs and facilities that are being developed every day that prompt regular feedback and interactions from students (Gaudine & Moralejo, 2011; Mann, 2014) .

Innovative methods in teaching also involves collaborating and discussing with students to help them understand the virtual learning dynamics and other innovative methods that are in place to promote a collaborative learning environment (Chadha, 2017). Faculty need to give careful attention to the course, syllabus, mode of delivery, course objectives, and course outcomes. A well-structured course with clearly defined course and learning objectives, and learning activities is important and necessary to enhance online learning. The outcomes of the instructional design process (Baker, 2010; Kim & Hannafin, 2011) guides the interaction and engagement with the students and this process is essential to facilitate online teaching–learning success (Carter, Hanna, & Warry, 2016).

## CHAPTER OVERVIEWS

**Innovative Teaching and Creative Learning in a Sport Tourism Curriculum: A Portuguese Case of Experiential Learning**, by Ana Baptista and Elsa Pereira, discusses higher educational institutions as complex organizations that allow for innovation and creativity to grow and flourish. To achieve this, teaching staff should stimulate students’ active engagement in their own learning processes leading to transformative student learning. This chapter focuses on an innovative pedagogical approach, which has been consistently implemented for the last three academic years in the 3rd year module “Sport, Leisure and Tourism” within Sports undergraduate degree at the University of Algarve (Portugal). The case study method and reflective portfolio were used to create an authentic, enriching, and transformative learning experience for all students. These teaching, learning, and assessment methods are, within the context of the module, underpinned by experiential learning theory. Meta-reflections of 92 students’ portfolios showed their views about the entire process and their perception of skills they gained: (i) scientific and academic; (ii) professional; and (iii) intrapersonal and interpersonal. The innovative pedagogy presented in this chapter aimed to impact on students’ ability to understand and navigate through complexity – both in a teaching and learning environment and in a real organization.

**Project-Based Learning in the Adult English Language Classroom**, by Cheryl Cruz, explores increasing student readiness for higher education as an objective and goal for many college-level preparation programs. Within the college-level programs, there is a group of students who will need additional preparation and support to make the successful transition into higher education. Adult English language learners have the task of learning the target language with all of the language rules, while applying the language in a meaningful, memorable, and useful manner. When adult English language learners are engaged in hands-on

project-based learning activities, the English language becomes more applicable for everyday use in and outside the classroom. Learners also have the opportunity to develop additional skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, information gathering, synthesizing, evaluating and collaborating with a team. All of these skills are critical for success in higher education and transferrable with adult English language learners who are completing their college-level preparatory programs. This chapter discusses the in-class approach of implementing a high-quality project-based learning activity that integrates English language learning in an authentic real-world manner. Practitioners of adult English language programs can draw on their in-class practices and the theories of adult education to utilize project-based learning in their classroom as a means to facilitate the language acquisition process. Through the project-based learning process, practitioners become facilitators who help learners meet the challenges of learning English, developing their understanding of American classrooms and improving their readiness for transition into higher education.

**Lesson Study and Teacher Training: Engaging in the Co-construction of Pedagogical Knowledge**, by David Allan, explores the use of lesson study as a strategy for co-constructing pedagogical knowledge and draws on data from a series of interviews with student teachers. Sixteen student teachers, undertaking a postgraduate teacher training program in higher education in England, engaged in Lesson Study as an official assessment of their ability to jointly plan, deliver, and evaluate a lesson. Lesson Study is thus seen to promote an intense collaborative working relationship between participating student teachers that engenders fresh opportunities for learning. It is argued, then, that this approach can challenge the prevalent model of individually led professional development by facilitating a space for the co-construction of pedagogical knowledge. Lesson Study is also explored for its potential to bridge the theory-practice divide by enabling participant student teachers to generate theory from practice.

**Initiating Innovation: The Case of Entrepreneurship Education in the United Arab Emirates**, by Matthew A. Gilbert, talks about experiential learning which encourages critical thinking and creative problem solving is the essence of innovation. Knowing this, in 2015, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) launched the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education Program in partnership with Stanford University faculty. The purpose of the project was to create customized curriculum for university students, support educators teaching the material, and inspire an entrepreneurial mindset that transitions the nation into an innovation-based society. Three cohorts of university educators participated in workshops, professional development activities, and a four-day visit at Stanford University to learn design thinking, the pedagogical platform of the custom curriculum. After a three-year pilot, remarkable results were realized among students, faculty, and within the entrepreneurial ecosystem of UAE. Analyzing the faculty and student interviews, reviewing an initiative impact report, and referencing related research, this case study: establishes the importance of teaching innovation and entrepreneurship, outlines the program's practical and operational elements, and documents how educators succeeded in integrating and customizing the curriculum (before and during the coronavirus pandemic).

**Active Images: Teaching Students Critical Thinking and Analysis Skills with Picture Postcards**, by Reba A. Wissner, shows faculty the benefits of using picture postcards in different disciplines for encouraging critical thinking, analysis, and visual literacy in the active learning classroom while helping students to contextualize what they are learning in the course. It will provide strategies for how to teach this material including possible sample worksheet questions that could be used in multiple disciplines. This chapter will present one way that faculty can innovatively use active learning strategies to teach students archival skills, analytical thinking, visual literacy, cultural competency, historical and locational awareness, collaboration with other students, and disciplinary content. Furthermore, it will discuss how this activity is equally well-suited for both innovative active and experimental classroom setups as well as large lecture halls and traditional classroom setups and how modifications can be made for each environment.

**Retreat Forwards: Student-facing Writing Retreats**, by Christopher Little, is a case study that will detail and discuss the decision by a central student-facing learning development unit at Keele University, to provide student writing retreats, accessible to students at all levels of HE studies. Staff and researcher writing retreats have been found to improve productivity and motivation, and to develop some participants' sense of identity as "writers" (Casey, Barron, & Gordon, 2013; Moore, 2003; Murray & Newton, 2009; Papen & Thériault, 2018; Swaggerty, Atkinson, Faulconer, & Griffith, 2011). Many UK higher education institutions provide a range of writing retreats, in varying formats, to staff and PhD students to further their writing goals but rarely, if ever, to undergraduate or postgraduate-taught students. Over the past four academic years, the learning development unit at Keele University have been developing and running a range of student writing retreats for undergraduate and postgraduate-taught students as part of our freestanding academic skills development provision. This case study will provide a summary scope of the sector, present relevant literature supporting writing retreats and critically reflect on and evaluate the freestanding writing retreats provided to students. The educational evaluation to be presented here stands as an innovation in the teaching and support of academic writing practices of students.

**Innovations in the Academic Language Classroom International Foundation Programme**, by Jill Haldane and Philip Davies, presents a discussion of innovations in pedagogic approaches for high-achieving, pre-degree pathway program students at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. The question under discussion in the academic language classroom is the extent to which dynamic cohorts of multi-lingual, multi-cultural, and multi-disciplinary students are being enabled to fulfill individual learning goals as well as the institution's expectations of pathway learners and academic language users. Wingate (2015) argues that in the absence of an epistemological and socioculturally embedded literacy instruction, students are not equitably prepared for success in the discipline or the wider institution. The chapter reviews critiques of are English for Academic Purposes and Academic Literacies by addressing "the best of both worlds" (Wingate & Tribble, 2012) approach. The chapter continues with a case study into the Academic Vocabulary in Literacy strand of the Foundation EAP course on

the International Foundation Programme at Edinburgh University. There then follows close analysis of innovation by course designers to adapt the “best of both traditions” model (Wingate & Tribble, 2012, p. 2) into an integrated academic language and literacy approach. It is posited that this approach could enable attempts at transition for high-achieving foundation students by experiencing language in dynamic and multi-modal genres.

**Strategies for Developing Mental Toughness in Higher Education and Measuring the Impact**, by Jenny Meggs and Peter Sewell, writes about the increasing awareness of higher education institutions facing significant challenges in managing and supporting students as they transition into university life. If Higher Education institutions struggle to achieve this important aim, this can lead to an increase in student drop-out. This can of course present significant financial implications and challenges and worse still, result in mental health challenges in students. The concept of Mental Toughness has been shown in a substantial number of investigations, to develop our understanding of why some people might be more vulnerable to these pressures than others. Importantly, it provides both a means of identifying those people and insights about ways they can be best supported. This chapter proposes a well-researched Mental Toughness framework to facilitate and support universities with these challenges and highlights three key strategies for managing this successfully.

**The XJTLU Entrepreneurial Campus: A New Paradigm of University–Industry Partnerships**, by Stuart Perrin, introduces the educational philosophy of Syntegrative Education (Malik, 2019) and its application within the Entrepreneur College (Taicang), an initiative by Xi’an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, within China. The chapter begins with an overview of the regulatory framework that has allowed entrepreneurial education to develop. Following a brief literature review, the chapter describes the need for degree programs to better match students’ needs for entrepreneurial learning outcomes to meet dynamic industry demands in the future. The chapter explains how symbiotic partnerships with industry (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000) allow for, and require, an innovative industry classroom through curriculum design, program delivery, and innovative assessments. With a focus on the student learning experience, the chapter highlights briefly the role those disruptive technologies have played in accelerating the use of technology, and especially its role in promoting lifelong learning. The concept of the XJTLU Learning Mall is introduced, explaining how it acts as an innovation and entrepreneurial project and partner center. The chapter closes by reminding us of the need for entrepreneurial education to add value to all the stakeholders, including students and industry partners.

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