

INTEGRATIVE CURRICULA

INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND LEARNING

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INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND
LEARNING VOLUME 50

**INTEGRATIVE CURRICULA:
A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL
APPROACH TO PEDAGOGY**

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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SERIES EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

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 are 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 illustrate how educators from around the world are using innovative approaches to create more effective and meaningful learning environments.

Innovation teaching and learning is an 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 a 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.

Patrick Blessinger
Founder, Executive Director, and Chief Research Scientist,
International HETL Association

Enakshi Sengupta
Independent Researcher & Scholar

PART I

INTEGRATING STUDENT'S EXPERIENCE

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO INTEGRATIVE CURRICULA: A MULTIDIMENSIONAL APPROACH TO PEDAGOGY

Enakshi Sengupta

ABSTRACT

The concept of integrating curriculum is being advocated in many institutions of higher education to solve problems that present-day curriculum development is facing. Several models of integrating curriculum can be found in the world of academia. However, there is little consensus among academics as to how we can define the concept and what would be the correct approach to implement integrative curricula. The concept ranges from traditional lecturer-driven discipline-based content to object-driven interest-based student exploration of the pedagogy. In the global context, curriculum needs to be sustainable in nature that would replace the rote method of learning and enhance the problem-solving and critical thinking skills of the students. There is a need to differentiate between reliable and relevant information and suggest alternative facts to create innovative thinkers in a world that offers open access to knowledge. Education in the present century is profoundly impacted by technology and globalization and students need all the skills to navigate through a challenging and ever-changing environment. Yet, concerns remain as to how to implement teaching-learning methods that address the multidimensional needs of the students and at the same time maintain a quality standard. Educators are now determined to impart knowledge that is exploratory, relevant, integrative and meaningful, and are anchoring content across disciplines. The approach is more focused on integrating students' experiences across teaching and learning activities of academic

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programs, construction of knowledge, and a range of competencies and capabilities in a meaningful and student-centered manner. This book volume will speak about interventions and case studies that are transforming learning from simple classroom learning to learning that can impact the sustainable development of society with a human dimension and creating a caring culture.

Keywords: Integrative curricula; teaching learning; disciplines; critical thinking; creativity; sustainable education; exploratory; relevant

INTRODUCTION

The meaning of integrative curriculum has different schools of thought and faculty often dwell on the fact of how to integrate curriculum through a meaningful approach. Beane (1993, 2005), a prominent advocate of integrating curriculum speaks about meaningful learning organized around issues that is important both for faculty and their students, and in this manner, it helps in supporting a democratic nature of teaching (Beane, 2005). Beane advocated four aspects of integration laying emphasis on democratic principles, and these four dimensions are the integration of experiences, social integration, integration of knowledge, and integration as a curriculum design. Integration of experiences brings the past and present experiences of faculty members and those designing the curriculum to facilitate new learning. Social integration occurs when students from diverse cultural perspectives enjoy a common learning experience. Integration of knowledge happens when issue-centric concepts are integrated. Integration as a design emphasizes project-based learning and other applications of knowledge (Beane, 1993).

Beane (1997) spoke about the curriculum that is general, helpful for students, motivates them to self-exploration, and creates social meaning. Curriculum integration “engages students as active learners who make the most of the decisions about what they study” (Brown, 2016, p. 123). Such a curriculum is designed to be a student-centric and allows a model in which “students become teachers and teachers become learners” (Pate, 2013, p. 174). Springer (2006), a leading practitioner in this field, further noted that “curriculum integration takes as its ultimate aim helping students live better lives now as well as in the future, not merely gathering more information for possible later use” (p. 14). Similarly, Dowden (2007), writing about curriculum integration stated that its main purpose is to “resituate subject matter into relevant and meaningful contexts” (p. 52).

Researchers, administrators, teachers, and educators have been interpreting curriculum integration in various ways (Jacob, 1989). They also have used different terminology to describe their approaches because as researchers and practitioners have earlier noted that there is little consensus on the meaning of the terms like curriculum integration, interdisciplinary curriculum, content integration, core curriculum, and multidisciplinary curriculum. Fusion is often the easiest process to integrate the curriculum. In certain places, educators have infused character education, financial literacy, critical literacy with environmental awareness into

the mandated subject-based curriculum. A multidisciplinary curriculum ought to have a common theme or capability to inculcate different subject areas, but each subject should maintain its distinct identity and remain separate from each other.

A transdisciplinary curriculum often transcends the disciplines; the organizing center involving the subject revolves around a pressing question, issue or problem and students are asked to use their critical thinking ability and creativity to find solutions to the problem. The terms “integrated” or “interdisciplinary” are often used interchangeably to describe various paths that can be adopted to create an integrative curriculum. Academic research on integrating curriculum generally focuses on examples of integration while taking into consideration two or three content areas, often it is not necessary to integrate all content areas. Two content areas that are very commonly integrated are the usage of the language of arts and social studies (Applebee et al., 2007), or science and math are also integrated randomly (Offer & Vasquez-Mireles, 2009). One such previous study has shown that the researchers (Stinson, et al., 2009) wrote six teaching scenarios which integrated models of math-science integration as the subject discipline, content, process of teaching, methodological, and thematic systems into a whole.

Curriculum integration helps academics to address concerns, such as multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983), constructivism (Dewey, 1938), or important pedagogical queries that further help in understandings of the subject (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998). Curriculum integration gives adequate scope to the faculty members to differentiate their teaching style and prepares students for the readiness of learning, familiarizes them with the processes for learning, and even the products of learning (Tomlinson, 1999). Curriculum integration is useful in helping students in their advisory programs (e.g., Crawford, 2012) and also in supporting students’ social and emotional development as well as cognitive development (Beane, 1997).

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

“The Peer Support Program: A Case Study of Peer Mentoring and Tutoring across Freshman Calculus Courses” by Ahmad Samarji in his chapter explains that integrative curriculum is sometimes understood in terms of utilizing two or more disciplines to explore and inquire into ideas to achieve certain tasks and learning outcomes. “Integrative” as an educational and curricular term, concept, and set of processes are more concerned with integrating students’ experiences across the teaching and learning activities of their academic program, constructing their knowledge, and a range of competencies and capabilities in a meaningful and student-centered manner. This chapter approaches integrative curriculum in higher education through peer teaching and learning. The chapter presents and analyzes the case study of Phoenicia University, Lebanon, where one of the approaches to emphasizing integrative curriculum is through the “Peer Support Program” (PSP). In the PSP, excelling students (mentors) across various courses (e.g., calculus, English, etc.) mentor and tutor their marginal peers (mentees) who are underperforming in their studies. This study analyzed the attitudes, perceptions,

and confidence levels of both the mentors and mentees in the PSP across freshman calculus courses. The chapter found that the PSP revealed reciprocity and mutual benefit for both the mentors and mentees in terms of academic gain, self-satisfaction, and personal growth. Some of the identified concerns about the program were that mentees seemed to be too dependent on the mentors and majorly driven by studying for the mark. The program was a win-win combination for the mentors, mentees, and the institution itself, serving as an effective integrative curriculum avenue, where students' experiences, commitment, and ownership in the teaching and learning process are actively integrated into a meaningful, connected, and student-centered university environment.

"Education for Social Justice: An Integrative Framework for Inclusive Curriculum Redesign to Enable Fair Outcomes and Promote Social Change" written by Digby Warren and Zainab Khan is about key challenges currently facing higher education (HE) in the UK and are the continuing dominance of curricula by West-centric knowledge traditions which reinforce normative Whiteness and undergird racism, and glaring disparities in student outcomes. Seeking to address these challenges and promote fair access and educational opportunities aimed at enabling a more equitable, just and life-enhancing society, London Metropolitan University has launched its Education for Social Justice Framework (ESJF) (2020) as an integrative framework for inclusive curriculum redesign. This chapter explores the context and moral imperative of the ESJF, its integrative elements, its pedagogical challenges, and its transformative potential, through critically reviewing its application during a pilot phase of implementation in 2020–2021, based on the perspectives of six academics involved as course leaders of the participating programs from various disciplines, as well as the authors. Data from individual interviews with the course leaders are used to throw light on key themes concerning the importance and character of the ESJF, challenges and enabling factors in implementing the ESJF, resulting course changes, and the role of students in curriculum development. The chapter concludes with some general implications of adopting an ambitious, integrative approach to curriculum, and pedagogical transformation.

"Designing, Implementing, and Assessing Learning within an Integrated Pharmacy Course" by Kimberly B. Garza, Channing R. Ford, Lindsey E. Moseley, and Bradley M. Wright explains that L. Dee Fink proposes that different and more significant kinds of learning should be created in higher education to transition student outcomes from simply "learning" to "significant learning," and these new types of learning should be situated within significant learning experiences (Fink, 2003). Fink also identified a taxonomy of significant learning that included six components: integration, foundational knowledge, application, human dimension, caring, and learning how to learn. Using Fink's Taxonomy of Significant Learning as a framework, the authors will share the development of a course on navigating the US Healthcare System that resulted in significant learning outcomes for students completing the first semester of a four-year Doctor of the Pharmacy curriculum. Each learning experience will link to a component of the taxonomy and will serve as the mechanism for the authors to share the development and implementation associated with each aspect of

the semester-long course. The assessment structure of the course is described in detail. The authors present one or more learning experiences to illustrate each component of Fink's Taxonomy. Finally, lessons learned from the development and implementation of the course are presented to provide guidance to programs considering the implementation of a similar significant learning experience.

"The Integrative Curriculum in EAP Programs: Design and Instructional Considerations" by Alanna Carter is about international students, specifically students who study EAP (English for Academic Purposes), are an increasingly important and large part of the makeup of Canadian post-secondary institutions. As these students have diverse learning needs and goals, institutions need to properly support these learners to be successful in academic settings. A review of the literature explores the increasing need to support this particular student population; approaches to the teaching, learning, and programming of EAP courses and programs; and strategies in and beyond the classroom to support these learners. This chapter offers design considerations and suggests that EAP curricula be integrative in nature. This can be achieved through choosing relevant topics, incorporating experiential learning opportunities, designing collaborative learning tasks, discussing issues of culture, and planning purposeful community connections. Approaching the development of EAP curricula through an integrative lens will ensure learners are ready for post-secondary studies in academic fields. Classroom examples from the author's professional experience are offered. Discussion of how to achieve integrative EAP curricula in virtual learning environments is also included.

"Teaching Three Courses Like One: A Case for Integrated Teaching" by Heather A. Ranson, Christian D. Van Buskirk, and Richard D. Cotton explores that team teaching in higher education requires a great deal of coordination and commitment from both the professors teaching together, as well as administrators coordinating courses. Given the difficulties in logistics, it is not surprising that many teams give up on team teaching after only one or two semesters. The literature and lived experience by the authors verify the benefits that come from team teaching: multiple perspectives on the course material, more than one-course delivery method, greater attention from students used to just one instructor, and a greater level of energy in the room and on-line when more than one presenter shares the lecture time. Team teaching (or co-teaching as it is also referred to), in the Service Management Specialization at the Gustavson School of Business in Victoria, Canada, is sharing a cohort of students across three classes, and while each professor is responsible for separate course topics, each makes the time to integrate topics and share time in the classroom together multiple times during the semester. The authors have been part of a team delivering curriculum this way for over twenty years, and this chapter examines how the material is organized and delivered team teaching success. Critical elements include funding to support team teaching, commitment from professors to coordinate together, willingness to share materials, and building bridges from class to class to enable students to follow and integrate learnings. Team teaching has resulted in greater cohesiveness amongst faculty teaching in the program, higher teaching evaluations than professors experienced in solo teaching, and students who feel better prepared to

tackle complex business problems that cross the interdisciplinary boundaries of marketing, operations, and talent management.

“Tracing “Symbolic” Policy Ideas About an Integrative Curriculum in the Bologna Process Post-2020 International Agenda” by Iryna Kushnir talks about the Bologna Process (BP) which remains a key international framework for guiding higher education development in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) until 2030. This chapter traces integrative curriculum ideas in the BP post-2020 and explains why they are symbolic policies. Prior research into curricula in the BP does not explicitly refer to integrative curriculum ideas and does not explore them in the post-2020 context. 2020 marked the deadline for the achievement of a fully functioning EHEA and for setting up new priorities for 2030. This study is informed by the theoretical ideas of soft governance and symbolic policies in the Open Method of Coordination. The study addresses the aforementioned gap in the scholarship by relying on a thematic analysis of the first EHEA communique that set the agenda for the post-2020 period – Rome Ministerial Communique (2020) with its three annexes. The findings highlight the following main areas of the integrative curriculum agenda as symbolic policies after 2020: student-centeredness, research-based learning, and the interconnectedness between learning and wider society. This analysis is significant for our understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the international policy rhetoric about the integrative curriculum which, in turn, defines the effectiveness of the implementation of these ideas in practice.

“Competence-Based HE: Future Proofing Curricula” by Rebecca Huxley-Binns, Jenny Lawrence, and Graham Scott explains that universities must build curricula that prepare students for the fourth industrial revolution (4IR). However, given the pace of change, we cannot be certain of the attributes necessary to navigate the fourth industrial age (4IA). This chapter argues we can prepare graduates for this unknowable future through integrative, competence-based curricula, outlines how we conceptualize, design, teach, and assess competence-based HE, and invest in those involved in teaching and learning at the University of Hull, UK. To be competent is to have the necessary experience, knowledge, and self-awareness to do something successfully. Competencies are “taught in practice and assessed in application” (Lawrence, et al., 2020). Students learn by applying disciplinary knowledge to professional practice, where possible attending live briefs or authentic teaching and assessment relevant to study, work, and life. This has the potential to benefit the local region and students as they build educational, cultural, and social capital. To sustain the currency of competence-based HE, we work with the learning community (student sponsors, prospective & current students, employers, and providers of voluntary and other services) in designing our programs of study. We facilitate mutual learning to design and deliver integrative curricula that are meaningful and relevant to all.

“Designing an Integrative Curriculum Using CLIL for Medical English Courses in the Faculty of Health Sciences During COVID-19” by Neslihan Onder-Ozdemir is a longitudinal study reports on the development of an integrative curriculum for Medical English courses, which arose as a need on March 11, 2020 when the World Health Organization (WHO) made the assessment that