

Higher education methodology and quality in cooperation between KJF and FHNW PH

Co-financed by the Swiss Contribution

TPPA/2011/09/02

Felsőoktatás-módszertan és minőség a KJF és az FHNW PH együttműködésében

A projekt a Svájci-Magyar Együttműködési Program társfinanszírozásával valósult meg.

Introduction and aims of the project

The Bologna process in Hungarian higher education in the 1990s was accompanied by limited changes in content and by and large has been unaffected by methodological changes. Although many innovative methods and teaching ideas were described that involved students and built on student cooperation, especially in teacher training, these methods and ideas were far from becoming dominant in the everyday routine of Hungarian higher education. In fact, in Hungarian higher education faculty to this date will typically use frontal questions and lecturing. Kodolányi János Főiskola (KJF) is the first and to date the only higher education institution in Hungary that has passed a pedagogical programme approved by its Senate, and this pedagogical programme is based on the experiences of faculty exchange programmes with Pädagogische Hochschule FHNW PH. While very few people are involved in the methodology of higher education and such research is not affiliated with any institution in Hungary, in Switzerland each higher education institution has a methodology workshop/coordinator/team that help faculty with teaching methods and teaching materials. Hungarian higher education institutions (colleges and universities) are unlikely to establish methodology centres in the near future -- that is why KJF has undertaken the task of running a website dedicated to higher education methodology, based on materials that are being selected and prepared jointly by Swiss and Hungarian colleagues. The website will be available for all Hungarian colleges and universities and it will be maintained for at least five years after the termination of the present project. Naturally, contributions by other institutions are most welcome. To pave the way for the new website, two conferences are organized, one on higher education methodology in Siófok, Hungary, and one on the quality of education in Aarau, Switzerland. Building on contents and methods thus identified, and also capitalizing on a jointly operated methodology team, we also plan to launch four modules of a new German language programme training teachers of quality, which can be used in present programmes of FHNW PH.

History of cooperation with the Swiss Partner, steps taken to achieve partnership with the Swiss Partner

KJF has had a 15-year long history of cooperation with Didaktikum of Aarau, Switzerland, a predecessor of FHNW PH. Every year KJF students participated in exchange programmes,

A projekt a Svájci – Magyar Együttműködési Program társfinanszírozásával valósult meg.

faculty members taught in each other's institutions and Hungarian faculty members took part in in-service methodology training programmes in Switzerland. In the past 5 years some more exchange programmes took place in the framework of Erasmus. For more on the yields of cooperation see: Anna Majorosi- Arnold Wyrsh: Austausch - Erfahrungen und Einsichten. Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz - Kodolányi János Főiskola. Székesfehérvár - Aarau 2008.

Joint work between Didaktikum of Aarau (Switzerland) and KJF was first started with the financial aid of the Swiss Parliament, WBZ(U), called Project Phasing Out, shortly after the democratic changes took place in Hungary in 1990. This joint work has by now become long-term pedagogical cooperation. In our judgement the project may involve other degree programmes, training sites and forms of training of FHNW PH and may result in new MA degree programmes in a German-speaking country may eventually evolve from the professional encounters, as well as other international or bilateral forms of cooperation. One product of previous cooperation is a textbook for BA students in German Studies prepared with the financial support of Project HEFOP, a book that gives particular attention to Switzerland. (Boócz/Majorosi/Szabályár: 3D Puzzle Landeskunde und interkulturelle Kommunikation, Budapest 2006, linked to the homepage of German Studies Department of ELTE Universty.) KJF faculty has always been keen on recounting their experiences to fellow instructors and to students and particular attention was paid to giving opportunity to a wide range of faculty members in the cooperation with the aim of distributing Swiss way of thinking and disseminating Swiss democratic attitudes that permeate the whole Swiss society and trigger self-reflection in those who experience them.

The aim of the project

The aim of the project is to change the attitude towards higher education methodology in Hungary and to spread an awareness of quality in education. Our project may have an overall impact on the entire Hungarian higher education by way of making an online in-service training course available to faculty and through this providing higher education methodology and a background of teaching materials that can be used in education (to date none of these exist in Hungary). FHNW PH and KJF will share experiences in the field of quality assurance, based on KJF's MA programme – which should involve the joint development of modules for FHNW PH in German and English based on KJF's accredited Teacher of Quality MA Programme.

The opening conference

We organized the conference 'Teaching Quality' in Aarau, where there were 12 plenary lectures and some workshops with 21 tutors and local professionals. The conference made it clear that the two countries have very different views on the questions of quality in education. Conference materials and further information can be found here:

http://www.kodolanyi.hu/quali/en/events/conferences/quali/program_quali

The Senat of KJF integrated the activities of the Swiss-Hungarian workshop focusing on issues of higher education methodology into the tasks of the Centre of Higher Education Methodology and Innovation. As we know KJF is the very first institution of higher education in Hungary, which created a stand-alone department dedicated to the methodology of higher education. KJF, one of the determining institutions of higher education in Hungary, plays a leading role in embedding and dissemination of the methodological thinking in higher education.

A projekt a Svájci – Magyar Együttműködési Program társfinanszírozásával valósult meg.

The joint activities revealed that Hungarian education matters may contain some specific experiences very useful for the Swiss educational experts, too. Thus mutual learning as a horizontal aspect of the project seems to be very important, even more so thanks to this conference, where personal relationships have also been developed by the most outstanding Swiss and Hungarian experts of education and quality management.

What is pending?

Hungarian teachers will work in Switzerland at FHNW PH on the topic „good practices”. It is the vested interest of our institution to secure our position as a private college and by showing our competitive edge. Since as a school we have a few experiences, we thought we could move on and step-by-step renew Hungarian higher education by sharing actual teaching materials with fellow instructors working elsewhere. This hands-on experience could be aided by Swiss colleagues through their experience, array of teaching materials, publications and personal consultations.

What comes next?

We are planning the following conference in Budapest:

*Challenges of higher education methodology – international conference and conversation of experts
Budapest,
June 6-7th, 2013*

The aim of the conference: presenting and discussing theoretical questions of higher education methodology and becoming acquainted with well-tried and innovative practices:

- Expected competencies of staff members in higher education.
- Relationship between higher education didactics and adult education.
- To what extent is the content of BA programmes able to arouse and maintain the interest of multitask-students?
- General student competencies and their improvement.
- How can higher education respond to the students' varying circumstances of life and to their expectations? How is it able to do so? How does it want to do so? (heterogeneity, focusing on students)
- Assessment methods that are both effective and student-friendly.
- Effective application of learning platforms.
- Best practice in planning, realization, assessment, output-measuring, methods and differentiation.

For more information please visit:

<http://www.kodolanyi.hu/quali/en/events/conferences/profi>

<http://www.kodolanyi.hu/quali/en>