

Call for Papers

15th Annual Conference of the Gesellschaft für Hochschulforschung

26–27 March 2020 at Universität Hamburg

(with a conference for doctoral and early career researchers on 25 March 2020)

Higher Education Teaching between Individual and Institutional Responsibility

Conference topic: The Motto

Teaching in higher education has always been caught between different demands which weave their way through decisions of highly differing quality and origin—and there is a reason for this. Higher education institutions are educational institutions and, as such, they serve to train, or rather, to qualify students. This means that they also serve professional *and* societal practice. At the same time, higher education institutions are part of the research and higher education system and are therefore charged with the task of generating scientific and scholarly knowledge and training the next generation of academics. For both students and teachers, the higher education institution is a living environment designed to educate for both students and teachers in equal parts. Science and scholarship, practice, and the individual—according to observations made by the expert in higher education didactics Ludwig Huber—mark the boundaries of higher-education teaching in which unavoidably ambivalent and contradictory powers are at work. Only a few years ago the German Council of Science and Humanities (Wissenschaftsrat) advocated finding an appropriate balance between practical demands such as preparing students for the employment market, academic demands such as inducting students into a particular discipline, and individual need, such as developing personal character, in every course of studies.

Shaping teaching at the higher-education level in this highly complex field of competing forces poses a challenge on various levels of action: on the microlevel of didactic activity through teachers in specific teaching-learning situations and events as well as on the macrolevel of organizational and political decisions through institutions when creating suitable conditions for teaching and studying. The joint responsibility for shaping degree programs on the mesolevel emerges between the resulting individual and institutional responsibility. These challenges have another overlaying level in the form of societal transformation processes such as digital transformation, which require both individuals and institutions to react in some form or other.

The fifteenth annual conference of the Gesellschaft für Hochschulforschung (society for research on higher education, GfHf) approaches this field of competing tensions in a productive and creative manner, working through antagonisms, ambivalences, paradoxes, and antimonies at all levels of activity involved in shaping higher-education teaching, to open up discussion, and cast a research oriented, multidisciplinary gaze. The conference should illuminate the fact that research on higher-education teaching is as much part of the field of education research as academic research, and cannot be attained without interdisciplinarity.

Sub-topics of the conference: The Tracks

Track 1—Microlevel (teaching-learning situations/courses): Teaching and learning at higher-education institutions largely take place in courses. They can, however, also occur in other learning environments within the institution. Relevant knowledge and approaches to these other environments come from sub-disciplines such as psychological and pedagogical teaching and learning research and didactics. At the same time, contextual factors influence the practice of teaching and learning: for example, degree program structures, demands or restrictions in the higher-education institution itself, the make-up of the student body, etc. Contributions in this track explore the interplay between prerequisites, aims, demands, and/or interventions on the microlevel, and pay particular attention to specific characteristics of and challenges facing higher education.

Track 2—Mesolevel (degree and other programs): Attention granted to the development of degree programs and other higher education programs has increased over the past few years. Higher education didactics as well as research into higher education devote themselves to the diverse expectations of academic studies formulated by interest groups in society and industry. The contradictions accompanying this increased interest regarding what university study is supposed to deliver: research and professional orientation as well as an awareness of diversity. Contributions to this track delve into the interplay of aspects on the mesolevel, dealing with the conditions, guiding principles, demands and/or instruments involved, and thereby work through disciplinary, or inter- and transdisciplinary demands affecting the development degree and other programs.

Track 3—Macrolevel (higher education/political framework conditions): Higher-education institutions are subjected to continual change; changing framework conditions both within and outside of the institution have a direct influence on the way degree programs and courses are shaped. As such, disciplines such as sociology, economics, and the study of science and research are becoming increasingly important. Political demands and programs as well as micropolitical developments at higher education institutions themselves shake up traditional ideas about “education through science and scholarship,” teaching and research freedom, and/or the connection between research and teaching. Contributions in this track deal with tensions on the macrolevel, concentrating on social, scientific, and higher-education policy developments, to elucidate the effects these have on teaching and learning in higher education.

Track 4 —Digitalization (on all levels): Digital transformation effects all levels and should be taken into consideration at each level. High relevance and at the same time observable insecurity justifies, however, an individual focus. Digital technologies have long been an integral aspect of the microlevel, with technical tools and systems as well as innovative teaching formats. The creativity demonstrated at this level, however, is not reflected in different forms of degree programs at the mesolevel. Instead, at the macrolevel of the higher education and policy framework conditions there is a push for digitalization strategies and swift reactions. Contributions in this track characteristically place tensions arising from digitalization at the center of focus and assume, for example, an informative, educational science, or cultural studies perspective.

Track 5—Open Track: The conference also offers the opportunity to submit contributions of outstanding importance for the study of higher education and research that are not directly related to one of the conference topics. We expect, nonetheless, such contributions to relate to teaching in higher education in a more general sense.

Conference structure: Formats and submission guidelines

Plenum formats. Two keynote speakers, one on 26 March 2020 (day one) and one on 27 March 2020 (day two), will provide important conference highlights. In addition to this, there will be a poster session (day one) as well as a debate, organized as a series of three smaller-scale debates. The GfHf members meeting, together with the award of the Ulrich-Teichler-Preis (Ulrich Teichler Prize) take place on day one.

Presentations. On day one (9 am–5 pm) there will be three sessions of 75 minutes each for presentations in the spirit of a discursive group format. Each 75-minute track comprises two presentations of between 20 and 25 minutes in length and with a discussion of between 10 and 15 minutes.

Workshops. On day two (9 am–1:30 pm) there will be a period of 90 minutes allocated to between five and nine workshops, operating simultaneously, as an interactive group format. A workshop consists of the presentation of between two and three presentations of new ideas or motivations for a maximum of 15 minutes followed by at least 45 minutes of interactive group activity. We encourage bachelor's and master's students as well as doctoral researchers to get involved, for example, as a target audience, as contributors of presentations of new ideas, participants in discussions, etc.

Contributions may be given in either German or English, and may take one of the following three formats: oral presentation, workshop, or poster.

Abstracts for all three formats must be submitted via the **conference website**, available at <https://www.gfhf2020.de/> **by 15 October 2019**.

We plan to **notify** applicants that their abstracts have been accepted **by 16 December 2019**.

Full-length manuscripts for accepted abstracts (oral presentations and new idea contributions) for **publication** in the conference proceedings must be submitted **by 15 March 2020**.

We plan to **notify** applicants if their manuscript has been accepted **by 15 June 2020**.

Further information on submissions

A. Presentations: Abstract of maximum 500 words and details of the track to which it relates. The abstract should—depending on the topic—clearly state the research question and relevance, theoretical framework, methodological approach, and the (expected) results.

B. Workshops: Abstract of maximum 800 words and details of the track to which it relates. The abstract should describe the joint concept of all presenters, sketch the aims and relevance, and explain the interactive form to be taken (including participation by students and doctoral researchers).

C. Posters: Abstract of maximum 250 words. The abstract should give an outline of the (research) project to be presented on the poster, including aim and (intended) approach/methodology.

D. Full manuscripts: Manuscripts of oral presentations of maximum 6,000 words, manuscripts of impulse contributions of maximum 4,000 words. Guidelines for manuscripts will be made available in fall (Sept–Nov) 2019.

We look forward to your contributions.

Conference Team: Prof. Dr. Gabi Reinmann, Prof. Dr. Carla Bohndick, Daria Hoffmann, Stefanija Naskovska, Dagmar Kaste