

e-learning in the life sciences: exploiting open source materials in the curriculum

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The colloquium topic was about e-learning in the life sciences, especially open source materials in the curriculum. In her keynote address Ulrike Wild from Wageningen UR touched upon several elementary issues of online learning, namely online strategy, values created, business model and investments needed, and finally the sustainability. She introduced audience - consisting of 30 European university faculty and staff members and students - to the concept of massive open online courses (MOOC) as well as concepts such as Small private online course (SPOC). She mentioned that with eight MOOCs Wageningen UR have approached more students than the university could have ever reached with any online education system. Wild finally proposed that ICA could provide a shared platform for agriculture and Life science courses for professional learners and actively promote recognition of MOOCs and re-use of materials and open courses.

Päivi Tynjälä from the University of Jyväskylä provided an deep scientific insight into Integrative Pedagogy and E-learning in her keynote address. Starting from the skills forecasted to be important in the future working life Tynjälä proceeded to all competences learners need to succeed. She introduced the model of integrative pedagogy consisting of three levels: cognitive, emotional and social level. Cognitive level furthermore build up from three elements, namely theoretical, practical, and self-regulative knowledge. Tynjälä concludes that e-learning and social media can provide mediating tools that enable the integration of different forms of expert knowledge. Learning environments often make a false presupposition that learners have strong self-regulative knowledge and skills. However, this is not true but it is important to guide students' learning also in the e-learning context.

Petri Parvinen from the University of Helsinki, shared his experience on e-commerce and e-learning. First he stressed the important difference between information and knowledge - an issue always to keep in mind with education. About e-commerce his topics covered scalability - the ability to harness geographically independent teaching resources and markets, e-learning platforms - and their uselessness in many cases. One approach to do e-learning is to publish a textbook kind of a e-course. This is because then students do not expect too much from the communication. According to Parvinen the real interactivity is still a ultimate challenge in the digital spatiotemporal locus. He also demonstrated his self-made e-learning course made according to this philosophy. Finally Parvinen mentioned the new potential related to virtual The programme of the colloquium included intensive workshop aiming to produce shared views around e-learning. The participants worked in three groups: first, Using MOOCs in on-campus education, second, Sound pedagogy in e-learning, and third, Sharing e-learning materials. The group work presentations were share at the end of the colloquium. The process will continue with shared writing exercise towards a peer-review "state-of-the-art" article on e-learning in life sciences.