

Newsletter

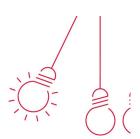
Teaching Academy Groningen

In this newsletter, the Teaching Academy Groningen would like to update you on the developments regarding the Communities of Expertise and on the upcoming <a href="https://webinar.com/we

Teaching Assistants (TAs) to the rescue? How can TAs help our teachers?

TAG and The Communities of Expertise

The Teaching Academy Groningen (TAG) is a platform to share good practises and develop knowledge in order to enhance innovative education at the University of Groningen. As mentioned in our previous newsletter, we currently have four Communities of Expertise: Blended Learning, Interdisciplinary Education for Employability, Inclusivity & Diversity and Teaching Innovation in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). To generate conversation within these communities, the leaders have prepared a blog with key questions of interest, you can read a short version below and the rest can be found on our dedicated Nestor page, Teaching Academy Community of Practice. If you can't access this page, please contact us, tag@rug.nl and we will gladly assist you by adding you to the community.



Accelerating with Blended learning

Looking for the right pace to take the next steps with the faculties

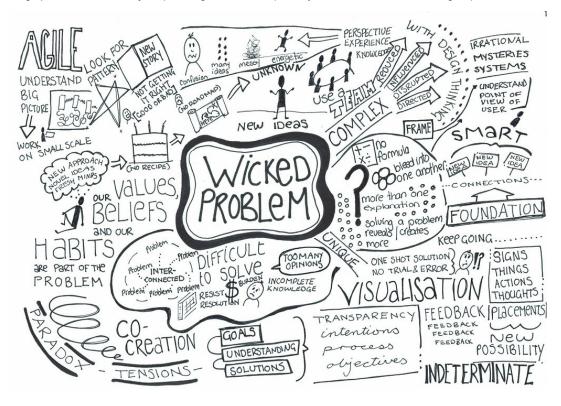
We see the mission of our Community of Expertise is to exchange best practices, help and inspire each other with blended learning. We are particularly interested in the lecturer's perceptions of how they will use Blended Learning moving forward. What really works in your course? What aspects of Blended Learning have the students really enjoyed? And where can TAG help to incorporate blended learning in a way and at a pace that suits each individual lecturer? As we face increasing student enrollments, we will need to incorporate blended learning (some face-to-face and other digital aspects of interaction and learning). How can we accommodate this needed change while minimizing the stress for the faculties? What can we put in place before the fall? If you would like to read more and/or contribute to our blog space about this subject, please go to blended learning section on the discussion group on Nestor.



Help me pimp my course!

Including an interdisciplinarity touch in your course for the next academic year

"We are living in an unprecedented time in history". This type of statement is nothing new for our ears (or eyes), but lately it feels like a mantra that is repeated in every corner of the planet because of the covid-19 situation. We, as educators, are aware we must be innovative to prepare our students for the real world. The Covid-19 crisis is only one example of the type of challenges faced by our modern societies, where no simple solution exists. Other examples include global poverty, climate change, the obesity epidemic or the spread of fake news. We define these complex modern challenges as 'wicked', those problems where solution or problem mitigation must involve cooperation of diverse professionals and disciplines. It's not rocket science to conclude that professionals that understand the interdisciplinary nature of wicked problems, are in demand. So, it is imperative that we nurture this interdisciplinary approach to problem solving in our students. But how do we do that? If you would like read more and/or to contribute to our blog space about this subject, please go to Interdisciplinarity section on the discussion group on Nestor

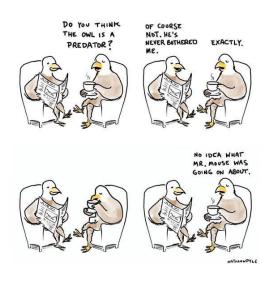


Inclusion and Diversity in teaching and learning

Who gets to speak and who gets listened to?

What are the implications of Covid-19 to inclusive teaching? How can our teaching environment be a safe space for students and educators? If we do allow for student voices, which voices do we actually really listen to?

Are non-Western authors/perspectives included in the curriculum? Do the skills we teach allow the future professionals to be self-reflective, respectful and adaptive in dynamic and diverse future work environments?



These are just some examples of burning questions that surfaced in the first brainstorm sessions on 'Inclusion and Diversity in teaching'. Many questions and positions need time to be explored thoroughly. Yet, we are excited to join forces NOW to share best practices across faculties and support any lecturer who wants to continue making their teaching more inclusive and to make use of diversity as a resource. The changes due to blended learning might be an opportunity within a challenge. But it is up to the

university and its lecturers to make it a success with regard to inclusion. If you would like read more and/or to contribute to our blog space about this subject, please go to Inclusion and diversity section on the discussion group on Nestor

Teaching innovation in STEM

Sparkling start of the STEM Community of Expertise

- Is a pre-recorded lecture "inappropriate or not-done"?
- Flipped classroom does not work for Science courses. True or False?
- If everything is available online, what is the added value of a "real" on-campus class?
- Is it challenging to teach science (online)?

During the first Brainstorm session of the "Teaching Innovation in STEM" we shared challenges and ideas about STEM education. Many teachers are still searching for effective (online) teaching strategies but other lecturers became passionate YouTube educators and Twitch streamers. And even Blackboard Collaborate can be entertaining using a Happy/Sad face:)/:(option. Did you try to transform your online or live session into a "talk show"? Here, one can invite an expert or a guest to discuss a topic in front of your students and involve them into discussion.

Many of us would like to try something new, but lack time and support. We hope to lower the barriers to trying something new. As a community, we can stand stronger together and share examples, resources, and experience. We need recognition and rewards for those innovative lecturers. They are our superheroes! And we can make them influencers: to inspire others. We have a mission to exchange best practices, help and inspire each other. If you would like read more and/or to contribute to our blog space about this subject, please go to STEM section on the discussion group on Nestor



Moving forward with research in higher education

How do we know what works best?

At TAG, we are interested in pursuing several agendas and have created Communities of Expertise just for those areas: Diversity & Inclusion, Interdisciplinary Learning, Blended Learning, and Teaching Innovation in STEM. But, one overarching idea is to pursue research in these areas to see the impact of innovations. We need to be able to provide evidence to support our claims that something is better or worse, why, and for whom. What are we doing at TAG to encourage research in higher education topics? First, our communities of expertise are there to not only share teaching innovations and research on related topics but to encourage new research. Second, several PhD positions have been funded to do research on educational innovations that align with our Communities of Expertise. And finally, we promote other funding opportunities such as NRO, Comenius, SURF, and other grant opportunities as well as give support to those faculty wishing to apply for grants. Please contact us at tag@rug.nl, If you have ideas or questions that you would like to discuss about research in higher education, Would you like to read more

and/or to contribute to our blog space about this subject, please go to Research in higher education section on <u>the discussion group on Nestor</u>

Join TAG today

What are your struggles? Where do you need help or advice? Or do you have something that works particularly well to share? TAG is the place for teachers to collaborate. Join the Community of Expertise that reflects your interest. Interested in a particular Community of Expertise?

You are invited to contact the <u>Leader of the Community of Expertise of your interest</u> or send your email to the Teaching Academy Groningen team at tag@rug.nl

Upcoming event:

June 15, 12.00 - 13.30

Webinar

Teaching Assistants (TAs) to the rescue? How can TAs help our teachers?



Find Out More

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tag@rug.nl

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