

STORIES ABOUT INNOVATIVE PROCESSES IN HIGHER EDUCATION: SOME SUCCESS FACTORS

Speaker:

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A paper focused on and written by...

■ Focus

- Integration of ICT into HE institutions
- The process
- Looking for Key Success Factors

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Data gathering and method

■ Interviews of actors telling their story(ies)

- from pedagogical and technological agencies
- in charge of the ICT integration
- into four HE institutions
 - University of Fribourg, CH
 - University of Louvain, B
 - E.M.LYON, F (French School of Management)
 - University of Liege, B

■ To overpass a simple description from the stories

- Introduction of e-Learning measured before all in relation with the purposes of HE
- Category analysis techniques
- Common factors / critical events / enabling processes / actors
- Key Success Factors appearing

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E-Learning implementation, the steps

- **Five common steps appear in the different stories**
 - Background
 - Inception
 - Start-up
 - Developments
 - Prospects

- **They sketch the stories as a chronological list of successive « critical events »**

- **They are used to understand, analyse and compare the four contextes**

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Step 1, Background

- **Favourable conditions for the inception of e-learning**
 - **Research projects**
 - *“Some research projects involving teachers dealt with more sophisticated e-learning, for instance in 1997 an European collaborative learning distance device (LEARN-NETT project).” [ULg, KSF2]*
 - **Work groups and commissions**
 - *“From years, UCL has been concerned by the quality of teaching; several work groups and commissions have been created to think about it and make propositions.” [UCL, KSF1]*
 - **Isolated teaching initiatives from pioneers**
 - *“At the end of the seventies and in the beginning of the eighties, some pioneers started to use computers in their courses, but those practices were very isolated. Generally, the use of the computer referred to some Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) sequences developed by the teachers themselves.” [ULg, KSF2]*

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Step 2, Inception

■ Some visionary people who give a boost

□ Institutional stakeholders

- *“In 1995, a new University President arrives, who cares about pedagogy and wants things to improve in this domain.” [UCL, KSF1]*

□ The founders

- *“a work group, composed of a vice-University President, a professor in science of education and a professor in computer science (...) at the same time a commission was set up where each faculty was represented” [UniFR, KSF3]*

□ First actions

- *“In 2001, from workteam the “LABoratoire de Soutien à l’Enseignement Télématique” (LabSET) becomes an institutional department of pedagogical support for the e-learning at the University of Liege.” [ULg, KSF4]*

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Step 3, Start-up

■ Investments can be made

□ Interdisciplinary staffs with practitioners are hired

- *“It was decided to place a centre at the intersection of science of education and computer science” [UniFR, KSF4]*

□ Equipment and substructure, e-learning design tools, etc.

- *“We had to negotiate with the general department of informatics support for hosting a Management Learning System on their server.” [ULg, KSF6]*

□ Different policies, different projects

- *“A lot of teachers develop their own web sites, alone or with the help of the IPM technical staff or with an assistant specially devoted to this particular initiative (by the way of university fundings).” [UCL, KSF7]*
- *“There was a training which aim was to present all the available tools. But once you are designing a course, the training is not sufficient, because it is not included in the professor's project” [E.M.LYON, KSF10]*

□ Impact of funds' origins

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Step 4, Developments

- **Development of resource centre and some events / changes**
 - **External events**
 - *“The NTE centre (...) received mandates from the SVC, as the Edutech mandate, which allowed to have supplementary collaborators, thus to enlarge the centre” [UniFR, KSF8 & KSF9]*
 - **Internal restructuring and decision**
 - *“The iCampus coordinator dreams of creating a new platform, very simple, developed in an interactive way with the demands of the users.” [UCL, KSF6 & KSF13]*
 - **Initiatives, projects & developments lead to concrete realisations**
 - *“LabSET gathers and brings together all the isolated initiatives of e-learning in its University. It promotes sharing of good practices. It supports the use of the e-learning platform WebCT and provides technological and pedagogical help in putting courses on line.” [ULg, KSF6 & KSF13]*

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Step 5, Prospects

- **About some impact on teaching and learning...**
 - *“Use of distance learning and teaching methodology are very different from one teacher to another. So it is very difficult to assess the impact on the students.” [ULg, KSF16]*

- **No guarantee about the future**
 - *“From several years, the fund for pedagogy projects has allowed to engage two more persons in the iCampus group, to continue developing the platform and helping the teachers to use it. But this fund is reassigned each year...” [UCL, KSF12]*

- **Looking for the next step... perhaps a true strategy**
 - *“NTE Centre could make only services, (...) it would be a pity, (...) NTE people must be allowed to publish, to make research and (...) also to give courses” [UniFR, KSF14]*



List of Key Success Factors (1/2)

- Visionary people
- Preliminary experience and resource
- Key persons : the expert practitioner (in a team)
- Resource centre favouring access to Computing x Pedagogy competencies
- Places of discussion, valorisation and collaboration
- Common tool for all the teachers allowing the realisation of their projects (Computing x Pedagogy)
- Variety of projects and usages at diverse levels : “small” starting projects, e-learning is no expensive project
- Funds for pedagogical development (FPD)
- Support and pressure of external environment

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List of Key Success Factors (2/2)

- **Teacher training : Computing x Pedagogy, linked with teachers' projects, through experiments**
- **Initiative liberty for teachers and experimentation place**
- **A clear, explicit, coherent and continuous pedagogical action of authorities : objectives, strategies, funds, promotional politics (valorisation of teaching)**
- **The institution highlights pedagogical innovation (in particular introduction of ICTs)**
- **Articulation of research and service**
- **Infrastructure for logistical means (equipped rooms, computer availability, etc.)**
- **Culture of teaching and of ICT's use in teaching (thinking on usages)**

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