Conference Presentation

Closing the Loop: Enhancing Interdisciplinarity in Research and Teaching (CLEAR)

BALSIGER, Jörg, et al.

Abstract

How are non academic experts involved in successive stages of the programming and funding cycles in research and teaching?

Reference

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Closing the Loop: Enhancing Interdisciplinarity in Research and Teaching (CLEAR)

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Context: Action COST- INTREPID

**Challenge 1 – UNDERSTAND CHANGE:**
To reflect and learn about what needs changing in the programming and funding cycle.

**Challenge 2 – CRITICAL MASS:**
To build networks and cooperation – bringing together research communities, policy makers and the funding community, to strengthen ERA’s capacity for ID.

**Challenge 3 – ENABLE CHANGE:**
To develop solutions that enable interdisciplinarity: beyond structural, institutional and cultural barriers with a particular focus on urban-related practice
Two interrelated concepts

Interdisciplinarity: involves a collaborative and integrative approach by disciplines to a common object.

Transdisciplinarity:
1. Process of knowing that transcends disciplinary boundaries
2. Method that brings political, social and economic actors, as well as ordinary citizens, into the process of research and teaching in a problem-solving perspective

Darbellay 2015
Our general question

How are non academic experts involved in successive stages of the programming and funding cycles in research and teaching?
Figure 1: CLEAR double-loop analytical framework
Phases of programming and funding cycle

1. Launching
2. Selection & evaluation
3. Implementation
4. Outputs, outcomes and impacts
Figure 2: Typologies of citizen engagement (Arnstein, 1969) and non-academic expert involvement
Figure 3: Conceptual frameworks for interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinary practices (modified from Huutoniemi et al., 2010, Klein 2010b, Balsiger 2015)
Research Design

• Delphi process
  – characterization of the integration of non academic actors in inter-trans-disciplinarity according to the 4 phases (launching, selection, implementation, outputs)

• Definition of key words
  – Criteria, advantages, drawbacks

• Cross findings with Interviews analysis
Delphi process

• 14 experts
  academic & non-academic
• 2 questionnaires mai 2017 and 2018
• 2 meetings – june 2017 and 2018
Tested in Delphi and changed into 4 types of involvement:

0 = non involvement
1 = passive
2 = consultation
3 = co-construction

**Figure 2:** Typologies of citizen engagement (Arnstein, 1969) and non-academic expert involvement
Participation of non academics
done during Delphi 2017
Example of a map constructed by one expert

Advantages and drawbacks
## Interviews

### Case Studies: Teaching

- **MDT**: Master en développement territorial, UNIGE (ISE)-HES HEPIA
- **Master en urbanisme UNIL-Geo**, Master disciplinaire
- **Mineure en développement territorial, EPFL- séminaire**
- **DPP (Diplôme en pratique du développement)**- IHEID, Genève et décentralisé dans 5 villes (Hanoï, Ouagadougou, Accra, Bichkek, Lima)
- **CAS- Pouvoir d’agir, HETS Genève**
- **Master urbanisme IUP-IFU, Paris**
- **Programme 4 cities, ULB- UVB (Bruxelles)- Copenhague, Vienna, Madrid**

### Case Studies: Research

- **FNS (Fond National Suisse de la recherche)**
- **ALLISS (alliance sciences sociétés)**
- **ANR (Agence nationale de la recherche, France)**
- **FNRS (Fonds de la recherche scientifique, Belgique)**
- **Interface sciences-société (UNI Lausanne)**
- **Projets SNIS (Swiss Network for International Studies)**
- **Université de Genève**
- **OFEV (Office fédéral de l’environnement)**
- **Fondation Shmidheiny**
- **HES-SO**
- **ESPON (European Spatial Planning Observation Network)**
- **Urban Nexus (projet européen FP7)**
- **University College London Urban Laboratory**
Synthesis of the Teaching Case Studies Interviews

*From expertise to academic acknowledgment*

- Actors in transdisciplinary teaching
  - Who gets involved and why: constrains and institutional expectations
  - Win-win, networks and investments
  - Time and temporalities

- What legitimacy for what role
  - Self-limitation
  - An inter-trans-disciplinary team: Interprofessional and interdisciplinary
  - Stakes of the conflicts: can we really erase cultural barriers?
  - Reflexive questioning toward accomplished students
« I am not a teacher, I am here for my expertise, which is my legitimacy. I am not here to evaluate the students or take decisions related to the academic field. »

(Practitioner and lecturer, 2017)

« We offer a course in urban planning to complement the initial academic background: some former students, now urban planners, return as supervisors in the program, but they have had a more complete and richer vision of the formation. This appeals on us to question our legitimacy as “disciplinary” teachers and non-urban planners facing those former students. »

(Lecturer, Master in urban planning, 2017)
Synthesis of the Research Case Studies Interviews

The legitimacy of the researcher questioned in the context of the Swiss research institutions diversity.

- Differences in functioning, financing, status and representation between research institutions:
  - Representation
  - Resources (time and finance)
  - Status and career plans
  - Interest

- Academic and professional know-how
  - Preserve its own specificity or become a second-class university
  - Collaborations and tensions
"A hierarchy remains. When you are at the university, you feel as if you are above Applied Sciences Schools (ASS) and that you have a higher level of knowledge. There is a hierarchy between academic and non-academic knowledge... Between fundamental and practical knowledge. There is also a feeling of inferiority on the part of the ASS, the feeling that we are kind of second class... Or, in counterpoint, a strong affirmation of the dimension ‘close to the field’ by the ASS. »

(Lecturer, ASS, 2017)

"I organized a conference in which the university was involved. The second day it took place in our ASS and none of my colleagues attended. They told me: “These guys are academics, we are practitioners.” There was a real denigration. I thought the way they simply rejected the “academic” was really distressing. »

(Professor, ASS, 2017)
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<td>2 coût d'entrée/effort</td>
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Table 3
Key words defined through 1st Delphi panel to describe inter and trans disciplinarity as well as advantages and drawbacks

- Key words issued from Delphi 1
- 3 key words issued from researchers’ interviews
- 3 key words issued from teaching interviews
- New key words
Some leads...

- Differences between academic and non-academic actors (representations, discourses and practices)

- Closing the loop
  - Different limits between research and teaching
  - Legitimacy as a transversal limit
Still to go

• Further analysis (typology of programs)
• Focus-group (with alumni)
• Articles (*Futures, IJSHE*, etc.)
• 20-21 June 2019: conference in Geneva

*La transdisciplinarité au prisme du développement urbain durable*

• Subscription before end of April

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