



Section 10

Design Educators as Change Agents

Track 10: Design Educators as Change Agents

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Introduction

Kremers, Liepins, and York (2019, p.173) a notion that “a revolution is needed to address the gap between knowledge and action” by transforming pedagogical programmatic practices, transforming curriculum, transforming academia, and transforming ourselves inspired the formation of this track theme and informed selection of contributions included in this section.

We argued that educators should play a vital role in supporting the proposed transformation as it they who inform how teaching and learning is planned, organised and delivered. In addition, the educators’ specific pedagogical approaches guide and structure learning and teaching elements such as: the curriculum content, students’ assignments, subject delivery, learning environment in which the learning takes place and interaction between the involved students and the given subject’s matter. These elements constitute signature pedagogies which according to Shulman:

“are important precisely because they are pervasive. They implicitly define what counts as knowledge in a field and how things become known. They define how knowledge is analyzed, criticized, accepted, or discarded. They define the functions of expertise in a field, the locus of authority, and the privileges of rank and standing.” (Shulman, 2005, p.5)

If we agree with Shulman’s proposition, then educator’s signature pedagogies, including those in ‘Design’ field, shape professional practices and therefore, there is a need to explore design educators’ pedagogical practices, which may shed light on at least two issues:

1. whether what might be considered core design competencies are actually needed to teach design or what has been impact of these academics on design signature pedagogies?
2. what our academic leaders are understanding of the change processes to either reproduce the signature pedagogies or change these in repose to internal and/or external factors?

In this track, the collection of the invited 16 submissions exemplifies teaching and learning experiences in design education research including 12 research papers, 2 case studies, and 2 workshop proposals. The submission explored the theme from different cultural perspectives which ranged from the insight of teaching creativity and design thinking, designers in a studio, design knowledge and methods applied in design classes, and the leadership and related course settings. Moreover, these studies employed diverse methods including verification research, case studies, exploratory study, protocol study, and empirical studies.

The submission has been arranged into four sub-themes:

- Design educators’ role on cultivating creativity and design thinking
- Design educators’ role on developing design knowledge
- Design educators’ role in the design studio
- Design educators as leadership of the discipline

Design Educators’ Role on Cultivating Creativity and Design Thinking

Submission by Janey Deng Klingelfuss and Markus Klingelfuss, which reflects the need to critically align with the key concerns of design thinking led education, in fostering “student’s creative and reflexive capacities” (QAA, 2019) opens the section. The authors argue that through an emphasis on the development of critical pedagogies facilitate development of students critical understanding and active participation in learning



activities. The follow-up submission by Katelijn Quartier elaborate on development of a 'ready to use concept', containing design guidelines and tools, that support students in making informed design decisions. The author proposed that the students are taught to be critical thinkers from the 'start' and to apply scientific knowledge alongside their design skills while designing. The third submission by Francesco Galli, Zhabiz Shafieyoun and Gerry Derksen's research investigates the implementation practice of embedding adaptive leadership in the internationalised creative curriculum. They explain the mutated role of the creative educator from the 'instructor,' who delivers the educational content to the students, to the 'coach,' who constructs the learning process for the future expert designers, and finally indicate that future thinking for creative leadership needs to consider three factors.

Design Educators' Role on Developing Design Knowledge

Four studies and one workshop proposal in this cluster focus on the development of design knowledge. Amongst, Elisabet Nilsson and Anne-Marie Hansen's study provides an example of how teaching activities made available via an online facilitate to open educational resource that offers teaching resources for teaching for values in design. The paper ends with a concluding discussion about the potentials of design teachers to become change agents through their pedagogical practices that enable students to go from knowledge to action. Ryan Slone and Bree McMahon developed the 'Mash Maker' project, a design charrette that explores the collision of time and form through a system of carefully devised prompts. In this project, music has been used as a logical framework for exploring relationship between time-based characteristics for structuring sound. Meng-Dar Shieh, Hsu-Chan Hsiao and Yu-Ting Hsiao's study used a verification method—to apply the practical teaching—to obtain a set of methods on bionic design and product development. Lu-Ting Xia, Chun-Heng Ho and Xing-Min Lin's study focused on green design in industrial design, who designed an experiment to investigate students' senses of environment in the design process. There is a workshop proposal developing Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which discusses the accessible and inclusive teaching for people of all ability levels, launched by Hsiao-Yun Chu.

Design Educators' Role in the Design Studio

Two selected submissions related to design studio experiences. The opening submission by Koray Gelmez, Pelin Efiltili, Enver Tatlısu, Tuğçe Ecem Tüfek, Onur Yılmaz, designed a survey addressing in-studio roles and responsibilities. The authors explored the relations with the instructors, the effects on the student learning process, the factors shaping pedagogical roles, and the administrative responsibilities. The second submission in this section by Julie Milovanovic analysed four design critiques from a master design studio in architecture using the protocol analysis methodology. The findings provide empirical support for Donald Schön's description of learning design in the studios through a learning-by-imitation approach, which reveals that design critiques are mainly focused on designing itself (tacit knowledge) more than explaining how to design (explicit knowledge).

Design Educators as Leadership of the Discipline

There are six submissions which refer to the leadership of design discipline. Jianpeng Zheng's research paper analysed one of undergraduate course "brand communication design". It has discussed the curriculum logic, teaching process and teaching methods of inquiry practice teaching of design major in application-oriented universities. The follow-up research paper by Yuanyuan Xu's focus is on the art in design. The author argue that image has become a typical symbol of the arts in this era. The paper analysed how the courses of visual communication design adapt to the demands of this era is an important problem that design educators should think about. Lei Sun takes the teaching reform of the undergraduate program in Shandong University of Art & Design as a case for study. Through surveys with students, teachers, and employers, it finds out three core challenges faced by the design majors and finally proposes three correspondent solutions. Selen Sariel also shares a case study which presents an in-class exercise to learn about the course learning out-comes for a Human Factors in Design course carried out with undergraduate level industrial design students in the 2020-2021 academic year. The case study introduces the course content, comprised of the theoretical knowledge-sharing part, sample assignments and in-class exercises to define the context of the study. Yun Fan, Jianglong Yu, Yang Zhang, Erik Bohemia's paper described the development of Chinese industrial design education in colleges and universities from 2015 to 2019 and analyses the influence of national policy on industrial design education. It mainly adopts literature analysis and data statistics methods to compare the development process, professional ranking, the talent training scheme and curriculum in colleges and universities. The purpose is to provide development direction and reference for colleges and universities with industrial design

majors. Robin Vande Zande's workshop aims to generate ideas on re-designing worldwide education. The workshop is based on an international symposium 'Shape a Better World', 2019 in Florence, Italy, which brought together thought leaders that represented 14 countries from diverse ethnicities, cultures, and backgrounds.

The selected papers are contributing to a broad theme of design educators as change agents of design education, as the significant needs for educators as change agents are related to challenges related to societal, environmental and sustainability issues which needs urgent attention. However, these contributions are not considered to be exhaustive, more issues in relation to this topic need to be explored in the future, such as

- what distinguishes design educators from educators from other disciplines or cultures?
- what is professional bodies understanding of lectures role to introduce change for the profession?
- how educators can be supported to change their practices?
- how do lecturers or programme leaders and deans understand the change process?
- how lecturers manage different requirements of change?

References

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Professor Wang takes typography as his key research field and pays particular attention to explore the possibility of visual innovation of local cultural symbols.