

4TH INTERNATIONAL UNIVEST: STRATEGIES TOWARDS COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Organizing Committee UNIVEST'13

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The Organising Committee of the **4th International UNIVEST Conference** wishes to acknowledge the Editorial Board of the Journal of Technology and Science Education (JOTSE) for publishing this special issue on collaborative learning strategies.

After three editions in which the work of UNIVEST has focused on issues such as the self-regulation of learning, student involvement in the university and students as axis of change in the university, this fourth edition aimed to move forward towards defining strategies and proposals to implement collaborative learning in universities today.

With that main goal, the IV International UNIVEST Conference was proposed as a forum to debate and exchange ideas about university teaching and learning processes and the importance of placing students in the centre of these processes.

Like the previous editions, this one was also committed to an especially participatory working dynamic and to promoting different points of view. The programmed debates were complemented by contributions from recognised specialists who shared their ideas and thoughts on the main subject of analysis: collaborative learning. In relation to this general subject, papers were specifically focused on one of the five thematic axes proposed for this edition:

- Planning and organisation of teaching
- Evaluation
- Tutoring action plans
- Student participation in university life
- Experiences outside the classroom

A total of 77 papers on the areas of the sciences, the health sciences, and engineering and architecture were accepted by the Scientific Committee for the Conference. Every paper was reviewed by at least two reviewers. The possibility to submitting their papers to the Journal of Technology and Science Education (JOTSE) was offered by the organisation to the authors of the highest rated communications in these areas. A set of six papers were finally selected for publication in JOTSE.

The study “Flow experiences in everyday classes of Spanish college students: The fit between challenge and skill” is concerned with the flow state as a high intrinsic motivation experience. The authors analyse in which contents within the social psychology subject students experience more flow. The results showed that students experienced different states of consciousness in different sessions: relaxation, apathy, flow and anxiety. These findings provide new insight into the relationship between an academic subject and students, facilitating the creation of new and innovative strategies for learning.

“Space of teaching support and innovation” presents the work of the teaching assistants of the Faculty of Psychology at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. They are a group of students that provide support to the teaching staff. Collaborative work has proven to be an effective method for them to achieve their goals. The results of two satisfaction surveys, one answered by the teaching staff and another by the same participating students, are analysed in this paper.

The study “Mental Health Nursing Practicum: student and mentor perspectives on stress and satisfaction” is focused on identifying students’ sources of stress in order to provide strategies to confront them and diminish

the potential consequences. Ascertaining the perception of stress and the stressors is a priority. This study applied both quantitative and quality methods to achieve its objectives: to analyse the perception of stress and the stress-generating factors faced by third- and fourth-year nursing students during the mental health practicum, and to determine satisfaction with the new mental health practicum in a student survey and in a focus group of mentor nurses.

“Skills in clinical communication: are we correctly assessing them at undergraduate level?” shows the results of a training programme in clinical communication under a problem-based learning (PBL) methodology and correlation between student self-assessment and teachers assessment.

This involves a qualitative-quantitative cross-sectional study in usual practices in the second year of the degree in Medicine.

The article “Effect of filming errors committed by nursing students to evaluate simulated clinical situations” describes a study carried out by a group of students in the second year of nursing, and it tries to evaluate the influence of somebody filming students during the clinical simulation. Does it make them commit more errors or not?

The filming of the staging represents a useful tool to review the decisions they took and the actions they did, with the purpose of highlighting strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement.

Finally, “Help to new students of ICT Systems Engineering Degree at EPSEM-UPC: Mentoring” presents new students at the Manresa School of Engineering (EPSEM, Escola Politècnica Superior d'Enginyeria de Manresa) who were voluntarily provided with mentoring service during their initial period at university. Mentoring gives academic, teaching and self-organisational support. It improves academic results and reduces the abandonment of studies. In particular, mentors are experienced learners studying in the last year of their degree.

Finally, we want to acknowledge Dr María Martínez (UPC. Barcelona Tech). We appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with JOTSE for this special issue.

Organising Committee of UNIVEST'13 .

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BIOGRAPHY

The UNIVEST'13 International Conference was organised by the Institute of Education Sciences of the University of Girona. From the beginning, UNIVEST has worked with scientific and organising committees that make sure the conferences meet quality standards in terms of content and that they are well run. The members of these committees, in keeping with the conference's characteristics, are a diverse and heterogeneous group.

The scientific committee is made up of university professors from different scientific areas and with broad and lengthy teaching experience.

The organising committee consists of teaching staff, academic and administrative officers, a student representative and specialists in the organisation of university training and educational innovation activities.

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