

English Abstracts

Quality Assurance of Online Classes in University Education Triggered by the Novel Coronavirus

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This paper summarizes the events in university education triggered by the novel coronavirus, drawing on media reports and documents from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). It also considers students' reactions to online classes based on surveys conducted by Kyushu University and Rikkyo University. The results indicate that 1) students evaluate online knowledge acquisition classes positively; 2) students feel isolated in unidirectional online classes; and 3) with certain steps, interactive online classes can be as effective as face-to-face classes. Based on these results, the author proposed three avenues to ensure the quality of university education: making online learning more interactive, promoting hybrid learning, and supporting extracurricular learning.

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The Possibilities and Challenges of Online Education and its Quality Assurance after University Integration

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Osaka City University (OCU) and Osaka Prefecture University are planning to integrate to establish a new university in 2022. The new university will have multiple campuses, including a new campus from 2025 that will offer general education. There will be fewer opportunities for students to interact and learn diversity from each other in general education because it is difficult for upper-grade students studying at multiple campuses to take general education at the new campus. However, the situation might be improved by utilizing online education. Based on my trial implementation of online distributed educational practices at both universities simultaneously, it was found that the success of these practices would require each student to have their own personal computer, timetable synchronization, and an integrated learning management system. Additionally, classroom environments (Wi-Fi, webcams, microphones, speakers, etc.) need to be prepared for high-flex, hybrid, and mixed education.

Both universities conduct internal quality assurance (IQA), including continuous and systematic collection of direct (OCU indicators) and indirect evaluation indicators (student and faculty surveys). These efforts need to be continued in the new university system. Furthermore, quality assurance of online education should be integrated as part of the university's IQA efforts.

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Toward Quality Assurance of Online and Hybrid Classes: The Case of Online Teaching Support at Kyoto University

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To prevent the spread of the new coronavirus infection (COVID-19), Japanese universities conducted fully online classes on an unprecedented scale in the first half of 2020, and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) utilization was promoted at once.

At Kyoto University, online classes were introduced in the first half of 2020. To support online teaching, the Center for the Promotion of Excellence in Higher Education, to which we belong, in collaborating with the Institute for Information Management and Communication, has built a support site, *Teaching Online @ Kyoto University*; holds FD workshops; and has conducted a faculty survey. In the latter half of 2020, we supported hybrid classes.

As a result of university teachers working on online teaching by force of circumstances due to the pandemic, it has been realized what can be taught online and what cannot. The challenge is how to ensure the quality of online classes or hybrid classes.

In this paper, the support system of Kyoto University for online and hybrid classes is described, and we summarize how the Center for the Promotion of Excellence in Higher Education supports online education. Finally, the issues of quality assurance of online and hybrid teaching are discussed.

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Physics Experiments and Exercises in an Online Environment

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Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, it became difficult to conduct face-to-face lectures and experiments in the 2020 academic year. In this paper, we introduce some examples of online experiments for teaching and practical training, which are difficult to conduct in an online environment, in “Physics Experiments,” a basic science subject of the Nagoya University curriculum. Advantages and disadvantages have emerged from teaching experiments in the online environment for various subjects within “Physics Experiments.” The advantages include an increase in the number of interactions with students and an easier grasp of the entire experiment on the part of the teacher. On the other hand, there are some disadvantages, such as the lack of opportunity to learn the basic operation of the experiment, and not being able to experience the experiment operations face-to-face. In the future, we would like to take advantage of both forms of instruction by applying the experience of online experiments to face-to-face experiments.

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HyFlex Course Design Reconsidered

NAKAJIMA Hidehiro

This paper examines ongoing discourse on the HyFlex course design which has been rapidly recognized among instructors teaching in higher education institutions during the COVID-19 pandemic. The HyFlex course design has been used successfully for more than a decade at many higher education institutions around the world with a wide variety of courses, particularly courses for adult and part-time students. However, the HyFlex course is known as the live broadcast of lectures in the classroom to remote participants via web conference systems in recent discourse in Japan. Higher education researchers and practitioners often introduce those kinds of concept in a local context erroneously and spread the ideas without careful investigation of the US's background to save the cognitive load. This paper aims to raise an alert over the tendency for Americanization without critical review and reconsider the HyFlex course design concept based on previous studies. The most important aspect of designing our courses with the HyFlex model is to focus on the learning experience rather than the mode of delivery or participation.

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Education and Activities in French Universities to Prepare Students for Employment

NATSUME Tatsuya

This article aims to clarify the situation and some characteristics of education and activities in French universities to prepare students for work.

Since the 1990s, the French government has engaged universities in preparation for students' employment. The government thought that universities had to offer education and some activities for employment besides traditional academic education to correspond to students' growing and diversifying demands for employment. In 2017, legislation on higher education prescribed the preparation for employment as one of universities' missions.

The government introduced professional courses in the third year of bachelor level leading to a Professional Bachelor's degree in 1999. Some universities began to offer special lectures as a kind of career education and increased practical training in companies. Also, many universities established career service offices to help students find jobs. Education and activities to prepare students for employment had considerable impact on the academic characteristics of university education.

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Development of Liberal Arts in Chinese Universities in the Twenty-first Century

LU Yi

For many years, greater importance has been attached to specialized and professional subjects in Chinese higher education than on liberal arts subjects.

Nowadays in China, many students who graduated from high school enter university, thereby enhancing the popularity of higher education. In this context, the importance of liberal arts has also increased further and there are calls for reform of the system of liberal arts. However, this reform is taking place with no clear vision on the part of the Chinese government and is consequently facing problems and difficulties. The reform of liberal arts in China is still in its infancy.

This paper makes it clear why and how the reform comes to be required in China and examines both the development of the reform of liberal arts in Chinese universities and the problems encountered.

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Proposal of Design Principles for University Instruction Utilizing ICT and Based on Re-Interpretation of Transaction Distance Theory from Total Amount of Scaffolding

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This paper proposes a set of design principles for university education for the future with COVID-19, so that student autonomy will be nurtured through ICT utilization. First, the situation of university education faced by the sudden campus shutdown caused by COVID-19 is examined using the four groups of distance education theories: theories of independence and autonomy, industrialization, two-way communication, and equivalency. Transactional Distance Theory, which conceptualizes distance not as a physical but a psychological phenomenon with autonomy, structure, and dialog as the three key factors, is then introduced as a useful framework for re-designing university education. Criticisms of the theory are reviewed, which led to a proposal for its re-interpretation, with “dialog” as an on-going scaffolding and “structure” as an advance scaffolding to enhance student autonomy. Eight design principles are proposed, describing the stages of the scaffoldings being taken away, so that the students’ autonomy will be nurtured more by requiring more from them in the later part of university education. A freely available resource for faculty development by Kumamoto University is available to interested readers.

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Empirical Study on Rate of Return to University Education Investment by University Rank and Faculty: Focusing on the Possibility of Failure in University Education Investment

SHIMA Kazunori

This paper targets high- and low-ranking universities and measures the expected rate of return to each university education based on the information on the firms where all graduates work. The expected rate of return to university education of the relevant university is calculated based on the average, and while paying attention to their diversification, whether or not there is an economic effect of university education and possibility of failure of its investments are clarified.

The following results were obtained. (1) The economic effect of investment was confirmed to be greater at the case university with higher rank than at the case university with lower rank. (2) The existence of a certain economic effect of university education has been clarified even in the university with low rank, which has not been clarified in previous studies. (3) Focusing on the dispersion of the economic effect of the university education investment, there are no cases of investment failure at the university with high rank, but such cases at the university with low rank. (4) It became clear that there are a certain number of cases where even graduates of the university with low rank can obtain expected rates of return that exceed the average value of graduates of the university with high rank.

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How has COVID-19 Changed College Students' Perspectives on Study Abroad?: From Student Survey Results

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The worldwide spread of the new coronavirus continues to cast a shadow over international education. When the outbreak began in February 2020, students studying abroad were asked to return home immediately and for those planning to go abroad, their plans were cancelled because an end to the pandemic was nowhere in sight. This paper presents the results of a survey on how this pandemic has affected college students' views on study abroad and international education by asking questions on the following topics: 1) changes in awareness of studying abroad, 2) pros and cons of online classes, and 3) having co-learning classes with international students in Japan. As a result, 65.4% of the students answered that they plan to study abroad after the end of the pandemic indicating that students are not losing motivation. As for online courses, 89.6% of the students answered that they do not feel they can gain the same experience compared to actual study abroad. On the other hand, students gave a high evaluation to face-to-face co-learning with international students studying in Japan, stating that, through interaction and taking the classes with them, they gain some international experience.

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The Workshop Organized by the *Pädagogische Akademie* for Elementary School Teachers Involved in the *Berufspraktisches Jahr*

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New colleges, formally known as a *Pädagogische Akademie (PA)*, were established in Prussia during the Weimar Republic (1918-1933) to train elementary school teachers. Graduates of the *PA* after 1931 were required to participate in a *Berufspraktisches Jahr (BJ)* – a required period of teaching practice for the elementary school teacher’s qualification exam. A mentor, chosen from the teachers in the elementary school, had the role of assisting *PA* graduates.

This study focuses on the workshop for mentors. The workshop was held by the *PA* to introduce its activities to mentors. Since mentors graduated from normal school, they did not have much knowledge about the *PA*. Therefore, the workshop provided an opportunity for them to learn about the *PA*, which played a significant role in the *BJ*. However, this has not been examined sufficiently in prior research. This study seeks to clarify the content of the workshop and how mentors evaluated the *PA* after the workshop.

The conclusions are as follows:

1. The content of the workshop included lectures, observing classes of the *PA*, and exchange of opinions. The *PA* was able to arrange the content of the workshop.
2. Most of the mentors after the workshop had a good impression of the *PA*. Through the workshop, most of the mentors changed their attitude toward the *PA*, which encouraged them to build a good relationship with *PA* graduates during their *BJ*.

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Research Trends and Key Issues Regarding Career Support for International Students

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This paper examines the research trends and key issues regarding international students' career development and employment in Japan. First, the titles of previous papers were analyzed to get an overall picture, and then the content of active research areas among those was organized. The title analysis showed that while many studies targeted "career support," few studies targeted "policy," which should essentially influence this issue. Besides, there has been a tendency in recent years for the content of career support to be focused on "Business Japanese Education."

The content of the "career support" research could be classified into the following four themes: 1) content of career education, 2) method of career education, 3) organizational structure for career support, and 4) human resources for career support. The key issues of each theme were identified, which were 1) prevention of activity trap, 2) consideration for diversity, 3) promotion of the understanding and participation of the whole university, and 4) identifying the qualifications and abilities required for career support profession and how to develop their skills, respectively.

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