Implementing research-based teaching and learning across Bachelor programs

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Conclusions

• Research-based learning was implemented in a way that led to great self selection of the students. The way it was implemented it might also be attractive and feasible for a selected group of students only.
• Additional funds created opportunities to try and evaluate new concepts without forcing strategic decisions. Hence the logic and timing of strategic decision making and the projects could become unaligned.
• The opportunity to implement a related concept was not created by the project and its results, but by the people who initiated the project.

Initial Conditions

Bachelor programs introduced
Scientific development
Employability
Tuition fee introduced
Funding for innovative teaching
Large classes
Passive student behavior
Surface learning
Teaching as information transmission
Desire to apply knowledge and to experiment.
Research informs teaching.
(Research) methods are taught, but rarely applied.

Vision

• The courses were created as research-based, meaning students engage in research tasks and processes to learn, and aim at developing a broadly defined employability.
• Prototyping and evaluating the concept of research-based learning at the Faculty with a selected group of BA students.
• Mainstreaming research-based learning at Bachelor level exploiting the experiences made.

Potential realized:

The courses provided a setting in which students choose the Deep Approach of learning more likely than in other courses.

Vision

The courses were created as research-based, meaning students engage in research tasks and processes to learn, and aim at developing a broadly defined employability.

• The courses were characterized by the student’s as opportunities for active and sustainable learning.
• The students reported to have further developed key competences like team work, data analysis, writing reports and literature research.
• Within the courses the students got relevant insights into research as a field of work and profession.

Difficulties resulted:

• Only within the BA Social Sciences (out of 5 BA programs) the courses became established and could attract a significant number of students.

Continuous consequences

• Three project partners continue to offer three courses within the profile group.
• Two projects partners replaced or modified existing courses to make it research-based.
• During a conference research assistants from Cologne University and other Universities discussed the concept.
• A guidebook and three reports were created.
• The experiences made might be helpful to implement a major shift to problem-based learning across all lectures during the first two years of the BA programs.

References