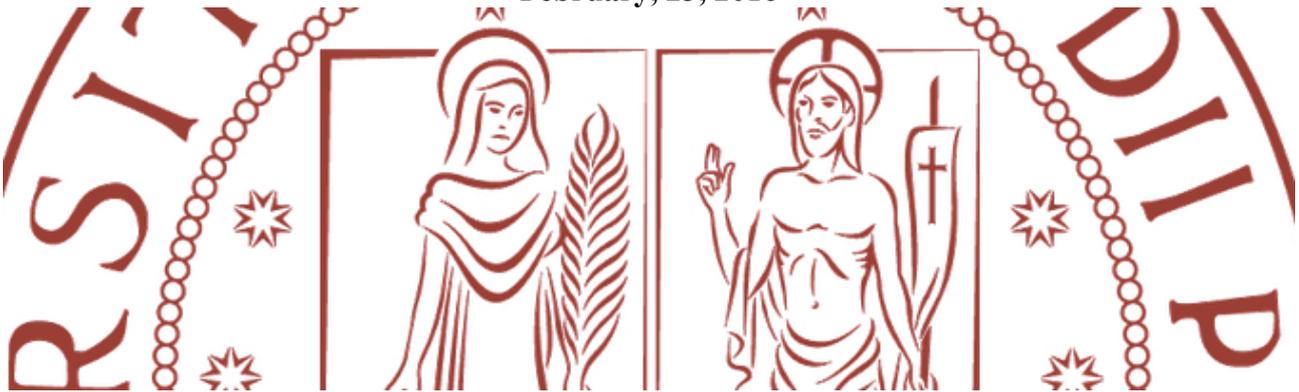


February, 23, 2016



University of Padova, Sala delle Edicole, piazza Capitaniano

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Voices in HE: Students Participation and Institutional Cooperation for Quality Improvement and Innovation in Higher Education

Among other institutions, Higher Education has been seen as a key driver of societal change, as the space where the youngsters are expected to “become” competent citizens and professionals. However, Higher Education is currently struggling to keep up with the expectations of lifelong learning and the open innovation society. Its hierarchical tradition is clearly anachronistic in a world where participation and self-development have become the norm (Harvey & Knight, 1996; Sheets, Crawford, & Soares, 2012).

As part of the ongoing debate about Higher Education institutions’ identity their main roles have been identified as : a) a scientific community where high level knowledge is produced through scholarly research; b) a learning community where the knowledge is discussed and disseminated through teaching; and c) a crucial stakeholder that supports qualified professional practices, informed policies and dialogue with other institutions in society, towards joint innovation (Wiley & Hilton, 2009). One of the most critical and still generally overlooked issue is the engagement of students, not as consumers, but as active participants in developing a Higher Education fit for a knowledge-based society. In fact, their engagement implies forms of learning that represent not just an “additional value”, but the key to shape the skills for entrepreneurship, participation, commitment and creativity, all required for both economic growth and a deep democracy.

The movement called “Students’ Voice” has developed over the last 20 years, based on the idea that young people have valuable things to say about teaching and learning upon which teachers and policy makers can

usefully draw to inform their actions. In University contexts the Student Voice movement is a growing branch of educational research with crucial impacts on students learning processes, in line with a more holistic approach to students’ and faculty development, engaged in a new relationship with students, which is defined as *partnership vs customer-service relationship* (Cook-Sather, Bovill, & Felten, 2014). Researchers working within the Student Voice perspective stress that, despite the genuine attention given by a great part of today universities to students feedbacks and the efforts of them to engage with students, there has been a missing element, that is the direct involvement of students in actually bringing about changes (Dunne & Zandstra, 2011). The Student Voice research allows us to understand and examine the shift from a view of student as consumers to one as an active-collaborator and co-producer of knowledge with the potential for transformation.

Taking into consideration the above depicted context, the aim of the conference is to discuss these issues within the academic community of Padova, and to involve students and faculty together in order to identify and develop strategies and concrete actions to improve the role of students inside all university processes and achieve new forms of partnership and governance of higher education with concrete impact on students’ development and on university reforms.

Researchers from 5 countries, working on an European Project on Student Voice in HE will be engaged in these discussions, and will lead workshops with students and teachers.



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**DIPARTIMENTO DI FILOSOFIA, SOCIOLOGIA, PEDAGOGIA
e PSICOLOGIA APPLICATA (FISPPA)**

Program

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|--------------------|---|--|
| 9.00 | Sala delle Edicole: Welcome time | |
| 9.30-9.45 | Valentina Grion | Introduction to the Conference |
| 9.45-10.00 | Vincenzo Milanese, Direttore del Dipartimento FISPPA Monica Fedeli, Referente Commissione Internazionalizzazione del Dipartimento FISPPA Franco Corti – rappresentante degli studenti in Consiglio di Amministrazione | Saluto delle autorità |
| 10.00-10.20 | Simona Bezjak, Ergo institute, Ljubljana, Slovenia. | Youth Participation: The Voice of Young People in Social Contexts. |
| 10.20-10.40 | Ignacio Haya, Universidad De Cantabria (ES) | Student Voice in compulsory education: a long path towards inclusive schools |
| 10.40-11.00 | Cristina Devecchi, University of Northampton (UK) | Student Voice in HE: students' identity in the changing role of universities. |
| 11.00-11.15 | Coffee Break | |
| 11.15-11.35 | Kovács Klára, Center for Higher Education Research and Development, University of Debrecen (H) | The Effects of Institutional and External Factors on Non-Traditional Students' Success in Higher Education |
| 11.35-11.55 | Stefania Manca, ITD-CNR Genova (IT) | Participatory culture in the networked area: how technology can enhance students' engagement and partnership |
| Workshops | Room "Film" and Room 5, I floor, Palazzo del Capitano, piazza Capitaniato | |
| 11.40-13.00 | Different students and researchers' groups lead by each key lecturer | Exploring Possibilities for Student-Faculty Pedagogical Partnerships |
| 13.00 | Conclusion | |
| 13.00-14.30 | Lunch | |
| 14.30-17.00 | Open meeting to work at the VHE ERASMUS+ Project | VHE Participants and representatives of students |

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