

TEACHING



ANTICIPATION BEFORE A CRISIS...

... how do you use and explore institutional infrastructure and resources in your teaching practice?

... how can you provide impulses to expand your institution's infrastructure and resources to allow for experimentation in your teaching practice?

Well, it was not really that different from what I usually did. I always liked to know what's going on, so I'd regularly check updates, central mailings from our university, etc to find out what is available and what I can use. And if I came across something I thought would work for me, I'd just try it out. I also talked to people a lot. And with the students, I mean, I always got their feedback through the end-of-semester evaluations and often there were some great ideas in there about how lectures and seminars could be improved. So that was what I used when I talked to our fantastic didactical support people.

INFRASTRUCTURE + RESOURCES

TECHNICAL SETUP (HARDWARE, SOFTWARE) FOR LEARNING PROCESSES, SPECIALISED TRAINING, TUTORIALS, GUIDELINES



COPING DURING A CRISIS...

... how do you make use of your institution's infrastructure and resources to keep teaching going without sacrificing learning quality?

... how do the available resources support your creative problem-solving for your teaching?

To be honest, the AI guidelines had been quite helpful. Of course, there were some aspects in there, where I had to say from my professional expertise that it was a bit more complex than that but in those instances, I always adjusted them. Some of my colleagues struggled with that, though, and they were confused about what they were allowed to do because information flow was often delayed. What I did though was offer counselling to my students because they really needed to talk about AI and how they felt about it.



ADAPTATION AFTER A CRISIS ... IS BEFORE A CRISIS

... how do you want your experience to be included in evaluating which infrastructure to keep?

... what kind of resources would enable you to turn successful improvisation of teaching practices into routines?

Seeing how well my students respond to the "AI counselling", I am talking to a few colleagues now to work on extending the programme. Maybe we'll even be able to offer that to the whole university. But for that I'd need extra staff. And even if I had more staff, it's not like universities are built for long-term contracts, especially for non-tenured academics. This makes long-term planning and implementation always difficult. And of course, we as professors need more training because AI is developing so quickly that it can be hard to keep up.

COLLABORATION + COMMUNICATION

PROCESSES FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY, MULTI-LEVEL COLLABORATION, LINES OF COMMUNICATION

... with whom do you typically collaborate within and beyond your institution to explore new teaching ideas?

... which communication networks, spaces and channels are useful for you to develop creative solutions for your teaching practice?

I often just talked to my students. I mean, most of the time, it was just me and them in the classroom anyway so who'd be better suited to inspire new ideas? But of course, I also collaborated a lot with my colleagues, because just from our background, we automatically considered questions of ethics and implications for the human psyche. A lot of that happened spontaneously, actually. When you met a colleague on campus, you just started chatting and before you knew it, a new idea was born.

... with whom do you collaborate at a moment's notice to quickly adapt your teaching?

... to what extent do ad-hoc communication channels enhance your creativity in teaching?

The quickest way was always within our department. We had a culture where we relied on each other and when AI came crashing in, the first thing we did was set up a meeting to come together and talk about what this meant for us, for our teaching, and for supporting our students. That was when the idea of this counselling was born, because we noticed how students struggled with these new possibilities and challenges. But of course, we struggled, too. Suddenly, we got all these AI-generated texts, which were mostly just rubbish. Actually, I sometimes took those and used them as examples in my teaching to show how machines worked differently than the human brain.

... how do you encourage ongoing collaborations to enhance the diffusion of creative teaching solutions?

... with whom do you engage in critical discussions about which teaching innovations should remain?

They change quite a lot, I have to say. I mean if things are running smoothly, there is not that much to talk about. So we usually just get together every 2 or 3 months these days. But even if the frequency has declined since AI has become a normal part of our lives, it's still comforting to know that the support system is in place. I do talk a lot with my students, you know, in the classroom, most of the time, it's fairly obvious which approaches work and which don't.

ROLES + RESPONSIBILITIES

INCORPORATION OF PERSPECTIVES, ALLOCATION OF TASKS AND ROLES, DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

... who is responsible for guiding teaching innovation and steering long-term teaching development?

... what is your own role in this preparation?

Everyone of us, I would say. We all needed to make sure that our teaching was innovative, engaging, thought-provoking and all of that. I couldn't do that for someone else. And also, every class was different, with different skills, technical setup and so on. So it was my job to make sure that I took that into account for each class and used the tools and whatnot provided by the university accordingly.

... how does your role change with regard to finding creative solutions for teaching?

The biggest change for me was that I had to become more pragmatic in my decisions and couldn't always be creative. In the midst of figuring out how AI could be used beneficially for psychology, I just didn't always have the capacity to consider every perspective and opinion but needed to find the best common ground for everyone. Because no matter what, students needed to be able to keep up their studies and graduate in time if they wanted to. So if anything, the crisis made me less creative at times.

... who needs to be involved to ensure that improved teaching practices are sustained and do not depend too heavily on key individuals?

It has been a real challenge to deal with this huge new technological possibility but now, we are used to it and things are starting to feel like they used to again. But then, there are always new technical developments coming in, so we always need to keep up. Especially in psychology, the rise of AI therapists really keeps us on our toes. But everyone is responsible for their own teaching and I don't think there is any way to change that to make it less dependent on individual effort and enthusiasm.

CONTEXT

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

FOR EXAMPLE: POLICIES AND REGULATIONS, FUNDING, DISCIPLINARY CULTURE, FACULTY GUIDELINES, IT ACCESSIBILITY

How do external conditions influence your creative ability to navigate change?

Since I only have limited time, I need support from my staff. However, if people only have limited contracts, it can be tough to keep up a consistent information flow and knowledge management. And of course, institutional AI policies but also national AI regulations are constantly changing and telling us what we can and can't use. And then, AI keeps on changing, there are new applications coming out every week. That makes it hard to keep up.

IDENTITY

THE INSTITUTION'S SELF-UNDERSTANDING FOR EXAMPLE: MISSION STATEMENTS, TEACHING CULTURE, SENSE OF BELONGING, ROUTINES AND PRACTICES OF COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

How do the self-understanding of your institution and the corresponding internal dependencies influence your creative ability to navigate change?

I know that bringing about change in higher education is always a long-term effort but I do think that every step is moving us forward and most of the time, my university is open to that. Or at least not restrictive. As a professor, you are pretty free to decide how you want to teach and it also helps to work in a department where we can depend on one another without needing to coordinate everything. This creates a lot of freedom to explore and experiment, if you want to.