

**Exploring Difference –**  
Strategies to Make University  
Teaching Count

Monday 1 December 2014  
Embassy of Canada Berlin



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The series INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON EDUCATION BERLIN is a joint initiative of the British Council, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the German-American Fulbright Commission, the Embassy of Canada to Germany and Freie Universität Berlin.

Through the contributions of international participants the series aims to enrich the debate on science, research and higher education policy in Germany, to place German perspectives in a global context and to learn from positive examples from other countries.

## Ongoing series

- 1 Exploring Difference –  
Making University Teaching Count, 15 October 2007
- 2 Exploring Difference –  
The Philosophy of Undergraduate Education, 10 April 2008
- 3 Exploring Difference –  
The Challenge of (Post)Graduate Education, 9 October 2008
- 4 Exploring Difference –  
The Challenge of International Branding and Marketing, 30 April 2009
- 5 Exploring Difference –  
Integrating Lifelong Learning into Universities' Missions, 19 October 2009
- 6 Exploring Difference –  
Recruitment, Selection and Admission of Doctoral Candidates, 26 April 2010
- 7 Exploring Difference –  
Postdoctoral Careers in Global Academia, 11 October 2010
- 8 Exploring Difference –  
Transdisciplinary Research and its Impact at Higher Education Institutions, 10 October 2011
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Transnational Education – Models, Drivers and Challenges, 23 October 2012
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Strategies to Make University Teaching Count, 1 December 2014**

## Exploring Difference – Strategies to Make University Teaching Count

The eleventh conference in the ID-E Berlin series will focus on teaching excellence in higher education. The discussions will address the following topics and questions:

### 1. Institutional strategies: challenges and demands

- Do universities need a general teaching strategy? And how would you develop it?
- Do we need subject-specific teaching concepts in universities?
- Do you distinguish between teaching and learning strategies?
- Does teaching count in research intensive universities? (for promotion, recognition, career...)
- What can presidents, rectors and deans do to support good teaching? (rewards, incentives, support structures...)
- Is there such a thing as a “tool box” for best practice at your institution?
- Do we need a more drastic cultural change within research universities to move towards a recognition of teaching excellence?

### 2. Improving teaching

- Does graduate education prepare academics to become good teachers? And do university professors want to be taught how to teach?
- How to align curriculum, pedagogy and – not to forget – assessment?
- How do you deal with the increasing heterogeneity of the student body? Do we, for example, have to make provisions for international students with different learning cultures?
- Do you differentiate between teaching in Bachelor’s and Master’s programmes?
- Which role do alternative models play – such as collaborative teaching, research internships, mentoring models or interdisciplinary classes?
- The question of evaluation: How do you best assess teaching practice? And how do you measure learning outcomes?

### 3. General questions and national frameworks

- Is the question of good university teaching “en vogue” again and why?
- Is it necessary to establish national bodies to support teaching excellence?
- What about national recognition schemes for teaching (with funding attached)?
- Do we need more specific scholarship of Teaching and Learning in HE?

Drawing on examples from their own education systems and institutions, a detailed understanding of the different challenges and new developments in HE Teaching will be elicited from our experts from the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States, the Netherlands and Germany.

## Programme

<i>Time</i>	<i>Session</i>
<b>13.00 – 13.30</b>	<b>Registration and Coffee</b>
<b>13.30 – 14.00</b>	<b>Welcome and Opening Remarks</b> <b>Marie Gervais-Vidricaire</b> Canadian Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany <b>Ulrich Grothus</b> Deputy Secretary-General, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)
<b>14.00 – 16.00</b>	<b>Panel Discussion</b> <b>“Exploring Difference – Strategies to Make University Teaching Count”</b>  Speakers <b>Prof. Arshad Ahmad</b> Associate Vice President, Teaching and Learning, McMaster University (CDN) <b>Dr. Joe Bandy</b> Assistant Director, Center for Teaching, Vanderbilt University (USA) <b>Prof. Klaus Hoffmann-Holland</b> Vice President Teaching and Learning, Freie Universität Berlin (GER) <b>Prof. Harm Hospers</b> Dean Faculty of Humanities & Sciences, Dean University College Maastricht/Lecturer, Maastricht University (NL) <b>Prof. Philippa Levy</b> Deputy Chief Executive (Academic Practice), Higher Education Academy (UK)  Chair <b>Jan-Martin Wiarda</b> Head Communications and Media Relations, Helmholtz Association
<b>16.00 – 16.30</b>	<b>Coffee</b>
<b>16.30 – 18.00</b>	<b>Final Plenary and Discussion</b> Conclusions and recommendations for the national debate
<b>18.00</b>	<b>Presentation of the “Ars legendi-Preis für exzellente Hochschullehre”</b> by Stifterverband and Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (HRK), <a href="http://www.ars-legendi-preis.de">www.ars-legendi-preis.de</a>
<b>Followed by</b>	<b>Reception &amp; Buffet</b> Opening event for the conference hosted by the Stifterverband which continues on 2 December at the Embassy of Canada to Germany



## Arshad Ahmad

**Arshad Ahmad** earned his MBA & Ph.D. at McGill University and is presently the AVP, Teaching and Learning at McMaster University. Dr Ahmad is also the Director of the McMaster Institute for Innovation & Excellence in Teaching & Learning (MIETL). His recent appointment signals McMaster's intention to elevate teaching and learning as an institutional priority. In addition to pedagogical and technology support, MIETL has been given the additional mandate to produce scholarly research on teaching and assemble an international advisory board to guide future de-

velopment. MIETL aspires to lead Canada in academic development and host regular regional, national and international learning events.

### **Abstract**

In 1991, a national commission made headlines by declaring: "Teaching is seriously undervalued at Canadian universities and nothing less than a total re-commitment to it is required" (The Smith Report, p.63). Since then, many have asked for evidence that points to whether teaching counts. Or whether teaching counts more now than it did then. A more relevant question might shift the focus from making teaching count to making learning count. And discriminate the level at which it counts. Does it count in your course, a particular program or discipline? How about at your institution that works within a provincial context where educational policies are formulated? These layers provide a useful lens to formulate strategies that can help to make a difference in teaching and learning in Canada. We explore some of these strategies that have evolved over the past two decades and seem to have made an impact.

## Joe Bandy



**Joe Bandy** is Assistant Director of the Center for Teaching and faculty in the Department of Sociology at Vanderbilt University. He received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1998, and was Assistant and Associate Professor of Sociology at Bowdoin College from 1998 to 2010, after which he came to Vanderbilt. From 1996 to 2004, his research investigated the many ways that social movement organizations have responded to the economic changes associated with globalization, especially the efforts of U.S. and Mexican labor and environmental movements to forge coalitions in response to joint problems. Since 2005, he has focused on administrative, research, and teaching projects related to faculty development around high impact teaching practices – particularly case- and problem-based methods and service learning – and has championed teaching methods that support civic engagement, environmental sustainability, and critical understandings of social differences. At Vanderbilt University, he oversees programs dedicated to these concerns, particularly junior faculty development, service learning and community engagement, sustainability education, and issues of difference and power in teaching.

### Abstract

There is agreement across the more than 4,500 institutions of higher education in the US that the sector is facing momentous challenges, ones that are impacting the form and quality of teaching and learning. Educational technology has enabled distance and blended learning in ways that are beginning to fundamentally unbundle the spatial, temporal, and institutional contexts of higher education. The US, always a diverse nation, is becoming ever more so and offering a positive challenge to educators to extend post-secondary education to a larger, more representative group of students and to teach in ways that are more inclusive and promote global citizenship. The practical challenges, however, of developing more inclusive and global systems of education are significant. And of course, US higher education is struggling to define its cost-effectiveness and defend its relevance to the common good given the rapid inflation of tuition and fees, and budget cuts, particularly in public colleges and universities. This economic squeeze places enormous pressure on institutions to teach more with less and to engage in teaching that is publicly relevant and professionally oriented. And one could raise further concerns with the impact of athletics on US colleges and universities, the evidence of declining critical thinking and student engagement, the challenges of social and environmental problems to traditional curricula, or the prioritization of research over teaching in the nation's leading institutions.

Together, these challenges have caused even casual observers to become Jeremiahs decrying a crisis in higher education, one that fundamentally threatens the quality of teaching and learning, and thus the future of the nation itself. Against these tendencies are those reformers who have championed a renovation of higher education, yielding a system that is more supported, open, affordable, cosmopolitan, interdisciplinary, and publicly and critically engaged. Crucial to these reforms are a variety of high impact teaching practices that involve more student-oriented teaching, problem-based instruction and curricula, collaborative education, learning communities that bridge disciplines and schools, experiential and research-intensive learning experiences, writing-intensive assessment, capstone experiences, living-learning communities, and community-based education in the form of service learning or public scholarship.



## Klaus Hoffmann-Holland

**Klaus Hoffmann-Holland** is University Professor, holds the chair of Criminology and Criminal Law and is Vice President for Teaching and Learning of Freie Universität Berlin. He received his law degrees from Justus-Liebig Universität Gießen (Dr. iur. 2000; Dr. iur. habil. 2005, *venia legendi* criminology, criminal law, juvenile justice and corrections). Prior to his appointment in Berlin, he served as a public prosecutor and as a judge in Rhineland-Palatinate. Since 2013 he serves as a presiding judge at the Landgericht Berlin. In 2005, Klaus Hoffmann-Holland was award-

ed the Dr.-Herbert-Stolzenberg-Award for jurisprudence. He taught at University of Gießen, the University of Warwick, the École normale supérieure Paris, Johannes Kepler University Linz and Université de Strasbourg. He also served as a visiting professor at the Center for Transnational Legal Studies, London, in the Faculty of Law of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and was a visiting professor at the Nihon University, College of Law, in Tokyo. On three occasions, he joined the Georgetown University Law Center's faculty as an adjunct professor for the Summer Law Program in London.

### Abstract

German Universities (and their research and teaching staff) are currently facing several challenges: In the wake of the Bologna process, universities in Germany have been tasked with coping with a steady increase in student quantity, caused by a growing number of students from abroad, a shift from vocational training towards university education, and a shortening of the secondary education cycle. This increase leads to fascinating perspectives, but also puts a great strain on universities, which have to accommodate these changes without a corresponding increase in their limited resources. Simultaneously, the German "Excellence Initiative" has strongly encouraged and funded outstanding research and post-graduate education. In the future, we will have to focus more on the very foundation of academic excellence: teaching and educating undergraduate students as well and as thoroughly as Master students and the coveted PhD candidates.

Being one of the most prominent German research universities and a beneficiary of the Excellence Initiative since 2007, Freie Universität Berlin (FUB) has witnessed an above-average growth in first-semester students (35% from 2009/10 to 2013/14). In order to meet the challenges described above, it has developed several strategies: Improved information channels aim at guiding prospective students towards the right choice of subjects, and special mentoring programs are designed to allow for greater in-person interaction – often a deficit at universities with a high student-faculty ratio and a reason for high drop-out rates.

A rather unique feature of Freie Universität's strategy, which showcases its unwavering commitment to excellence in research and teaching, is a method for evaluating and improving the quality of teaching, developed at FUB's Department of Education and Psychology. By collecting and analyzing student questionnaires, areas for improvement can be identified and teachers can be trained in corresponding, tailor-made courses. This qualification program for university teaching, which concurrently evaluates the quality of instruction, the quality of motivation, and the quality of interactivity, is mandatory for all newly hired faculty but also available for the entire academic staff at FUB. It comprises train-the-teacher modules, special offers for technology based teaching, and personal coaching by experienced university teachers. We are confident that its establishment will lead to an excellent education - which means more than just educating the excellent.



# Harm Hospers

**Harm Hospers** has a background in Psychology. He holds a chair in Applied Health Psychology. His research focuses primarily on HIV/AIDS prevention, more specifically on behavioral determinants studies as well as on the development and evaluation of evidence-based behavioral interventions. Professor Hospers was appointed Dean of University College Maastricht in January 2009. In January 2010 he was appointed Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences of Maastricht University.



## Abstract

The number of young people looking for higher education options is strongly increasing. In the Netherlands the number of freshmen at universities has almost doubled between 1998 and 2014. This includes young people who leave their country of origin to study abroad. This is a global phenomenon: in 2011 almost 4.5 million tertiary students were enrolled outside their country of citizenship; twice as many as in 2000. In many countries this has led to a significant increase in student/lecturer ratios. In the Netherlands it has also led to an increase in programs that have set a maximum number of students they will take in and to an increase in programs that select students (applying many different selection methods). Finally, the EU tuition fee jungle adds to growing uncertainty among young people if and where they might find a place to study.

The lucky ones that do find a spot are in many places confronted with mass education, such as lectures with hundreds of fellow students, limited number of contact hours, and efficient assessment procedures. One of the negative effects is the decrease of engagement of students and teaching staff with their education programs. A focus on innovative strategies to increase student and staff engagement with the education process is urgently needed.



## Philippa Levy

**Philippa Levy** joined the HEA in 2013 as Deputy Chief Executive (Academic Practice). She leads strategy and services for learning and teaching development and innovation in and across the disciplines. An advocate of research-led learning and teaching, and academic and professional services staff collaboration, Philippa is responsible for: consultancy services relating to academic practice, the HEA's Resource Centre and research underpinning the development of learning and teaching. Previously, Philippa was Professor of Higher Education Development and

Head of the Information School at the University of Sheffield. Between 2005 and 2010, she was Director of a national Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) where she led a £4.5m programme to investigate learning and teaching approaches based on student inquiry and research. She has an MA French Literature and Society from the University of Warwick and an MA Librarianship from the University of Sheffield.

### Abstract

The outcomes, quality and enhancement of higher education (HE) teaching have risen up government and institutional agendas in the UK over recent years. The HE policy environments of the four UK nations differ. However, they share a commitment to placing students 'at the centre' of a system in which the educational mission of HE is seen as more important than ever in straitened times, with a key role to play in relation to economic growth. Recent policy reforms are shaping an increasingly marketised HE environment, allowing for greatly increased tuition fees in England, and stimulating intense competition between an ever more diverse range of providers across the UK. A key part of the picture is the increased provision of public information about HE learning and teaching to inform student choice among institutions, using quality indicators such as student satisfaction rates and graduate employment destinations as reflected in national and international league table rankings. And the changing landscape of HE learning and teaching across the UK as elsewhere includes a shift toward more learning-focused approaches, with students positioned as active co-producers and partners in an increasingly digital and flexible learning environment, and a strong focus on making UK HE more accessible and inclusive in relation to the needs of increasingly diverse student cohorts.

There are plenty of challenges for HE teaching practitioners and strategic leaders here, and provision of appropriate support for the initial training and continuing professional development of teaching staff (including leadership development) is seen as a priority for the enhancement agenda, as is the need to continue to work toward rebalancing esteem for teaching in relation to research - for example, through national and institutional strategies for recognition and reward against professional standards and criteria for excellence.

The Higher Education Academy, as the national HE enhancement agency, acts as a 'hub' supporting individual practitioners, institutions and the system as a whole. It provides a national professional recognition scheme for HE teaching aligned to the UK Professional Standards Framework; accredits institutional initial training and continuing professional development provision; manages a national teaching awards scheme; runs a series of opt-in national student feedback surveys for institutions; and offers enhancement programmes on a range of themes in the areas of curriculum design, innovative pedagogies, student transitions and staff transitions.

## Opening Remarks

**Marie Gervais-Vidricaire** is a graduate from Laval University (B.A. in Journalism and German), the Institute of Political Sciences in Paris (post-graduate studies in international relations) and of the Paris Institute of Advanced Studies in Social Sciences (political sociology). She joined the Foreign Service in 1980 and has served in Mexico City, Bogota, New York, Paris and Geneva. From 2005 to 2009, she was Ambassador to the Republic of Austria. Following this assignment, she worked in the Group of Independent Experts mandated by the Secretary General of NATO to make recommendations for a new strategic concept for NATO. In Ottawa, Mrs. Gervais-Vidricaire has held a number of positions within the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Privy Council Office. From 2001 to 2005, she was Director General of the Global Issues Bureau and from 2011 to August 2013, she was Director General of the Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (START). Since September 2013, Ms. Gervais-Vidricaire is the Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany.



**Marie Gervais-Vidricaire**

**Ulrich Grothus** is Deputy Secretary-General of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and Director of the DAAD Berlin Office. He obtained a master's degree in Political Science at the Freie Universität Berlin in 1976. He then worked as a journalist before joining the International Division of the former West German Rectors Conference in 1982. He has been working for DAAD since 1988, first as spokesman and head of the president's office. Starting in 1991, he has been consecutively director of all three DAAD program directorates. In between, he served as director of the Paris office from 1998 to 2000 and of the New York office from 2004 to 2008.



**Ulrich Grothus**

## Chair

**Jan-Martin Wiarda** is head of the "Communication and Media" department at the Helmholtz head office. Previously, Wiarda was deputy head of the "Chances" department at DIE ZEIT newspaper. Parallel to studying politics, economics and sociology in Munich, he completed a vocational training course at the Deutsche Journalistenschule. In 2003, he completed his studies with a master's degree at the North Carolina University, USA. For many years now, Wiarda has been writing for various daily newspapers, including the Süddeutsche Zeitung, Tagesspiegel and Financial Times Deutschland. In 2004, he became an editor at DIE ZEIT newspaper. For his journalistic work, he has received, amongst other recognition, the KAUSA-Medienpreis. In addition, he regularly works as a presenter for panel discussions and congresses.



**Jan-Martin Wiarda**

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