

INTERNATIONAL GUIDE CONFERENCES: BUENOS AIRES AND BEYOND

The IX International GUIDE Conference, held in Buenos Aires from 6th to 8th May 2015, has seen the participation of outstanding universities coming from numerous countries of Latin America (Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Venezuela) as well as from USA, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Turkey, Spain, Italy and UK.

The Conference focused on different topics, ranging from the comparison between traditional and distance education to relevant social themes, such as digital inclusion, e-citizenship and online education accessibility.

The comparison between traditional education and the new learning processes in technology-based higher education have been the most debated topic. One of the main research questions was linked to the analysis of the concrete advantages deriving from the application of new pedagogical models combining classical and innovative methods. In this framework practical case studies, related to the Cono Sur region and other Latin American countries have been presented, reflecting on the use of new media and social networks as learning tools.

All the contributions also investigated the parameter of quality. The achievement of high-quality standards, regardless the teaching modality, still represented an undeniable goal for all universities.

Several studies described innovative virtual laboratories and interactive learning environments, aiming to detect the main features of high quality products. Multimedia solutions for distance learning have been presented in the field of Physics, Science, Biology, Engineering and Law. Carrying out an interesting parallelism between smart cities (with their smart grids and smart mobility) and online universities, it has been underlined how the academic institution may be able to enhance a smartification process that allows the sustainable evolution of its essential components - education, research and technological transfer – for the creation of new “Smart Universities”.

Digital inclusion and e-citizenship have been debated by Latin American speakers, underlining differences and similarities among several countries. An interesting study has been presented on the situation of elderly people in Brazil and the perspective of their digital inclusion in the next few years. E-learning accessibility has been approached from the perspectives of different regions and areas, by comparing the situation of Latin American, Europe and the Islamic

world, where the use of mobile technologies is adding value in the field of Islamic studies and teacher training.

Finally, it has been considered the theoretical aspect of software usability, which represents a primary issue in the realization of high-quality and effective products for higher education. Before investigating the effectiveness of virtual learning environments, it is necessary to critically consider how a virtual tool is designed and to which purposes it responds. The preliminary analysis of users' demands helps to individuate how to meet such requirements by the creation of a tool, which might be friendly, functional and efficient.

Back to Europe

The X International GUIDE Conference "Optimizing Higher Education for the Professional Student: A balance of flexibility, quality and cultural sensitivity", will be held on September 16-18, 2015 at the University of Applied Sciences Technikum Wien (Vienna), Austria's largest technical university of applied sciences that offers both traditional and distance degree programs.

The conference aims to promote discussion on improving higher education, bringing to light the needs of the evolving 21st century student and proposing new pedagogical strategies and technologies for meeting those needs. Particular attention will also be given to the continuing education and training of the working professional student, as well as the essential role of international collaboration and cultural sensitivity in the advancement of higher education research and technology.

Optimizing higher education for the professional student: A balance of flexibility, quality and cultural sensitivity

Provisional conference schedule

16 September 2015

Registration

Welcome Session

- Prof. Alessandra Briganti, GUIDE General Secretary
- FH-Prof. DI Dr. Fritz Schmöllebeck, Rector of UAS Technikum Wien

17 September 2015

Parallel Sessions

The Evolution of the University Student

- Assuring Quality, Flexibility and Access in Distance Education
- Career-Oriented Distance Education and Corporate Training

18 September 2015

Parallel Sessions

- Connecting with the 21st Century Learner
- European Citizenship and Beyond