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The Enhancement of Students' Career Management Competence – a Strategic Higher Education Policy Approach

DR. GERHART ROTT | UNIVERSITY OF WUPPERTAL

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Serbia within European Paradigm of Career Guidance – Recommendations and Perspectives

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Overview

1. The challenge of strategic governance of HE institutions

- role and function of universities in emerging knowledge societies
- features of university governance ↔ socio- economic developments

2. The shift towards student-centred learning

- student-centred teaching and learning
- expectations on knowledge acquired

3. Building bridges towards economy & society: CMC

- transfer knowledge productively and
- adapt creatively to increasingly flexible world of work & its risks
- development of students' CMC

Overview *cont.*

4. Implementing a cooperative approach on the institutional level

- best suited on organisational level and for deepening content & methodology of CMC
- supporting HE efficiency, effectiveness and efficacy

5. Exploring opportunities: Linking with wider discourses and policy developments

- European Higher Education Area (EHEA)
- theory and practice on career development
- European Lifelong Guidance and Policy Network (ELGPN)

The challenge of strategic governance of HE institutions

Knowledge-driven economies and societies

- knowledge becoming a primary source of wealth
- HE institutions: multiple engagements and complex functions

Conflicting fields of expectancies

- universities' core quality:
“devotion to the preservation and advancement of knowledge, to the pursuit of truth, and the enjoyment of mans intellectual powers as a knowledge institution” (Skúlason, P. 2013)
- enhanced expectations reflecting economic and social change:
massive expansion, widening access, increased economization
- responsibility to balance between conflicting fields of interests

The challenge of strategic governance of HE institutions *cont.*

Balancing demands new steering requirements

- enhanced accountability
- increased risk management for funding
- necessity of branding the institution

Good Governance in HE institutions

- balancing external culture and internal culture
- maintaining integrity of academic values and becoming more receptive to external demands
- third pillar of academic demand: service to stakeholders and society at large

The challenge of strategic governance of HE institutions *cont.*

Complexities of governance and policy making

- “*revolution of the fundamental constitution of academic work*” (Scott, P. 2013)
- the establishment of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA): specific European answer to these key developments

Interfaces between institutional and careers strategy

- Teaching and learning environment favourable to foster knowledge transfer and innovative potential of graduates
- Relationship of HE institutions & students to economy and the world of work and society at large

The shift towards student-centred learning

Emphasis of student-centred learning in the EHEA

- Louvain Communiqué (2009), Bucharest Communiqué (2012): empowering individual learners, new approaches to teaching and learning, effective student support and guidance systems
- Encouraging students as active participants in their own learning
- Facilitating supportive and inspiring working and learning environments in HE

Task of paradigm shift from teaching and learning

- reconciling increasing number of students - “massification of HE” - with core objective of HE: to substantiate critical thought and knowledge

The shift towards student-centred learning *cont.*

Enabling to cope with change process

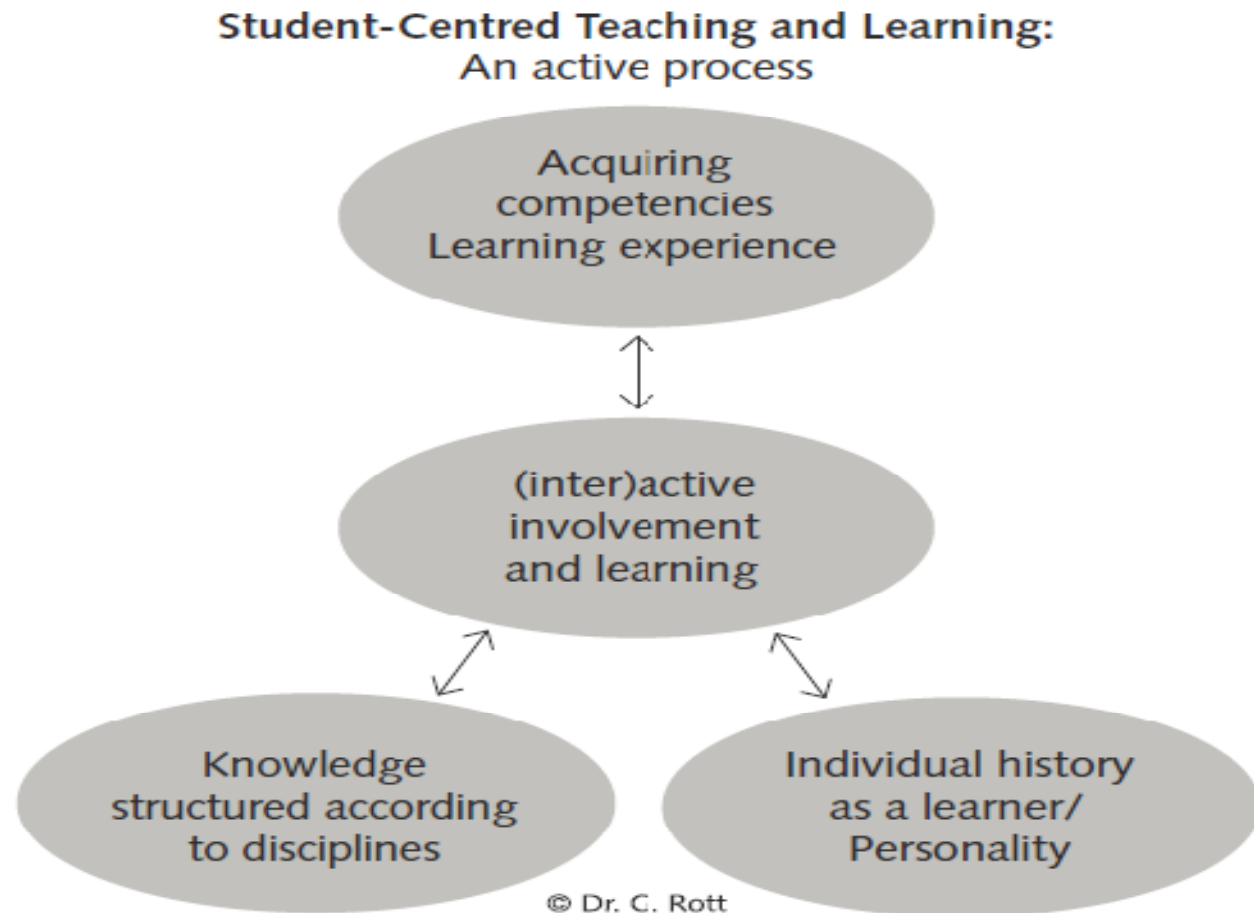
- enable students and graduates to contribute to adaptation and construction of human realities and natural environments
- acquiring knowledge, consciousness and ethics embedded in reflective views of the world

Deep learning approaches and reflective competence development

- Acquisition of discipline - based knowledge and methodologies connecting and supporting: self-reliant reflective and lifelong learning embedded in their personality development
- "deep approaches" (Biggs, J. & Tang, C. 2011) in learning and studying

The shift towards student-centred learning *cont.*

Introduction of a basic model:



The shift towards student-centred learning *cont.*

Statement in the Bucharest Communiqué 2012:

“Higher Education should be an open process in which students develop intellectual independence and personal self-assuredness alongside disciplinary knowledge and skills. Through the pursuit of academic learning and research, students should acquire the ability confidently to assess situations and ground their actions in critical thought” (p.2)

Building bridges towards economy & society: CMC

Institutional focus: relation to economy and society

- concerning research and teaching & learning
- success of graduates in job market: an acid test of the interface between the universities, business and society
- increasing flexible and global markets: enhanced opportunities but also increased pressures and risks

Enhancement of students' employability

- defensive approach towards individual and collective risks not appropriate
- raising opportunities by raising “professional relevance of studies”
- to achieve this objective: vital role of career management competence (CMC)

Building bridges towards economy & society: CMC cont.

Intersections of student-centred learning and development of CMC

- by critical understanding of academic contents and methodologies: encouraging self-reliant and active learning
- opportunity to relate to the world of work is not in opposition to academic learning but align with it and enrich it

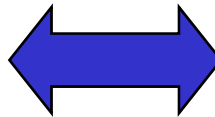
Elements of career management skills (Canadian Blueprint)

- '*personal management*': e.g. positive self-image; understand influence in one's life and work; respond to change and growth, strategies
- '*exploring learning*': e.g. link lifelong learning and career building; evaluate and effectively use life/work and socio-economic information
- '*work and life building*': e.g. explore & improve decision making; recognise and take charge of one's life/work building process

Building bridges towards economy & society: CMC cont.

Intersections: career development and academic learning

- understanding of career development during life span, evaluating work experience
- contextualising academic knowledge in professional and work environment
- enhancing ability to transfer knowledge into new contexts



Competence:

- to reframe chance events to opportunities
- to explore challenges of decision making
- to adapt creatively and to be more flexible
- to be responsive as well as resilient to options arising
- to explore learning in new contexts
- to enrich motivation to studies engaged in

Building bridges towards economy & society: CMC cont.

Positive interaction between the quality of HE and employability

- ‘skilful practices in context’ (Yorke, M. 2013) shaping efficacy beliefs, self-theories and personal qualities
- enhancement of metacognition, self regulation and to reflect on in and for action

Close cooperation with faculties

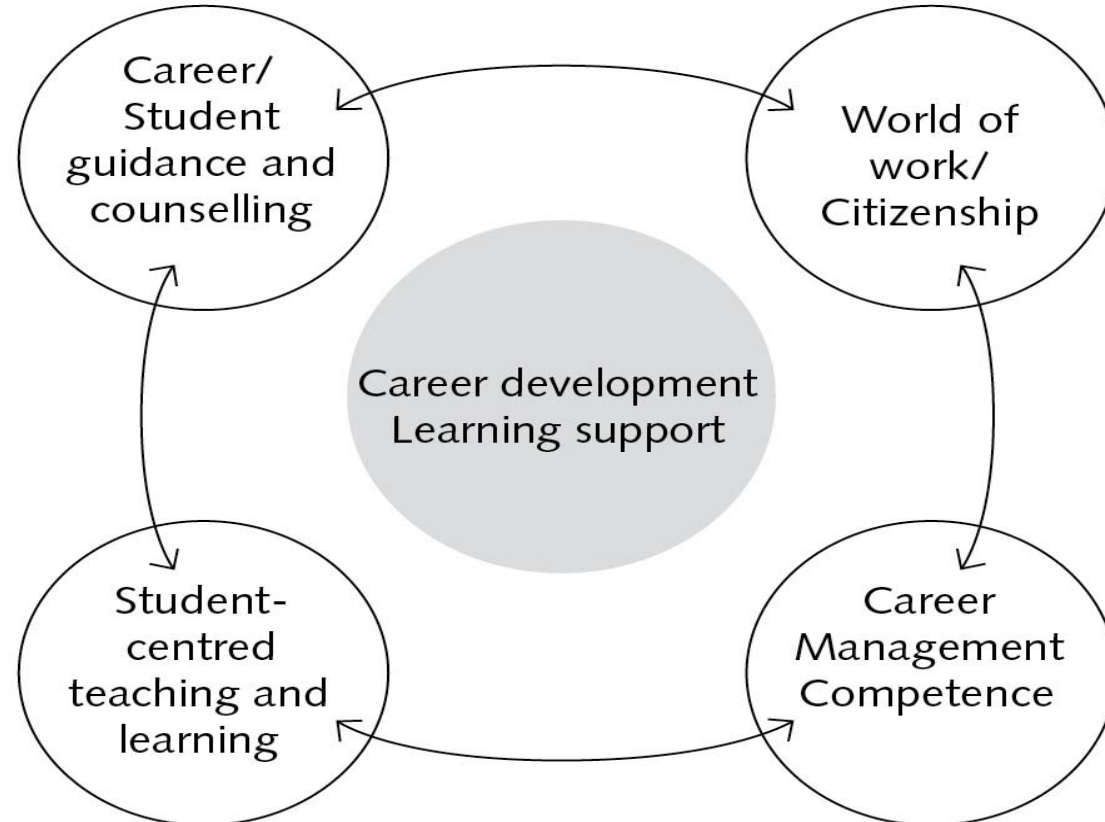
enhancement of positive effect:

- close cooperation with faculties in the development of career management programmes’ framework and content
- optimizing the specific potential of the discipline studied in a **cooperative approach**

Building bridges towards economy & society: CMC cont.

Shaping life-long learning and career development in HE

A Co-Operative Approach to Foster Career Management Competence and Learning



4. Implementing a cooperative approach on the institutional level

Partners of cooperation:

- Teaching staff
- Careers services and other students support services
- Employers and the wider society
- Students
- Senior management on faculty and university level

Objective of implementation

- students are able to mould academic knowledge into career management competence
- based on CMC students are able to transfer their knowledge into new academic and professional contexts

Implementing a cooperative approach on the institutional level *cont.*

Four clusters of cooperation:

1. Developing knowledge and expertise

- exchange about success and failures
- identification of good practice models
- collegial and expert trainings
- activating student participation in planning and content development
- exploring discipline –specific perspectives on the relationship to the world of work and to didactics
- substantiating and keeping up regional, national and international exchange in expertise

Implementing a cooperative approach on the institutional level *cont.*

2. Structuring the cooperation with enterprises and regional economy and society

- knowledge exchange, inviting external experts to contribute to courses
- joint events with enterprises and other employers
- cooperation in the fields of internships and other work experience
- joint support for students projects in enterprises and the wider society
- supporting start-ups by students and graduates
- intensifying cooperation with relevant stakeholders
- using and encouraging the potential of alumni to contribute to CMC
- considering results of graduate follow-up studies
- research elements in master's courses in cooperation with enterprises
- Balancing HE interests (e.g. uphold academic standard) and interests of external stakeholders

Implementing a cooperative approach on the institutional level *cont.*

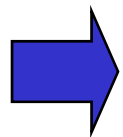
3. Institutionalising effective coordination and operational functioning

- step by step process
- careers services: proactive competence centre
- enhancement of trust is a long term process
- coordination and operational procedures include inter alia:
 - offering consulting, training and content
 - proposals for faculties and departments
 - structuring contacts with enterprises and other employers
 - drafting and implementation of policy recommendations
 - producing annual progress reports

Implementing a cooperative approach on the institutional level *cont.*

4. Integrating into institutional quality strategy and defining interaction with:

- teaching and learning and the specific CMC related learning outcomes
- fields of research
- structuring with the outside world: (regional) economy and society



With this strategic openness towards the world of work and society HE institutions and their career services are profiling the universities as organizations which are able to learn in a challenging economical and political environments.

Exploring opportunities: Linking with wider discourses and policy developments

International exchange and discourses for policy, theory and practice – especially relevant:

1. The discourses and policy developments in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)
2. Development of theory and practice on career development
3. The European Life Long Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN)

Exploring opportunities: Linking with wider discourses and policy developments *cont.*

The discourses and policy developments in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

- European Ministers of HE declarations - backed by implementation of the Bologna process and underlying debates and processes of policy shaping and content development
- Reflection *inter alia* in the EUA “Trends” reports, the “EUA Bologna Handbook” and the follow-up “Journal of the EHEA”
- Contributions by the EU Commission e.g. “Communication: EU Strategy for Modernising Higher Education” (2011)
- Reflecting these debates, policy and content development can substantiate the conceptual and organizational framework for career management competence

5. Exploring opportunities: Linking with wider discourses and policy developments *cont.*

Development of theory and practice on career development

- changes in the mode of production in knowledge societies are reflected in theories and concepts of career guidance and education
- concepts like planned serendipity, active construction of careers, nonlinearity, career resilience respond to flexible environments in the world of work and to the need to strengthen the persistency to overcome obstacles
- integration of these theoretical approaches into the concept of CMC emphasizing lifelong and contextual learning
- CMC as a lifelong career development process part of the paradigm shift in career guidance

5. Exploring opportunities: Linking with wider discourses and policy developments *cont.*

The European Life Long Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN)

- a member state-driven network established in 2007 supported by the EU LLL Programme and cooperating with the EU-commission
- EU council resolution (2008) inviting member states to develop lifelong guidance policies *inter alia* to foster lifelong acquisition of career management skills
- One of the results of work phase 2011-2012: “*Lifelong Guidance Policy Development: A European Resource Kit*”
- Work phase 2013-2014 *inter alia* impact and adaptation of Resource Kit for national development

5. Exploring opportunities: Linking with wider discourses and policy developments *cont.*

Concerning career management skills the ‘Resource Kit’ highlights as key policy challenge :

”to overcome fragmentation and to integrate existing bottom-up and top-down processes in a strategic perspective. ...Such a strategy needs to integrate the demands on student-centred teaching and learning, student support and the enhancement of employability in a meaningful way, and to make use of the potential of CMS for improving the quality of teaching and learning in the European Higher Education Area”
(*Ressource Kit* 2012, p. 22).

Thank you!

Akad. Dir. a. D. Dr. Gerhart Rott

Consultant

Senior Academic Advisor

Institute of Educational Research in the School of Education

University of Wuppertal

E-mail contact: rott@uni-wuppertal.de