

THE GREEN PEDAGOGY LEARNING ARRANGEMENT AT A TERTIARY INSTITUTION *

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1. WHAT IS GREEN PEDAGOGY?

GP has been developed at the University College for Agrarian and Environmental Pedagogy over the last six years. It is a joint enterprise, stimulated by the Vice-Rector Mag.^a Christine Wogowitsch and supported by staff, who are experts in educational sciences, environmental education and didactics. Apart from developing the principles of GP - by building on numerous authors who follow systemic, constructivist and humanistic paths - the key guidance is derived from the axioms of the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Moreover, many colleagues and students have published research articles and included this concept in their Bachelor theses respectively.

GP is central to the teaching of sustainable development in the learning fields of agricultural and environmental education. It creates learning arrangements for a constructive and solution-oriented processing of economic, ecological and social “hot spots”.

1.1. How to translate the aims of GP into school/university reality?

1.1.1 The Start

The starting point was inter-collegial cooperation, namely didactical seminars for teachers over the past six years. The focus among others was to work in small teams to design common modules and interdisciplinary study arrangements based on GP. Gradually many staff members started to think more towards the concept of GP. Team learning, an important part of inter-collegial cooperation, has led to intensive academic engagement on this track and has empowered colleagues to continue on this path. Above all, the principle of equality is seen as the highest value of cooperation, which allows team partners to set a course, make suggestions and favour innovation (Schratz; Westfall-Greiter, 2010, p. 122).

New forms of seminars - content adaptations

Designing new forms of lectures has brought about manifold content adaptations on the basis of the three pillars of ESD, namely ecology, economy and social affairs.

“GP manages to link scientific concepts, practical applications and motifs of

individual and collaborative action in agriculture and environmental sectors.

- Learning through participation
- Learning from contradiction
- Learning a differentiated distinction of facts
- Strengthening individuals and clarifying intentions
- Implementing ideas into innovative solutions“ (Pamphlet, 2014) are the leading principles for designing programmes for seminars and practice units.



Source: Pamphlet-Competence Centre for Green Pedagogy, 2014

Figure 1: Learning Environment

1.1.2. Locations have emotions - Learning through different environments

There are different learning environments for students at schools: The Micro, the Meso, the Macro and Mondo-Environment (Muller, 2008, p. 88-93). In each of them human beings learn, but the sustainability of their learning processes depends on the quality of their learning experiences and the diversity of their approaches to the subject matter.

A perspective which is central for the case-project below is the notion of “the room as the third pedagogue“, a statement coined by the Italian founder of the so-called “Reggio-Pedagogy“ in the 1980s. Loris Malaguzzi regarded children as researchers and poets and thought fellow students to be the first pedagogues, the teacher the second and the room the third. He found all three equally important for the learners.

This is an increasingly important point, when it comes to facing the socioeconomic changes in many societies of the Western world. Children of parents who both (have to) work tend to spend more time in school buildings and normally there is one pedagogue only, namely the teacher.

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