Diversity in the Transition to Higher Education - Open Call of Frontline Learning Research

To overcome the limitations of existing research in the field of Higher Education (HE), this special issue aims at entering a novel pathway to investigate diversity in the transition to HE by: a.) further investigating the role of diversity on different levels of HE, b.) connecting previously unconnected micro, meso and macro levels of diversity and, c.) developing methodological designs that can tackle this broaden perspective of diversity in the transition to HE. The common aim of the studies to be published in the special issue is to connect different levels of diversity by using different methodologies (quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods, and beyond). These studies will therefore contribute collectively and individually to a widened understanding of diversity and to further methodological developments in the field.

Important information:
Submission Deadline for 750 word abstracts: **January 31st, 2020**
Decision upon invitation to submit a paper: **February 15th, 2020**
Submission deadline for full papers: **April 15th, 2020**
Submit your proposal to: Mikael De Clercq (mikael.declercq[ET]uclouvain.be).
Find full call as PDF: [here](#)
Guest Editors: Mikaël De Clercq, Taiga Brahm, Ellen Jansen & Elke Bosse
FLR Website: [www.frontlinelearningresearch.org](http://www.frontlinelearningresearch.org)
**Call for Proposals: From Micro to Macro: Widening the Investigation of Diversity in the Transition to Higher Education**

Confronted with increasing student heterogeneity, recent research provided valuable insights into the importance of taking diversity into account in the transition to Higher Education (HE) (Jansen, Suhre, & André, 2017). Yet, there are three main limitations in the field: First, the notion of diversity in HE mostly encompassed students’ variability in background characteristics (Balloo, 2018; Winstone & Hulme, 2019). Second, research approaches are fragmented due to distinct perspectives on diversity (Bosse, 2015). This results in difficulties to integrate findings and to discuss practical implications (Noyens, Donche, Coertjens, & Van Petegem, 2017). Third, the literature is characterized by one-sided methodological approaches which restrain the integration of different perspectives on diversity. Overall, the role of diversity in students’ transition to HE is under-investigated (De Clercq et al., 2017).

Recent attempts to clarify the notion of diversity in HE (Balloo, 2018; Winstone & Hulme, 2019) asserted that diversity in HE goes beyond students’ variability in background characteristics and can be extended to the variability in the features of the learning environment, as well as higher education institutions (OECD, 2012). Endorsing a three-level framework of HE (Enders, 2004; Munge, Thomas, & Heck, 2018; Taylor & Ali, 2017), our notion of diversity encompasses differences at (1) the **micro**-level of the individual student background or experience, (2) the **meso**-level of the learning environment or institutional context and (3) the **macro**-level of the wider education system and global context.

To overcome the limitations of existing research in the field of HE, this special issue aims at entering a novel pathway to investigate diversity in the transition to HE by: a.) further investigating the role of diversity on **different levels of HE**, b.) connecting previously unconnected **micro, meso and macro levels** of diversity and, c.) developing methodological designs that can tackle this broaden perspective of diversity in the transition to HE. The common aim of the studies to be published in the special issue is to connect different levels of diversity by using different methodologies (quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods, and beyond). These studies will therefore **contribute collectively and individually to a widened understanding of diversity** and to further methodological developments in the field.

When investigating the relevance of student diversity for study success, an important gateway for research is students’ transition into HE. Although the notion of transition lacks a clear-cut definition in the literature (for a review see Kovač, 2015), with regard to HE, it may be understood as an instability and rupture period which leads to a qualitative evolution concerning students’ academic and social integration (Coertjens, Brahm, Trautwein, & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2017). Transitions into HE are broadly considered in this special issue: from secondary to higher education, from home country to abroad, from vocational/professional to university higher education.

The special issue calls for **high-quality studies** employing a methodology that goes beyond a single-factor analysis of the transition issue and using cutting-edge data analysis to investigate different levels of diversity in the transition to HE. To reach these goals, submitted papers will need to first provide an abstract of 750 words fulfilling the following four requirements to be considered as a potential contribution of the special issue.

1. Clearly investigate the topic of diversity in the transition to HE.
2. Demonstrate how they connect at least two levels of the three-level framework of HE.
3. Provide high-quality research using multidimensional methodology (e.g. considering several factors of the transition process together). The editorial board is favouring a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches, longitudinal designs and innovative measures.
4. Discuss methodological and theoretical implications for future (frontline) research as well as practical implications for academic development.

References


see full call here ...
less text ...