# *Abstracts*

## Strategies to promote staff development at University. From teaching evaluation to work field

Ettore Felisatti

The Italian university doesn't support faculty development. Teaching is not valued as much as research. In response to this concern this paper presents PRODID, a project of Padua University that outlines strategic actions for faculty development.

*Keywords*: Higher education; faculty development; didactics; training for innovation; systemic actions; Teaching and Learning Centre.

## Evaluative research in education: a survey among professors of University of Padua

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This work aims at illustrating to illustrate the design and the first results of a survey which involved 1849 university professors who were teaching courses at Bachelor's and Master's Degrees of University of Padova during the academic year 2012/13. The research is part of a project of improvement of the academic educational innovation and the quality of academic teaching. The kind of approach is an evaluative research which was conducted within the academic organization and carried out among peers, using a quali-quantitative

mixed method. The data was directly obtained using a CAWI questionnaire which was distributed to the whole teaching staff, and it was linked to administrative data related to the educational offer and students' evaluation of teaching in the same academic year. After a preliminary analysis of the factors which affected the probability of answering to the questionnaire, the results were summarized using some indicators which showed the diffusion of good practices of teaching, support needs, beliefs, interest and availability of the respondents to discuss more extensively the questions of the survey. The results are presented considering as reference context of teaching action and learning activities the eight Schools into which the degree courses are organized. Lastly, we identified sub-groups of potential participants for the qualitative phase of the research: they were characterized by different levels of professional practice and interest in innovating university teaching and they will be the right subjects to involve in different and integrated activities directed to develop teachers' professional competences.

*Keywords:* Teaching assessment; academic teaching; teaching innovation; educational practices; student assessment; teaching methods.


## Innovating Accademic Didactic Through ICT: the Experience of the PRODID Project

Marina De Rossi, Mario Giampaolo, Claudio Riva, Cinzia Ferranti, Angelo Calò, Luigi Castelli, Cecilia Dal Bon

This article deals with the theme of innovation in academic didactic through the use of technologies and is one of the outputs of a larger project, "Preparazione alla professionalità docente e innovazione didattica" (PRODID), which aims to establish and develop strategies to support teaching profession at the University of Padua. The authors introduce the theoretical framework and the projects carried out in the University of Padua to take advantage of the potential of technology, then present the results obteined during the first year of the project. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire which involved professors of the University and semi-structured interviews conducted with 16 privileged witnesses forming part of the teaching staff. The questionnaire collects the level of diffusion of didactic solutions that rely on online resources and the quality of teaching experiences conducted by the teachers. The interviews relate to multiple aspects of teaching by highlighting best and innovative practices, resistances due to established practices, and teaching models adopted.

## Developing teaching and learning methods to innovate the Italian context of Higher Education. The case of University of Padova

Monica Fedeli, Anna Serbati, Edward W. Taylor

This article looks at theories and practices related to faculty development and innovation in teaching and learning methods in Higher Education, in order to respond to the European 2020 Strategy, in which the *High level group on the modernisation of higher education* has been established, whose aim focuses *on improving the quality of teaching and learning in Europe's higher education institutions* (2013). The paper is framed within the context of the project PRODID (Preparazione alla professionalità docente e innovazione didattica), funded by the University of Padova, Italy with the major goal of creating a permanent and effective academic center for research on learning and teaching and faculty development. The theoretical framework of PRODID is informed by constructivism and social constructivism, and the student centered approach, encouraging student-teacher partnerships as a dimension for faculty development and teaching and learning innovations. The University of Helsinki and Michigan State University are mentioned as relevant examples of organizational settings integrated in higher education institutions that offer a great variety of practices consistent with the chosen theoretical framework. They also offer the Italian program of University of Padova models for critical reflection in how their teaching strategies can be created and developed on the basis of this international experience. The final discussion aims to highlight the strategies adopted during the first year of the project, characterized by the Italian culture and revealing new insights and ideas to create an Italian model of teaching and learning center.

*Keywords*: Faculty development; teaching and learning methods; teaching and learning centre.

# Creating and sustaining teaching and learning centers: US models of resources and support, lessons learned, and building a culture of teaching and learning excellence

Joellen E. Coryell

This article represents an expanded discussion of a presentation on teaching and learning centers (TLCs) to an Italian national conference on the components of a research project entitled, Preparazione alla professionalità docente e innovazione didattica (PRODID). The article aims to highlight an overview of findings from the research and practice literature regarding TLCs across their history in the United States, including the common structures and roles of these centers. Finally, the author provides theoretical underpinnings from organizational learning and development that are recommended for practice in creating and sustaining effective TLCs including the importance of co-creating value for teaching and learning excellence, building an inclusive learning culture within institutions of higher education, and managing and sustaining organizational change. Suggestions for further research are also provided.

*Keywords:* Teaching and learning centers; faculty development; learning culture in higher education

# Excellences and critical aspects: teachers'point of view about teaching in higher education

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The aim of the present paper is to illustrate the first results deriving from the qualitative analysis of open questions included in PRODID (*Teacher professional development and academic educational innovation*) Questionnaire. The questions have been formulated in order to collect the point of view of teachers about *excellences* and *innovations*, perceived *critical aspects* in their teaching practice and the *need of support* for the improvement of teaching. The analysis has been realized through the use of software Atlas.ti. In particular, the analysis has been developed in order to underline strengths and weaknesses as well as the necessary support for the improvement of teaching and teacher professionalism. Findings are presented illustrating the distributions based on the School (context in which the single course is realized) as well as

the thematic issues emerged from teachers' answers. Thematic issues are then discussed on the basis of the related scientific literature.