

Friday 15 November 2019, 10h30-12h30

Parallel Workshops

Democratic and Participatory methods to foster the competence-based approach to teaching and learning

Workshop 2: Improving critical thinking in order to address controversial issues through participatory methods

Background

Creating and offering an open-minded environment to enable all students to participate actively and be involved. This is a means to prevent conflict over controversial issues.

In fact, following the Multiple Intelligence Theory (H.Gardner 1998) it is possible to design contexts and interactions useful for all students to be inclusive. Considering the different students' strengths, teachers can build a teaching-learning process based on RESOURCES (eg. communicative, relationship, critical thinking, knowledge and critical understanding of the self).

Encouraging students to discuss sensitive and controversial issues in a safe and respectful atmosphere is a crucial aspect for every democratic school and society.

It means creating experiences for the promotion of critical thinking, freedom of expression and consideration of different points of view. As a result, we can develop risk prevention of the use of hate speech by students.

To achieve this, a school action plan for managing disputes - through staff training - should be adopted as a priority. This workshop is aimed also at presenting communicative techniques designed to promote students' skills.

The strategic dialogue technique (Nardone, 2009) develops some specific communication tools. This dialogue promotes the competences of teachers and students through exchanging and comparing ideas about controversial issues. This method will assist in overcoming contrasts and will find solutions for difficult issues between teachers and students.

The workshop will present the strategic dialogue model and use a “learning by doing” method. Participants will be able to experiment the technique actively.

Main objectives

The main objective of this workshop is to offer participants different approaches for facing controversial issues.

Learning how to observe and recognize the different intelligent attributes in students.

Learning how to design bridging paths, starting from strengths to weaknesses in the curriculum

Learning about techniques suitable for the development of a cluster of CDC for addressing controversial issues.

This active and communicative technique can be reproduced by teachers in the classroom.

Sub-objectives:

- To discuss how to use an approach in order to develop an aptitude for democratic schools.
- To reflect on managing diversity at school.
- To explore how participative and strategic techniques can help promote communication skills.
- To give direct experience of an active and reflective learning technique that can activate understanding of a cluster of competences of the RFCDC within a safe environment

Expected Outcomes

- Knowledge about an inclusive theory such as Multiple Intelligence Theory
- Information on how to apply Multiple Intelligence Theory at school to prevent controversial issues (and “weak” students from dropping out)
- Familiarity of techniques for developing skills for the discussion of controversial issues.
- Familiarity with an approach that allows the development of a safe environment for debate to be supported.