

FED Lunch Research Series 2015

“An Initial Assessment of Chinese Teachers' Readiness to Teach 21st Century Skills” & “African American Female Students in Online Collaborative Learning Activities: The Role of Identity, Emotion, and Peer Support”

Date & Time: 15 April 2015, 13:00 – 14:00 (Light lunch begins at 12:30pm)

Venue: Room G021, Faculty of Education (E33)

Language: English

Audience: FED Academic Staff / Ph.D. Students / Master Students

Enquiries & Registration: Mr. Brendan Lei (FED_Event@umac.mo); Tel: 8822-4120

** Complementary light lunch will be provided.*

Abstract

Topic 1: An Initial Assessment of Chinese Teachers' Readiness to Teach 21st Century Skills

There have been great changes regarding the way people work and live in the 21st century. Basic tasks can be accomplished by machines or less expensive labor markets, which only cost small expense. Students need to be capable of higher order skills in order to work and live in the 21st century. Regarding this, Eastern and Western educators have proposed a set of 21st century skills, i.e. creativity, critical thinking skills, flexibility, collaboration and etc., in which future students should be capable of. It would be crucial for students to manage these skills when they graduate from high school. In this vein, teachers take an essential role in the learning process of students. Previous researches have shown that teachers' self-beliefs significantly influence students' academic achievements and outcomes. However, limited number of researches has been done to study teachers' self-beliefs and readiness for 21st century skills teaching. The current research aimed to gain insight on better understanding of the teaching process of 21st century skills in China. 410 primary school teachers from Hebei and Guangdong were invited to provide quantitative and qualitative data with regard to their self-beliefs and understanding of 21st century skills, lending support from a framework proposed by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills. The finding showed that, under the circumstance of teaching 21st century skills: First, the participants were intrinsically motivated to teach; second, they aimed at approach oriented goals in teaching; and third, they believed themselves as moderately to highly capable of teaching these skills. The research implies that teachers are of good preparation for teaching 21st century skills. Therefore, high quality of teaching can be expected.

Topic 2: African American Female Students in Online Collaborative Learning Activities: The Role of Identity, Emotion, and Peer Support.

The aim of the study was to explore how African American female students perceived their experience of online collaborative learning. A qualitative study was conducted in a university in Southeastern United States. We conducted semi-structured interviews with nine African American female students in an online multimedia instructional design course. Data triangulation was achieved by including the analysis of the students' emails, their posts on online chat room and bulletin boards. Results revealed that the perspectives of African American women towards online collaborative learning could be categorized into three themes: (a) peer support perceived as a give-and-take process with a sense of fairness, (b) group member role as a formation of identity, and c) “frustration” as a common response to differing levels of peer participation and interaction. These emerging factors reflected African American women's perceptions towards online collaborative learning and provided profound implications for future research and practice.

Speakers

Topic 1: Ms Hoi Ka Weng (FED PhD student)

Topic 2: Ms Lei Sao San (FED PhD student)