

Book Review

Teaching In Extended Programmes In South Africa by Lynn Coleman

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Extended curriculum programmes (ECPs) are designed to equip undergraduate students who do not meet the minimum requirements with the necessary competencies to be successful in their studies. Academic support and skills development are integrated with regular academic work. The key role of extended provision is therefore to support educationally disadvantaged students who are underprepared, despite meeting minimum admission criteria, by enabling them to be placed in an extended curriculum programme that will provide them with the academic foundation to successfully complete their studies.

The introduction of Extended Curriculum Programmes has opened doors for those many learners who do not meet the minimum requirements for study at University. Nevertheless, Lynn Coleman's edited book is well timed, as there is a specific need to examine the benefits as well as the challenges facing the provision, teaching and assessment of ECP subjects. The book presents views from students and lecturers, and discusses the teaching methods and tools necessary to promote teaching and learning in extended programmes. Chapter authors provide a variety of different tools and pedagogies that can be employed in a range of ECP subjects including languages, arts and science, and accordingly recommend numerous methods and techniques to make the environment conducive for effective learning to take place. Throughout, the authors take into consideration the challenges caused by differences in culture, home language and socio-economic background of students and lecturers.

The classroom context in extended programmes is portrayed as one in which students interact with lecturers through seeing, listening, doing, writing and speaking. The emphasis is on active learning where students are not just recipients but also participant in the learning process. This serves to encourage students' learning and overcome the feelings of inadequacy that students might feel by being in an ECP programme. It is essential that lecturers be equipped to perform the tasks expected of them. To this end, the authors address the necessity of transforming the nature of education. In this book, the lecturer is portrayed as a communicator, facilitator and a guide during the lecture. The lecturer's socio-economic background, race and gender serve as a road map for promoting learning.

Students are not seen as empty receptacles for absorbing knowledge, but rather as individuals with prior knowledge that has value in the process of learning.

The academic background from which extended students come, necessitates the use of different pedagogies to ensure students develop the knowledge, attitudes and skills they need. This is evident in this book's focus on teaching practice and the development of communities of practice that enable teaching and learning to take place. The different research studies reported on in the book portray the need to shift attention beyond lecturers as providers of information and student as recipients of this information. The intention of the extended curriculum is to prepare students for the degree or diploma they want to pursue. It is for this reason that the focus should be on empowering students.

What better way to empower students than by involving them in every aspect of their learning? As depicted in the research article, 'Shifting the power boundaries in a physics class' by Dale Taylor, an action-based study is done to ensure that both student and lecturer are involved in order to avoid one-sided conclusions. Such research means that the scholarship of teaching and learning includes students, lecturers and administrative staff. Taylor's chapter aims to examine the power differentials that exist between students and the lecturer, where students may normally feel disempowered within the teaching and learning environment. Students tend to withhold what they know and understand because of the invisible power relations that exist between them and their lecturers. This research shows that dismantling these power relations enables more effective learning because both parties are invested in the teaching and learning.

Efforts are being made by universities to equip extended curriculum lecturers with the necessary training and tools. Such academic development is critical to ensure that students graduate from their desired educational programmes. I would recommend this book to academics in extended curriculum programmes to guide their teaching. The book negates the incorrect assumption that extended curriculum students are academically weak. The book ably acts as a point of reference for teaching diverse students in a range of subjects, while also considering various administrative issues relating to extended curriculum provision.

The book is Open Access, and available to download in full and for free from the website: <http://teachinginecp.com/>.

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References

Coleman, L. (ed). 2018. *Teaching in Extended Programmes in South Africa: Classroom Contexts, Lecturer Identities, and Teaching Practices*. Cape Town, South Africa: Fundani, Centre for Higher Education Development, Cape Peninsula University of Technology.



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