



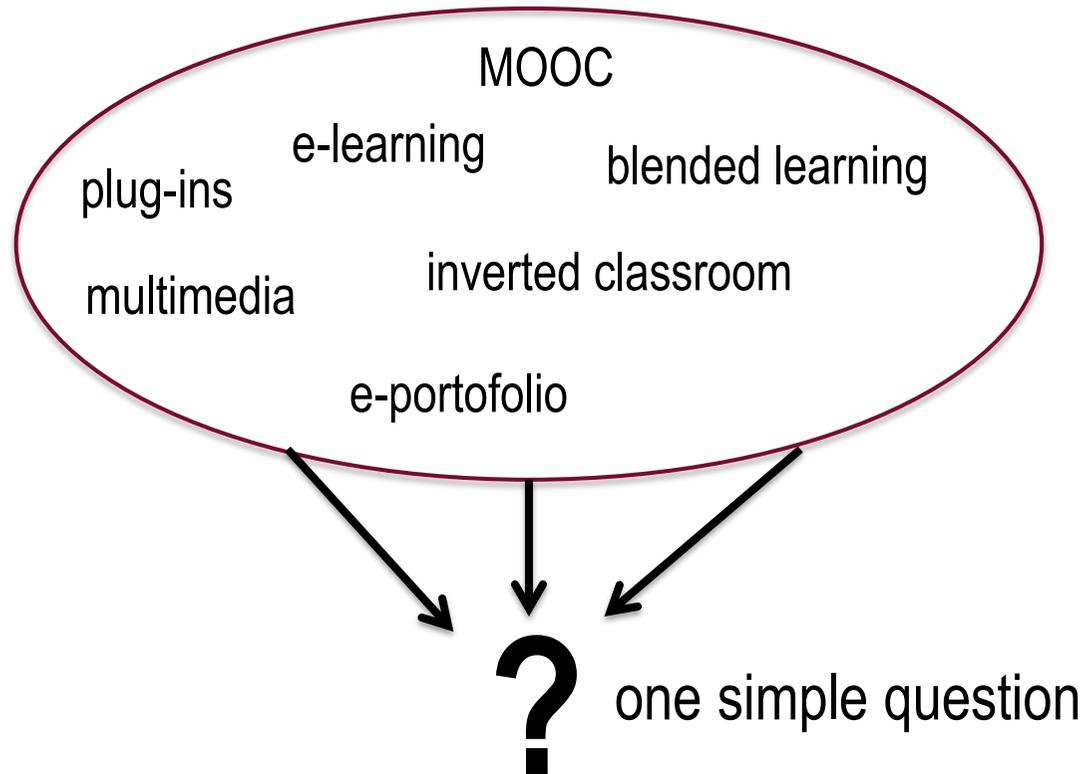
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DIGITALIZATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION: LESSONS LEARNED AND CRITICAL REFLECTION

University of Konstanz, 23th of February 2018

Sascha Spoun, President of Leuphana University of Lüneburg



Can there be successful digitalization in higher education without a clear teaching mission statement and a teaching strategy?



At Leuphana, we tried so many things in the past...

- Leuphana Digital School
- Mentored Open Online Courses
- Global Classroom
- Blended Learning
- etc.



In the end, it was all about learning how to support our purpose of contemporary liberal education



We all like to talk about the great opportunities of digitalization in higher education...

Hello future!

However, what is the purpose of all our efforts and investments?

GO BACK TO THE OLD NOTORIOUS QUESTION:
WHAT IS THE AIM OF HIGHER EDUCATION?



Ideally, digitalization helps achieving the aims of higher education. But what are the aims?

- basic knowledge?
- expertise?
- critical thinking?
- problem solving competence?
- vocational training?
- individualization in contrast to socialization at school?
- all together?
- something new?



And what could be future aims of higher education in a world full of digitalized processes?

"Even when the shots are called by algorithmic formula, **success** depends on the ability to execute the play on the ground, with actual people interacting with other persons, inside and outside the organization over time [...] the decisive factor is arguably management's ability to cultivate effective teams and networks of expertise whose members come to share an understanding of collective purpose and develop ways of learning from their experience."

A. Colby et al. *Rethinking Undergraduate Business Education – Liberal Learning for the Profession* (Stanford 2011), 30.



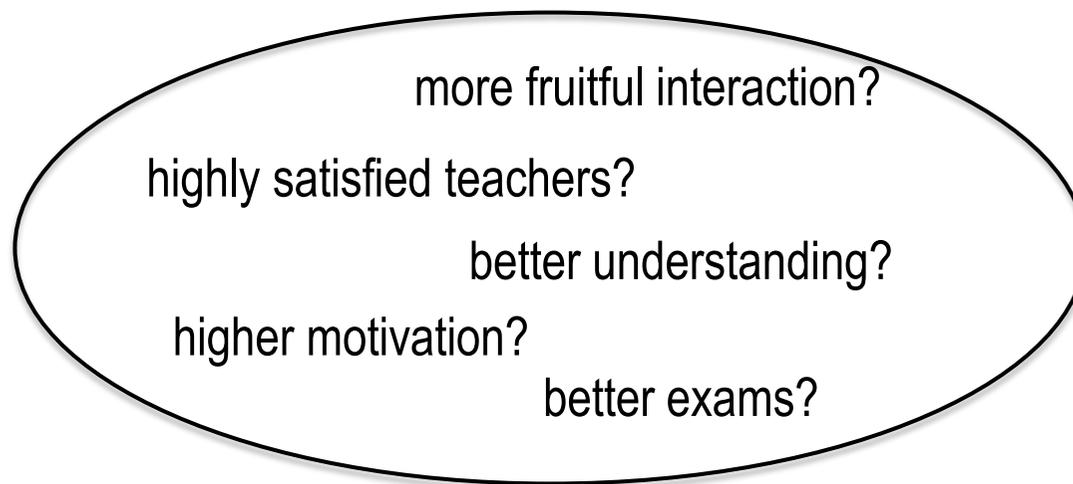
One can also go one step down and ask: which didactic desiderata digitalized teaching can help to remove?

- lack of interaction in the classroom?
- overcrowded classrooms?
- high obstacles of understanding?
- content too much theoretical / abstract?
- lack of mentoring when students study on their own (reading, preparation of exams)?
- etc.



Once the aims are clear, one can ask what digitalization can contribute to

However, don't forget to think about result testing!





Case study 1: when global aspects are relevant for higher education

The **challenge** of the Leuphana Master program Global Sustainability Sciences: think sustainability globally!

The **solution** has been the Global Classroom: by aid of multimedia, teachers and students from both the Arizona State University and the Leuphana University have joint lectures, seminars, and discussions.

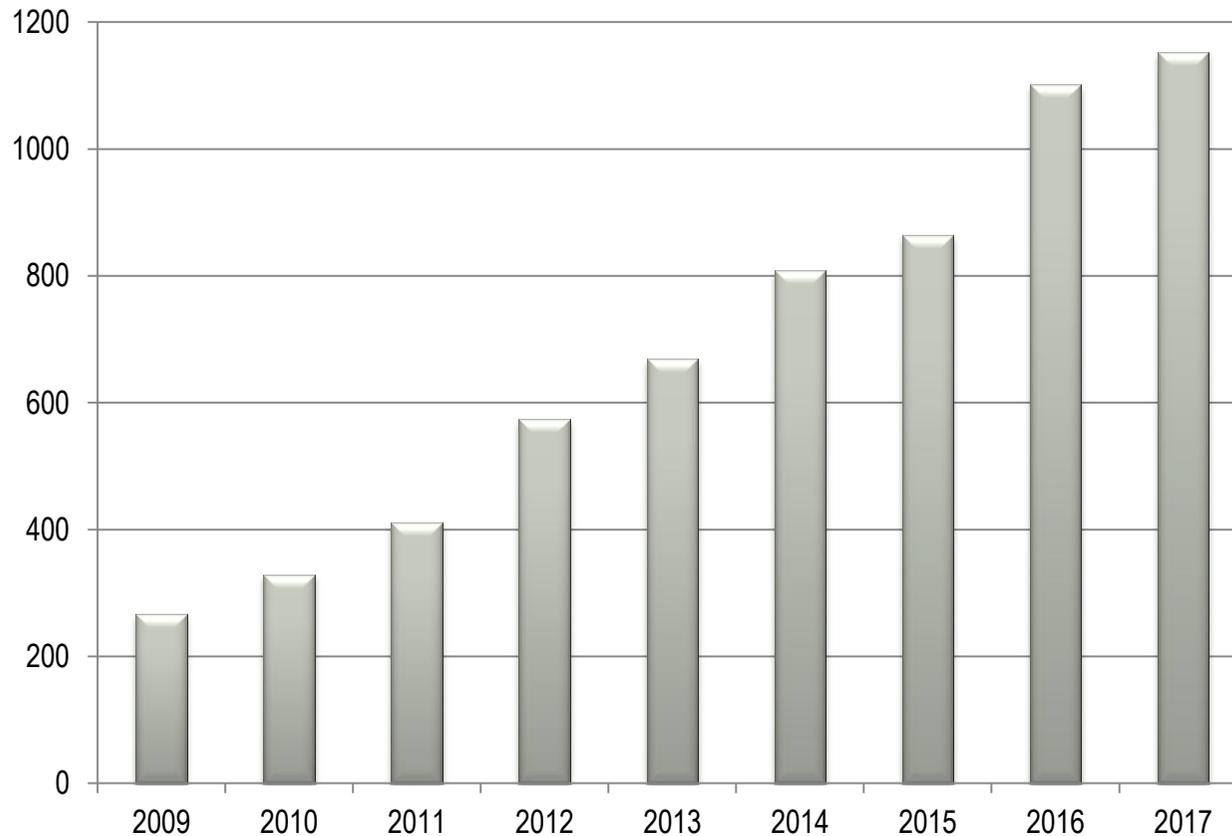
The **success** is critically reflected in two publications

Caniglia et al. (2017) Transnational collaboration for sustainability in higher education: Lessons from a systematic review, in *Journal of Cleaner Production* 168 (2017) 764–779

Caniglia et al. (2017) The glocal curriculum: A model for transnational collaboration in higher education for sustainable development, in *Journal of Cleaner Production* 171 (2018) 368–376



Case study 2: when profit is also at issue

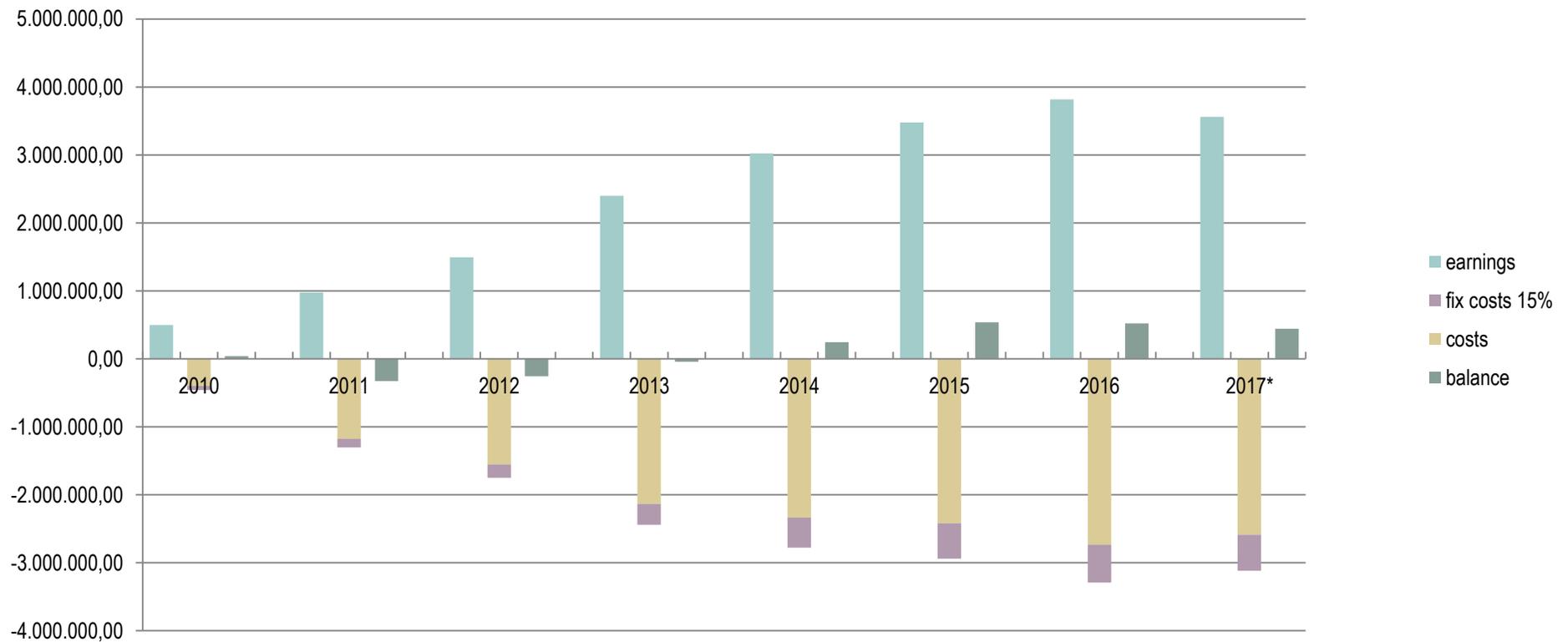


Students at the Professional Schools p.a.

The Leuphana Professional School:
blended-learning allows ambitious Bachelor and Master programs for full time professionals



One criterion for success: financial development of the Professional School



* preliminary data of the 13 th of November 2017



Risks of digitalization in higher education should be considered and minimized

- information overload
- technical gimmicks cover lack of content
- rising complexity
- less reading by students
- lost of focus and concentration
- less initiative
- „Dienstleistungsmentalität“ – feed me!
- lost of physical attendance on a campus



In a nutshell:

future tells us which opportunities we have

tradition tells us which purposes we have

my recommendation:

for successful digitalization in higher education, bring
both together, tradition and future!

combine what is (technically) possible with what is
(educationally) necessary!



For future aims, never forget to learn from the past

