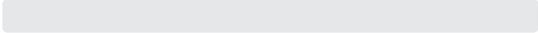




# Teaching Manifesto

HUMBOLDT-UNIVERSITÄT ZU BERLIN

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This manifesto for teaching was developed in a wide-ranging participatory process involving students, lecturers, administrative staff, and the university's leadership. It reflects the identity of Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (HU) and provides a framework for excellence in teaching. Its aim is to encourage imaginative responses to current and future demands of teaching and learning, and to actively support innovation. An environment that supports excellent teaching and learning requires family-friendly and lecturer-student focussed structures. It also rests on respectful communication,

should take into account everyone's specific requirements and abilities and promote mental and physical health. At Humboldt-Universität, excellence in teaching, therefore, is the joint concern of all members of the university. This includes all students and teaching staff as well as employees from technical support, other services, administrative staff and the university's leadership. Humboldt-Universität therefore invites all its members to actively participate in an ongoing dialogue about creating and maintaining social spaces conducive to study.

**Excellent teaching is based on:**

- Shared values
- Freedom
- Trust
- Social responsibility

**Excellent teaching aims for:**

- An education that encourages and promotes personality development
- An efficient transfer of knowledge, skills and attitudes
- Developing competencies

**Excellent teaching makes use of:**

- A variety of methods
- Suitable assessment culture and formats
- A thriving feedback culture

**Excellent teaching requires:**

- Stable and healthy conditions
- Resources
- Reliability

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

**CROSS-CUTTING TASKS**

Inclusion, diversity, equality and participation

Digitisation and media literacy

Multi-perspectivity and internationalisation

Sustainability and innovation

Research | Reflection | Holistic Vision

**TEACHING PHILOSOPHY OF HUMBOLDT-UNIVERSITÄT ZU BERLIN**

# TEACHING PHILOSOPHY OF HUMBOLDT-UNIVERSITÄT ZU BERLIN

orients teaching towards research, reflection and a holistic vision

## Teaching and Research

The HU Berlin regards teaching as equal to research in its standing and synergetic with it in content. Consequently, teaching is of decisive importance for shaping the scientific-academic environment. Higher education teaching is characterised by the fact that it is a scientific endeavour. Students are encouraged and supported to undertake their own research and to learn by participating in research. In accordance with the educational ideal of Wilhelm von Humboldt, teaching and research cannot be separated; are not subject to immediate applicability; and all parties involved need to be aware of their responsibilities towards society.

## Teaching and Reflection

HU Berlin is guided by Humboldt's educational ideal of an equal and holistic education for its students and life-long learners. This ideal results from the interplay between the self and the world and is designed to foster the development of rounded personalities. Higher education teaching should,

therefore, be designed to enable lecturers and students to interact in a self-determined and collaborative way. They should be enabled to reflect their respective roles as well the university's inherent institutional power structures. In addition to developing discipline-specific skills, higher education teaching facilitates analytical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and research-, as well as evidence-based reflection skills. To facilitate excellence in teaching and learning, teaching staff are provided with the resources and freedom to develop their teaching practice didactically and methodologically.

## Teaching as a Holistic Approach

Teaching at HU follows a holistic approach in preparing students for their future careers and encourages them to develop multi-perspectival thinking and learning as a lifelong process that encompasses affective, aesthetic, and social experiences. To facilitate this approach, students and lecturers should be given sufficient freedom, flexibility, and creative possibilities to collectively shape their teaching-and-learning processes and environments.

## CROSS-CUTTING TASKS

relate to all areas of teaching and learning and are taken into consideration by all parties involved in the implementation of the teaching manifesto and its guiding principles.

### **Inclusion, diversity, equality and participation**

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin is committed to educational justice, equal opportunities, and freedom from discrimination. Teaching promotes sensitivity towards the diversity of participants in the teaching and learning process. Based on an intersectional understanding of heterogeneity, it emphasises the importance of inclusion, equality, and diversity by constantly breaking down barriers to encourage active participation for all in teaching and learning. Diversity, here, does not only refer to considering individual – visible and invisible – characteristics of lecturers and students, but also to taking the contents and forms of teaching and learning into account. HU (also) acknowledges the differences between different academic subjects and the existence of a variety of perspectives, experiences and cultures within them.

### **Multiperspectivity and Internationalisation**

HU Berlin views itself as a transnational space of education. It is a multi-perspectival, multi-lingual, and internationalised institution, which offers lecturers and students the possibility to engage with different perspectives and to adopt these perspectives themselves. This allows for the acquisition and fostering of new insights, critical thinking, cultural competencies, ambiguity tolerance and for a broader understanding of complex issues. This goal is widely supported through internationalisation, which promotes mobility as well as a global exchange of knowledge, talent, and ideas. Cooperation in teaching – within each department, the university, the city of Berlin and internationally – offers a framework for mutual enrichment and productive synergies.

## **Sustainability and Innovation**

HU is aware of the role higher education teaching plays in promoting sustainability and a future-oriented outlook. By encouraging innovative approaches and by integrating aspects of sustainability into teaching and – where suitable – including sustainability as a topic, HU raises awareness of these aspects and simultaneously contributes to resolving global challenges. In the spirit of lifelong learning – on an individual and institutional level – openness, dialogue, and shared expertise are our guiding principles toward new discoveries and decisions.

## **Digitisation and Media Training**

Higher education teaching at HU Berlin is embedded in a society that is increasingly driven by digital technologies and artificial intelligence. We understand digitisation as (a process) that expands all academic subjects and provides new methodological possibilities for more flexibility, participation, diversity, and accessibility. Digital skills and a reflective and critical approach toward modern media and technologies complement the use of analogue media and the associated working approaches in teaching and learning.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR EXCELLENT TEACHING

describe the various aspects and fields of action for learning and teaching which are based on the understanding of education and inclusion of cross-cutting tasks.

1

**Excellent teaching rests upon shared values and skills, freedom, and trust as well as social responsibility.**

### Values and Skills

Excellent teaching rests upon shared values and ethical principles, for example, commitment to a democratic society and a humanistic view of mankind, which are needed for collaborative and productive co-existence. Against the background of current social challenges, teaching requires all those involved to act independently while taking on mutual responsibility; it should be driven by a scientific ethos, a thirst for new insights, curiosity, and reliability.

### Freedom and Trust

Within this value-based framework, HU Berlin strives to create free spaces to (re-)think its teaching. Teaching that grants freedom is characterised by an appreciative, respectful, and trusting cooperation.

### Social Responsibility

Teaching at HU Berlin recognises its responsibility for shaping social change. The openness and dissemination of knowledge beyond the boundaries of the university, as well as the inclusion of different social groups and perspectives play a key role in this.

2

**Excellent teaching aims to provide a holistic, personality-developing education. It seeks to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable graduates to act with competence and confidence in professional and social settings.**

### **Personal Development**

Teaching at HU Berlin encourages and enables all participants to reflect on their own role in the university environment and society. This creates opportunities to (further) develop their own personality.

### **Academic Ethos**

Students are enabled to participate in professional discourse and to think and act in an academic and evidence-based manner. Students are encouraged to perceive themselves as researchers and to recognise their opportunities to participate in the creation of new knowledge. This will prepare them for careers in academia and beyond.

### **Vocational Preparation**

By promoting a well-founded understanding of academic subjects and a set of specialised, subject-related skills, higher education teaching prepares graduates to take up complex tasks both within and beyond the professional sphere. Learning at HU is therefore also situated in application-oriented contexts to ensure the connection between the academically developed and taught contents and methods and specific professional contexts.

### **Orientation Toward Competence**

Taken together, the aforementioned target categories result in a holistic profile of competencies. Higher education teaching at HU prepares its graduates to responsibly employ their academic competencies – to acquire, verify, further develop, and communicate new knowledge with the help of sound theoretical and methodological proficiency, and a research-oriented attitude – in non-academic contexts, to act flexibly and to reflect on the ethical aspects of their actions.

### 3

**Excellent teaching uses a wide range of methods and suitable forms of assessment and requires a developed feedback culture.**

#### **Diversity of Methods**

Teaching at HU Berlin utilises up to date and appropriate methods as well as course formats that reflect the different disciplines and working approaches of individual faculties and institutes. Formats and methods are used across disciplines and their suitability is compared with the values upheld by the university. To this end, lecturers use activating, cooperative, and participatory methods and event formats that are conducive to learning.

#### **Feedback Culture**

Excellent teaching requires regular and accurate feedback from all those involved. HU Berlin aims for a participatory and lively feedback culture in order to strengthen the autonomy and personal responsibility of students and to promote the exchange between all actors involved in teaching.

#### **Assessment Culture**

In principle, a transparent balance between competence objectives, teaching and learning activities, and examination performance must be achieved. Accordingly, examination forms and formats must also be continuously evaluated and further developed as part of a more comprehensive assessment culture.

# 4

**Excellent teaching requires stable and health-promoting conditions, resources for further development and mutual commitments.**

## **Conditions**

Excellent teaching is based on stable conditions in terms of financial, personnel, time, and spatial resources as well as extensive university infrastructures. The administrative and technical departments at HU support teaching and its further advancement in collaboration with all groups by providing the organisational and practical foundations. The relevant committees and the university's leadership provide the institutional and legal framework to encourage this.

## **Healthcare Management**

The mental, physical, and social well-being of all stakeholders is a prerequisite for maintaining the quality of teaching in the long term, as is a health-promoting teaching and learning environment. By continuously raising health awareness, conserving resources, and enhancing health literacy and flexibility, HU Berlin ensures that teaching and learning are compatible with other personal, professional, and social responsibilities. This concerns both the consideration of existing as well as the prevention of future health restrictions.

## **Curricular Development and Quality Enhancement**

The continuous development of teaching and learning is supported by an interdisciplinary and collaborative exchange and by ongoing evaluation processes. The professionalisation of teaching staff and the flexibilization of study programmes are continuously promoted and increased, as is the space for interdisciplinary and multi-perspectival collaboration, exchange, mutual support, and networking within and outside the university.

## **Commitments and Obligations**

The guiding principles for teaching deliberately do not set any quantifiable standards, to stay abreast of the diversity and individuality of those involved in teaching. Nevertheless, based on our shared understanding of excellent teaching, we all commit ourselves to these obligations to implement the points stated in the teaching manifesto.

## Impressum

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