Some Perspectives

Anselm Böhmer

Having read Mrs. Tripura Sundari's and Mr. Wang's contributions, one sees that many aspects can be collated as »lessons learned«: digital learning and teaching are indeed a »new normal« of academic collaboration – at every university and even more so in international courses. There are always obstacles to be overcome, but in the end, the success of the collaboration is a question of individual skills, motivations, and well-designed opportunities and tasks. It is therefore a requirement for scholars in higher education (1) to bring with them competence in creating inclusive, supportive, and safe digital learning environments, (2) to have the knowledge and capacity to support learning processes individually and as a collaborative activity, and also (3) to be able to transfer knowledge, expertise, and digital outcomes into a set of competencies and skills that combine academic reflection and critical thinking with purposeful activities grounded in professional practice.

Both students have reflected on their experiences not only in a personal sense, but also within their academic theoretical framework. This demonstrates the importance of theoretical considerations when interacting in practical settings and project-based work-flows. Professional alliances and professionalization in general are based on theoretical reflections that help to describe, comprehend, and engage with the environment of learning, collaboration, and practice. For students, this is clearly helpful in their professionalization as (future) educators and it leads to the realization that digitization is a »quintessential aspect of any higher education sector« (Tripura Sundari) that is as supportive as it is indispensable for the training of future educators. Additionally, the collaboration of scholars and students in learning and »building an online learning space« (Wang) together marks what will be helpful for future projects. It is the academic community of scholars and students that creates professional cooperations projects, and thus develops future communities of practice.

Here, both students have shared their experiences, but have also expressed their academic approaches to becoming professionals. This shows how much DIVA has achieved, how digital learning has brought together many of the best of the participants and contributed to opening up the future for better digital collaboration – at universities and beyond.