



European Society of Psychology Learning and Teaching

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

DEAR MEMBERS...

As many of us see the beginnings of Spring in the world around us, there is much to be hopeful about in 2021. This will be a year of change for many of us, as we reflect on our continuing practices of teaching and learning online, and how the future of psychology education might develop.

For ESPLAT, we have much to look forward to. The highlight of our Society will of course be our **conference on 2-3 September**, hosted by Prof. Birgit Spinath and her colleagues at Heidelberg University, and held entirely online. While it will be sad not to be able to meet in person and have those informal chats that can spark new ideas and friendships, there are many positives of holding the conference online. Not least of which is that it opens up attendance for those who might previously have been unable to due to restrictions on time, travel, and other responsibilities. We might lose some of the social aspects, but we gain a wider diversity of participants and their ideas and inputs. We also help reduce our environmental impact

considerably, and that can only be a good thing.

There are, of course, many other conferences taking place online this year. ESPLAT will be making a presence at the **EFPTA conference** on 16th April, and Susanne and I are looking forward to discussing teaching and learning at pre-tertiary level. If there are any other conferences that you think other ESPLAT members might be interested in, do add information about these to the discussion boards in the members' area of the website, so that we can share ideas and meet in different settings.

You may, of course, be eager to greet the return of conferences in person, and keen to see ESPLAT2023 coming to your university? We are now open to receive applications for hosting our next conference in 2023 (see the conference page on our website for the application form) and very much looking forward to when we can meet in a new location.

This year is also a time of change for the executive committee of ESPLAT. In September, some of

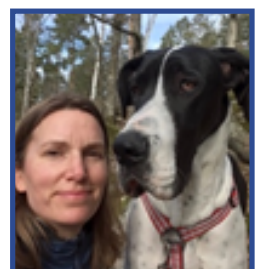
the executive committee members will be coming to the end of their two-year service and stepping down from their posts; myself included. This is also a call to our members to encourage you to apply for one of our vacant posts (see www.esplat.org and later in this newsletter for details) and to be part of the future of psychology learning and teaching across Europe and beyond. It is an ideal time to get involved! The groundwork has been laid and so you can be part of helping the Society to continue to grow and develop in new directions.

Since this will probably be my final president's message for the newsletter, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you all for your support of the Society and for continuing to work so hard in what has been an incredibly challenging year for our universities, students, teachers, and research endeavours. I hope you can recharge your energies and take time out to look after yourselves too.

Until we meet in September,

Best wishes,

Sally





ESPLAT CONFERENCE

2021 *Heidelberg University*

2-3 September, 2021 (online)

The theme of the upcoming ESPLAT conference is *Teaching and Learning Psychology in Times of COVID and Beyond*

Deadline: The deadline for submitting a proposal has been extended to 30th April 2021. Templates for submitting proposals for individual papers, posters, and symposia can be found on the Conference page on the **ESPLAT website** (<https://www.esplat.org/esplat2021>)

Registration: You can register by emailing esplat2021@uni-heidelberg.de including your name and contact details.

PLAT Special Issue: Papers presented at the ESPLAT2021 conference may be submitted to **Psychology Learning and Teaching** and will be considered as contributions to a special issue. All submissions will undergo the usual peer-review process. PLAT publishes research articles, reviews, reports and target articles (please consult PLAT website for detailed information).

Call for submissions: The current pandemic has a substantial impact on every aspect of our lives. This conference would like to be a forum for sharing information on how the Coronavirus pandemic has changed the teaching and learning of psychology. One major subject concerns the organization of teaching, in which online tools play a central role. Another obvious issue is how we as instructors can help students to debunk myths and identify illogical reasoning. Any other issues of how teaching and learning psychology have changed during the Corona-Crisis are welcome. Submissions can take the form of:

-Individual paper presentations: Presentations can be in the form of research papers, reviews or reports, presenting empirical work, grounded in a sound conceptual or theoretical rationale and using adequate methods that ensure robust findings. Reviews cover the literature on a topic of special relevance to the learning and teaching of psychology. Reports present innovative or especially relevant current practice, developments and techniques.

-Discussions: You may propose discussion rounds (focused on the conference theme) that you will introduce and lead.

-Symposia: Presenting research on one topic, compiling a coherent set of papers for discussion. Symposia are directed by a Chair, involving four presenters and one discussant.

-Posters: Presenting an empirical study or reports on teaching practice. Posters will be presented in virtual rooms and authors will have the opportunity to introduce their work and interact with the audience.

Follow us on social media to keep up to date with more of ESPLAT's movements:

Twitter: @esplatorg

Instagram: esplat_

Website: www.esplat.org



Please note that this is a **FREE** conference for **ESPLAT** members.

If you have colleagues who are interested in attending, please note that the conference fee includes one year's free ESPLAT membership.

The regular conference fee is 80 euros/ 30 euros for students

We (still) want to hear from you!

Would you like to write a short blog for our website, or report back on some work you've been doing? Send anything of interest to Gillian Hendry, our Secretary General, at:

gillian.hendry@uws.ac.uk

KEY NOTE PRESENTATIONS

Keynote 1

Diane F. Halpern

Dean of Social Sciences, Emerita at the Minerva Schools at KGI

"False news! Misinformation! Alternative facts! Trolls and bots: Critical thinking just may be an antidote for the chaos of our time"

Keynote 2

Teresa Guasch

Dean of Psychology and Education Faculty at the Open University of Catalonia-UOC

"Mastering the challenges of online education: Planning and feedback"

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Our aim is to advance the learning and teaching of psychology at all educational levels, and to provide a forum to engage researchers and teachers of psychology in communication and exchange.

Spotlight on...

Online PhD Viva/ Defences

WE HEAR FROM THREE NEWLY GRADUATED PSYCHOLOGY PHDS ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE OF DOING THE VIVA/ DEFENCE ONLINE

Since I started my PhD in 2016, I have been visualizing my defense day: standing in front of the committee in a big, beautiful room, surrounded by my supervisors, colleagues, friends and family. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, my defense ended up being virtual. This turned out to have both pro's and cons. A big pro was that even my international colleagues could tune in and listen to the defense. Answering the questions of the opponents worked out really well and luckily, my 'paranimfs' were allowed to be in the same room. They also organized 'Zoom drinks' afterwards!



The biggest con was that I could not celebrate this rite of passage with my supervisors, which, after four years of collaborating, made me a little sad.

For upcoming PhD candidates, I have a tip: it really helped me to practice the online defense with a 'mock' committee of colleagues, which turned out to be more difficult than the real defense, though I felt very prepared. I look back to a special day that I will not soon forget.

Dr Lysanne Willemijn te Brinke,
Utrecht University, the Netherlands

Even though one of my dissertation's topics was on web-based learning and teaching, I felt a bit disappointed when I heard that my final oral examination would be online. As it turned out, this was unfounded. Despite the fact that I could not look directly into the faces of my examiners during my presentation, it was fun to interact with the technology. From my experience, there is nothing to say that online oral exams could not be integrated into everyday university life, even after the pandemic.

Dr Sophie van der Beek, Heidelberg University, Germany

My experience of viva-ing online was a success. I feel that, whilst it will not replace the face-to-face format altogether, it is here to stay, even beyond the pandemic. However, nothing replaces the beauty of being in the company of others, so I fully intend on graduating in person, and having that celebratory meal... whenever that may be.

On a more general note, whilst I too was familiar with the viva horror stories, it really can be an enjoyable experience. Rather than tearing your work to shreds, your examiners want to help you to develop your research. In fact, my examiners specifically told me to be less apologetic; to be surer of my knowledge, and the work that I have dedicated years of my life to. I think this is something that is relevant to all PhD students.

Dr Robert McQuade, University of Strathclyde, UK

COMMITTEE POSITIONS OPEN

The following positions are open for application. Please see **Executive Committee** section on the ESPLAT website for more information.

President-Elect

Works alongside the President as Vice-President, assisting in the organisation and running of the Society.

Secretary General

Responsible for keeping an archive of agendas, minutes, and records including membership details.

Student Representative

Responsible for student interests and management of social media. Must be a current student actively working towards a Bachelors, Masters, or Doctoral degree in Psychology.

Conference Organiser

Responsible for organising, hosting and overseeing all conference duties for the 2023 ESPLAT conference.