

Minutes of tropEd General Assembly Meeting 11 and 12 February 2021 GA Online ZOOM

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Participants

Günter Fröschl (GF), Munich	Maaïke Flinkenflogel (MF), Amsterdam
Romy Kuempfel (RK), Munich	Anne Fabricius (AF), Heidelberg
Lisa Hoffäler (LH), Munich	Maria Rosario (MR), Lisbon
Govert van Heusden (GvH), Antwerp	Giulia Gardini (GG), Brescia
Rodney Reynolds (RR), Individual	Carola Eyber (CE), Edinburgh
Marie Lindkvist (ML), Sweden	Bruno Broucker (BB), Antwerp
Than Nguyen (NN), Hanoi	Jani Puradiredja (JP), Hamburg
Martina Manhart (MM), Individual Membe	Ralf Weigel (RW), Witten Herdecke
Yolanda Amat (YA), Barcelona	Nuria Casamitjana (NC), Barcelona
Mubasysyir Hasanbas (MH), Indonesia	Hans-Friedemann Kinkel (HK), Berlin
Alberto Matteelli (AM), Brescia	Eva Mertens (EM), Hamburg
Axel Hoffmann (AH), Basel	Bente Moen (BM), Bergen
Miriam Müller (MM), Student Rep	Nandita Rothermund (NR), Individual
Bernadette Peterhans (BP), Basel	

Full Members: 10

Collaborative Members: 4

Individual Members: 2

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Given the particularity of this GA we decided to divide the protocol by sessions. If the General Assembly would prefer to return to the traditional way of drafting the Minutes in future online meetings, please let us know.

Thursday, 11 February 2021

Session 1, 11:00 am-13:00 pm (CEST) (Chaired by GF)

Opening Remarks (GF, Munich)

GF opened the GA by presenting the day's agenda and announcing a short-notice additional presentation by MF on 'plagiarism in the tropEd Network'. GvH reminded participants about reading the uploaded 'read me' document before the strategic vision session.

TropEd office (GF, Munich)

Commencement of GA by reminding everyone about presidency election and short round of introduction by every participant present at the GA.

Review of Minutes from October GA 2020

- Minutes too extensive; for future keep minutes shorter when in break-out rooms (as brief as possible and with bullets points)
- Nandita Rothermund not able to join today's session but will join Friday
- Materials will be deleted from Drive in 4 weeks
- Comments on Minutes
 - o MF: typo mistake (in Quality Culture, break-out group); discussion about online accreditations: no outcome from this discussion is noted (final conclusion from this discussion missing)
 - o CE: discussed issue but did not make a decision about issue addressed by MF

Acceptance of minutes: 14

Objections: 0

Abstention: MM

News Secretariat

- Finances: account transfer still in process
 - o Reminder to please all check for invoices of annual fee payments
 - o Need two volunteers for financial review (German speaking)
 - Axel Hoffmann already needs two contact people (German speaking) due to changes in financial management
 - Carola Eyber offering to be responsible person
- tropEd Office: new secretary RK (official start 01.04.2021)
 - o RK: presentation of info mail idea for tropEd information
- Annual Report Reminder (filled in once per institution); if not received please contact secretariat; remember the deadline which is fixed!
- UCL leaving tropEd by end of 2021; still needs to fill out annual report

Courses accreditation

Quick summary of the main points that came up during the review of each group

Blue Group (GvH, Antwerp)

The review initiated a discussion on accreditation and COVID-19 course changes. New courses to be accredited or any accreditation should present the mode of delivery as if there was no pandemic (submit course with information as per usual, not adapted to COVID-19).

- ➔ GF reminding about interim changes of procedures due to COVID-19, renewed in DEC 2020: Course should be accredited as it usually would be delivered (as long as interim measures are

in vigour, course reps just need to send in modified course sheet to secretariat and EC will then give OK; no need for completely new accreditation)

Purple Group (ML, Sweden)

Only minor comments on courses. Same discussion regarding accreditation and pandemic.

GF: Remember that courses are on Google Drive and won't be sent around again; if there are any changes please upload to Google Drive for better course management

Green Group (MR)

Unable to meet with Hanoi but course was overall good and received Cat 2. No issues with Berlin course (Cat 1).

Yellow Group (GF)

No further comments regarding review.

GF: Reminder about course Categories (**cat 1**: only minor issues, conditional; **cat 2**: has to be reviewed by institution and then sent to secretariat which then forward course to be discussed by next EC Telco; **cat 3**: next GA; cat 4: complete rejection)

CE and JP will be financial reviewers

Plagiarism (MF)

Raising the issue of how to deal with plagiarism within the network and proposing a new working group on this topic. Main argument being that there is missing clarity on how to deal with such cases and that better communication within the network is needed. **Added to next GA Agenda.**

Comments and Reactions

General agreement that this is an important issue to address and attend to within the tropEd Network. Challenges voiced included data protection (sharing such sensitive information across institutions), harmonising policies among Universities.

Presidency Election

- Suggestions: AM (Brescia), RW (Witten-Herdecke), NC (Barcelona), CE (Edinburgh)
 - o CE: Not available for presidency
- Voting limited to full member institutions
- RW: not full member of tropEd; questions eligibility of being president?; unsure about the suggestion; only recent member and only 2 advanced courses but would accept suggestion; not paying full fee for tropEd → NOT POSSIBLE
 - o GF: in statutes president elect from full members; EC can be also individual member (elected from ALL members)
- GF: Nomination has to be by full member institution
- Doodle Poll (only full members can vote)
- ➔ Back to Agenda
- ➔ End of Session 1 (re-join at 2pm)

EM excused for afternoon session

Session 2, 14:00-16:00 pm (CEST) (Chaired by GvH)

TropEd Strategic Vision Part I (GvH, BB)

GvH: Meeting with task force a week prior to GA where it was decided to take 'a step back' due to COVID-19 and Brexit → educational programme needs to be adapted and therefore tropEd needs to deal with these new realities in the future

- Tomorrow: look at pending issues
- Today: How does the present situation we find ourselves in, shape our education in the future?
 - o The network needs to react to changes
 - Possible changes in higher education: will be worked out during this GA
 - Next GA: draft on how to react to these changes?

Plenary Discussion about the issue addressed by GvH and the Working Group

BP: uncertainty due to COVID-19 & lack of clear guidelines to guide students through the network (one problem is change of format: have to adapt very quickly due to current situation → difficult to adapt quickly within the structures of tropEd → more flexibility needed within the network)

- Main issue = guiding students in times of change as home institution and within the tropEd network
- Find more practical ways of adapting to uncertainty within the network

Multiple members (BB, CE, NC, BM) agreed that teaching methods and modalities have to be adapted in times of change. General trend towards adapting more blended-learning methods in the future and not going back to everything f2f nor everything online. Challenges raised were lack of interaction and some students 'being left behind' due to infrastructural issues (CE). Quality of teaching repeatedly mentioned and discussed in association to the changes that were taken thus far and that will take place in the future. Changes should not be at the expense of quality of teaching. This inherently includes focussing on the readiness of teachers to adapt more blended methods (MR: teachers faced great difficulties with online format).

- Most important is didactics (no 8 hours teaching online possible) → to ensure quality
- Technical issues
- Possibilities for students for physical contact outside the classroom
- internet connection appears to be the most challenging barrier to distance-based learning
- Quality question: does the quality remain the same?
- fairness for students to have long-term solution and avoid constant changes between modalities (more consistency in course formats).
- improve online teaching and make it a central part of teaching (more hybrid teaching; not successful in Norway)
- also think of equality of opportunities for students (AH)
- Aim of tropEd is bringing people together but how is this possible in times of virtual realities? (How to ensure mobility in such times?)

Questions Raised in chat during the discussion

RW (Witten Herdecke): How do institutions handle the fees issue? Are students less willing to pay for online the same as on site?

→ no fee adaptations at any institutions but it is being discussed in some places

/on Nuria Casamitjana an Alle: 03:08 PM

And maybe include the concept of equity in health and in health education

/on Martina Manhart an Alle: 03:09 PM

Fully agree with Nuria, I also think this aspect is missing

/on Maaïke Flinkenflogel an Alle: 03:09 PM

Agree with Nuria

/on Marie Lindkvist an Alle: 03:09 PM

Agree with Nuria

/on Günter Fröschl an Alle: 03:13 PM

Dear Govert and all, we will have to hand over to Miriam soon.

/on Globale Kindergesundheit an Alle: 03:14 PM

Maybe my naivety, but what do we mean by "social engagement"? How is this going to be materialised?

RR (UK): As a part of adaption to online formats, have any of the member institution created informal online hangouts to create opportunities for socializing and network building while online? → Heidelberg example of online potluck and other socialising events that took place online

GvH (Antwerp): Experience with students following asynchronous courses from abroad?

- Time difference was main challenges (AF)
- Recorded sessions required a lot of administration from the staff of institution (recording was cancelled because it was too much work and not really used) (AF)

LH (Munich): Munich similar to Heidelberg (core course started with f2f); few students could not join core course (who could not attend was saved a spot for next year); hybrid model is always at disadvantage to those joining online; short courses all online; teachers faced most difficulties; aiming to go back to f2f

- CE: does not agree that online students are always disadvantaged in hybrid models
- GF: participants exposed in informal manner to researchers and departments (which is lost in online format)
- AF: ensure equal opportunities
- MF: depends in expectations of students (question of equal quality and quality of teaching generally)

JP (Hamburg): give transformation of formats more thorough thoughts than just switching; more flexibility as no core courses are offered; participants mainly from LMICs and more students could be accepted; group work was translated to online where students could interact and bond very well

GvH: Shift to new modality where transformation and changes will be more easily arrange able

GvH closing of session

Following the plenary discussion, it became clear that the next years will be signified by uncertainty to which the network has to adapt hence, the vision statement needs to be inclusive and broad enough to be flexible in working out different approaches.

→ General consent that the second text (as presented in Docs) was better and that the statement should not be preoccupied with operational issues and focus on what the network brings together.

BB: A framework needs to be found where diversity can flourish after a common language was found; not think too much about operational issues; perspective (Do you see yourself reflected?); text should represent everyone

GvH: Broad statement = easier to work on & recognition can become influenced by this → statement will influence organization of tropEd

HK: Is vision statement not phrased in future tense? (What network do we want to become in future?)

→ maybe phrase more visionary (what are visions to still be achieved?)

- GvH: call current document more a mission statement

Equity was mentioned to be addressed in the statement (second part of the text)

RR: Limitations of the word 'discusses' (does discussing really capture the sensibility of tropEd as learning network in terms of the vision?)

Von Martina Manhart an Alle:

I also like the 2nd Version, but in the third Paragraph About the learning Network we could include the mutual learning aspect

Von Carola Eyber an Alle:

Good point, Martina

Von Nuria Casamitjana an Alle:

Agree with mutual learning. Students really value what they learn from colleagues and faculty/experts outside the class

Maybe my naivety, but what do we mean by "social engagement"? How is this going to be materialised?

Von Carola Eyber an Alle:

Yes, I prefer social justice instead of social engagement - engagement is a little vague. Social justice is through advocating for most vulnerable groups etc

Von Maaike Flinkenflogel an Alle:

03:07 PM

would there be a possibility in the final sentence to change the word students to participants/ colleagues

Von Carola Eyber an Alle:

03:07 PM

is it possible to strengthen the statement on social engagement to social justice?

1 neue Nachricht ↓

- BB: agrees with question of terminology (tropEd does not only 'discuss')

MF: last sentence: instead of students use 'professionals' or colleagues

Student Representatives (Miriam Müller)

Raising the point that student representatives have become too redundant and no longer really have a purpose. Stressing that there is a lack of connection between representatives from institutions and that the network does not support this endeavour enough.

Why does tropEd want student representation? (think about maybe different format)

What is the role of student representatives (group was never really diverse)?

- ➔ Question of representativity of this group for all students in the network
- ➔ Is the format of student representatives the right one?

Network members agree that there is a need for discussion on this issue and that tropEd as not adequately dealt with student representation and feedback (CE). Plus, there is a lack of lack of continuity from side of home institutions ➔ better support student representation (have rep in each institution that connect with each other) (NC).

MMüller: problem with recruiting new students for the group (difficulty with contacting others; too far away and no direct link) ➔ Miriam would like to give this task back to coordinators/institutions (feeling of 'not much happened' and ideas found little approval ➔ same issues keep coming back)

RR: Past representatives have not been representative of the demographic of students part of the masters; tropEd could facilitate more networking among the Network overall; tropEd has not positioned itself towards comments raised by students; fully supportive of debate but also have to understand what network constraints are to then find innovative responses to issues raised; value presence of students at GAs but wondering whether this is really the right way (rather do annual survey conducted among students?)

GvH: Concept of representation doesn't work/is difficult; focus on finding mechanism for sharing student experience in GA rather than representation; less pushing for representative contribution (rather organise survey; but maybe too much) ➔ witnessing rather than representing

GF: GAs often during holidays of students (barriers to participation by students due to the running of activities by tropEd); likes idea proposed by Jani (think of open session at beginning of GA and come back to this later)

CE: every time this issue is raised the discussion circulates back to the same discussion; first clarify WHY tropEd wants student representatives (What do we actually want?)

CE: students hold us to account; I want to hear students for accountability to work; primary reason for student representation because students hold network accountable (need to know from students how to improve)

GF: For many students they hold the home institution accountable and not the whole tropEd network ➔ too much holding whole network accountable? (Limitation of accountability); website fully base in student feedback but these things take time; more institution-focused representation

GF Conclusion: Plan at next GA to do open session for students to participate (money for travel stays the same); representatives may just moderate sessions

Tie in Presidency voting: Re-vote!

Friday, 12 February 2021

EM and ML not attending second day for personal reasons (excused)

Nandita Rothermund (NR) present

GF: Announcing official new president elect AM (Brescia)

Membership issue with Palestine University (received self-report documents which have been approved for site visit → Who can visit the site? (better physical rather than virtual)

- CE offering to be second person to travel to Palestine for site visit

Session 3, 11 am -13 pm (CEST) (Chaired by AM)

Strategic Vision Part II (GvH)

Break-out groups

Room	Break-out 1	Break-out 2	Break-out 3
Topic	Recognition	Core courses	Quality
Chair	Carola E	Bernadette P	Rodney R
Participants	Govert	Nuria C	Nandita
	Bente	Alberto	Bruno
	Jani	Giulia	Lisa
	Yolanda	Anne	Maaïke
	Axel	Guenter	Martina
	Mubasysyir		Ralf

12:00 End of Break-Out Sessions, coming back to plenary

5-minute feedback from groups

Break-out 1

JP: 5 year recognition changes (unanimously agreed, but need list of criteria for which an extension beyond 5 years is allowed e.g. pregnancy, health, COVID-19 etc → possibility for extension under certain criteria); criterion of 10 credits online which in light of COVID-19 is no longer appropriate → drop this point to avoid impression that online teaching is inferior to f2f; 10 credit points should be taken outside home institution but does not necessarily need to be outside home institution country (question how to acknowledge this point?)

Break-out 2

BP: more brainstorming regarding core course challenges; challenges faced by changing format and replying to demands of students and facilitators during the current times; in near future the accreditation of core courses needs to be reflected regarding format and organisational aspects; working group working on these issues (in the future)

Break-out 3

RR: Opening up rather than closing down; key points: 1) reducing barriers to learning e.g. finances or access to information from outside stakeholders, 2) what is quality? New models of quality (decentralised to institutions → a lot of implications; 3) transparent and honesty about how quality of learning is facilitated 3) concern about ensuring that teaching styles are responding to content that needs to be delivered; being open about non-European colleagues teaching for tropEd; 4) mobility and communication (two-way); 5) rethink what is meant by satisfaction and rather focus on engagement and real feedback loops (how to provide more opportunity for interaction)

Feedback Publication Teaching in Times of COVID-19 (JP, GF, Linda Kintu)

See Annex for presentation

GF: Manuscript will be circulated to co-authors and correspondent students; additional survey may be worth the effort (capturing what was done 1 year into the pandemic); IS anyone willing to conduct follow-up survey?

GF: results will change according to framework analysis

HK: for the future: very critical with manuscript as there are some fundamental issues generally when publishing as tropEd; give publication discussions more space within network in the future; who is tasked with analyses and writing results? (Who speaks in the name of tropEd when such publications are brought forward?)

BB: Good that analysis is redone; what about biases? Not sure whether it would be easy to collect documents from institutions (did you look at internal documents as well e.g. policy texts?) → consider looking at such documents for creating more reliability for replies of open questions → have more discourse → stronger qualitative analysis

JP: will have another look at analysis

RW: Provide additional structure and system of analysis; could inform write up of discussion; in intro and discussion, sequence and internal structure of paragraphs there is room for improvement → follow more conventions of scientific writing (topic sentence: what is the point of the paragraph) → need to improve quality of argument → include in abstract the objective!! And add in title that it is about “early response and experience of institutions”

HK: suggested second follow-up study due to limitations of the paper which only reflects very early phase of the process & speculations about future need to be contextualised to time when it was written (are these thoughts still relevant today? → contrast with newer version); not happy with the process: too rushed and not enough time about analysis and design → wish to improve in the future (**put on next Agenda a topic: How to go about writing and research in the name of tropEd?**)

Scientific Session: EUGLOH Network (Katja Radon)

Presenting EUGLOH Network (see Annex EUGLOH PPT)

Questions following presentation

NC: is there any plan to work with external stakeholders e.g. academic/non-academic? Open to collaboration with tropEd?

KR: strong interest in collaboration also with tropEd; most collabs outside the network are with the industry; other stakeholders would also be extremely interesting for the network

HK: A lot of focus on industry → consortium for strengthening EU industry? Partners outside Europe?

KR: not strengthening European industry; Innovation as research; NO collaboration outside of Europe; political interest of Hungarian government also reflected in work (main concern raised by KR)

CE: Question of funding, like Erasmus +?

KR: each university employs coordinator, student mobility funding; funding for online alternatives; national funding (DAAD in Germany e.g. setting up virtual lab); funding for travel and administration

13:07 End Session; LUNCH BREAK

Session 4, 14:00-16:00 pm (CEST)

Guest: Francisco Galvan (FG)

New tropEd Website (BB, FG)

First presentation of new website (by FG)

Questions

MF: approval of new website; comment regarding design of search option

FG: Proposing to add instruction about how to use the advanced search

GF: Newsletter idea (sent out via mail) which would be added as a 'news carousel' to the website (top 3 news) → on home page

FG: would not be difficult to add but has to be continuously updated (by secretariat)

How to deal with the content update of website?

GF: key options: 1) secretariat just receives content from individuals 2) migrate old website and everyone just checks what needs to be updated

→ Institutional updates most important part (migrate and then institution check content and sent changes to secretariat)

GvH: need to update Master programme text according to new vision statement which also will be updated → all materials will have to be updated at some point e.g. course handbook as well

AH: thesis if not scientific publication, is not public because it is assignment to receiving a degree (data protection)

GF: have option for page but not publish this page until resolved (how this has to be handled in terms of data protection)

GF: member institution info same as on old website; responding to GvH: updates will have to be made but do these updates immediately or with time and keep some old contents; secretariat will ensure most up-to-date documents about tropEd are on the website

→ **Institutions check their own content and then provide collectively all edited content**

→ **Encourage members to check content and materials more frequently**

Migrate all content → every institution has to check within set time period and forward adaptations to secretariat

Course management and accreditation workflow

GF: crucial point to discuss as the inefficient accreditation procedure is prone to mistakes and associated with extensive workload for secretariat → presenting idea of shifting review process on the website (centralise this process more and avoid back and forth of emails)

→ Problem of consecutive accreditation of same course: have to be able to track back all accredited versions (accreditation history needed)

Members raised doubts regarding the idea of channelling all accreditation process in one place which would be the website. This issue was agreed to be addressed once the website is finished (address questions of workflows in the future)

→ First content migration, then handover of website to RK, secretariat then initiates update workflow (reminder to member institutions to go through information); then website online; then turn to workflow issues

→ RK should give checklist to institutions on what to check to update

GF: Coming back to strategic vision group for a wrap up

Break-out Group 1 (CE)

- 1) For work experience: at least 1 year professional experience (6 months of work/internship in LMIC setting or vulnerable population groups)
- 2) External examiner: involvement of external person from home institution in master thesis process in form of oversight, jury (external examiner no longer has to be present in marking process)
- 3) 5 years: will remain but adding granting of extension according to predefined criteria (specify criteria for such a request) → CE proposing to formulate this
- 4) 10 ECTS dropped → no more restrictions to online ECTS

- 5) No longer all 60 credits need to be tropEd accredited; for tropEd recognition need min 10 credits which are attained from tropEd accredited modules outside of home institution; own institution needs to be tropEd member
- 6) To keep core course relevant: state on certificate how many tropEd accredited credits student has received

AH: distance-based core course it could happen that online master certificate may follow

CE: opening up tropEd recognition → easier to get recognition for students; at the same time the requirement for mobility is removed (virtual mobility remains but physical mobility is loosened)

NC: this is good and necessary progress; when and where will this be written down and when to communicate this to the students

AH: fully agrees with solutions BUT to be fair we should not vote today but in next meeting & all members need to be informed transparently before next meeting and only then students can be informed

HK: maybe add sentence why tropEd recognition is still needed (why should students get tropEd recognition); can this be applied also retrospectively?

CE: still has quality assurance

GF: not use retrospectively because this may open up very messy process (not going back further than 2020); introductory sentence why changes were made in document that will be written up about this (online poll where every institution has vote on this issue if no presence GA)

→ **Vote on recognition changes among all members**

Recognition (GvH)

Swiss TPH Request for 2 students → both ok (Chinese students went 4 months over 5 years but both students were involved in COVID-19 response which is seen as valid criteria for extension)

BP: third student also requested recognition → missing!

News, Dates, Upcoming events

CE: agrees with presenting “teaching in times of COVID-19”; vision changes still in the process and not ready yet to be shared publicly (its too early)

GF: unsure due to remaining controversy about publication; if manuscript gets support in the end then publication and submitting abstract is possible

HK: first get manuscript ready and discuss remaining issues

RW: tropEd should present but maybe use different document to present than teaching publication

NC: tropEd has lost interest in representation at such events → loss of visibility at conferences which is a pity

HK: main concern quality of paper and how analysis was done but if there is consensus about presenting the work this should be followed (by someone really skilled to present the work)

ML: easy to present at conference and challenges will really only have to be addressed when working towards publication

CE: detach from paper and hand in an abstract

Closing Remarks

Next dates for GA: 17-19 June in Switzerland (25th anniversary)

- Overseas GA to Tanzania?
- Different location for fall GA of 2021 (23-25 Sept 2021)
 - o European location: Witten Herdecke (rather second option), Brescia, Hamburg
 - Brescia could do it again in case possible given the pandemic (AM will check and discuss about this issue)
 - Hamburg also fine

The tropEd Online GA Feb 2021 was officially closed on Friday, February 12 at 16:00