

NORWEGIAN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY & PRAGUE UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS SUMMER SCHOOL

Teaching Generation of Snowflakes – New Methods and Challenges

Introduction

Generation of Snowflakes is a term that is often used of people in the generation born in 1995 - 2010. This term was first featured as slang in the 1996 novel *Fight Club* authored by Chuck Palahniuk. As the book explains, “You are not special, you are not a beautiful and unique snowflake.” Collins dictionary gives a simple definition of Generation Snowflake as “The generation of people who became adults in the 2010s, viewed as being less resilient and more prone to taking offense than previous generations.”

The word ‘snowflake’ references to their originality, since all snowflakes are unique. This generation came to be due to childhood overprotection (so called helicopter parenting). Older generations brand them as fickle, sensitive, and of having an exaggerated sense of what’s politically correct. This generation is made up of digital natives, which means that they know a lot about technology and learn new things quickly. Thanks to their lack of patience, Snowflakes often find creative ways to solve problems. Consequently, they can adapt faster to changes. This is useful since the labor markets demand workers who can initiate changes and handle rapid changes. Generation of Snowflakes also has unique problems that other often neglects.

Some authors use different names for the snowflake generation as they see this term a bit pejorative. We can see Generation Z, Gen Z, Gen-Zer, iGens, digital natives, net Generation, Zers, the @generation, pluralist generation, Post-Millennials, Tweens, eBay babies, The App Generation, Gen Tech, Gen Next, Rainbow Generation, Post-Millennials, the Selfie Generation, the Mobile Generation, the 21th Century Learners, Generation Me, Generation We, the Homeland Generation, the Selfie Generation, Generation Instant Gratification, Generation Reality TV, The Centennials or Generation of Artists.

This generation is now university students. But professors, who teach them, tend to use the same teaching approaches and teaching methodology as they used to do with older generations. Should they change the methods? What could be done to provide this new generation the best opportunities for progress in university studies?

Organizers

Prague University of Economics and Business (VŠE), Prague, Czech Republic

Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), Trondheim, Norway

Course overview

The Summer School will address the issues of reflecting specifics of so-called Snowflake generation students who have recently started to become university students. Snowflakes are more diverse than any previous generation. They bring diverse racial, gender, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds into the classrooms.

Traditional schooling methods and approaches are no longer effective with the new generation of students. Classes based on frontal teaching, focusing on textbooks or pre-recorded audio, do not reflect their learning style preference. Snowflakes are easily distracted and do not keep their attention for long; they prefer an independent learning style with a choice of what, when, and how to study; they require instant access, demand real-time interactions with teachers and peers, and prefer multimedia resources. They favor technology (especially social media) as it increases the quality of learning. Snowflakes prefer instant, interactive, engaging, practical, and experimental learning experiences; learning assignments and outcomes should improve their ability for better employment and have the potential to impact their lives and communities directly.

During the Summer School, we will explore and discuss the specifics of this new generation of students. We will elaborate on teaching styles that better reflect Snowflakes' way of learning. Theoretical foundations will be complemented by interactive and engaging discussion modules, workshops, and tutorials. Participants will be encouraged to implement their reflections through practical assignments, which will be collaboratively evaluated. The Summer School will be highly experiential, requiring everybody to participate in individual and group activities.

This Summer School offers a genuinely creative, engaging, and unique experience. Those four days will provide a practical insight into how to become a lecturer who can deal with various learning conditions and environments in both online and offline settings and reflect their students' specifics.

Learning Outcomes

Teaching Generation of Snowflakes – New Methods and Challenges Summer School is designed for fresh Ph.D. students and junior faculty members who want to learn how to

- Articulate the specifics of Snowflake generation students in their teaching endeavors
- Contrast teaching methods that reflect the diverse learning styles of their audience
- Illustrate various teaching situations where the specific approach is needed
- Appraise how various teaching styles reflect specifics of the Snowflake generation students
- Reframe their teaching according to various learning environments reflecting on the limitation of the digital environment

Level of participant

- Master
- PhD
- Post-doc
- Professional

This course is designed for students (Master's and Ph.D.), junior faculty members, and professionals (interested in) working in tertiary education and intensely concerned by their self-development in teaching methods.

Admission Requirements

Fluent English is required to participate in the Summer School.

Participants should be just about to begin OR freshly engaged with their teaching endeavors in tertiary education.

Admission Documents

- brief (academic) CV
- motivation letter with a teaching statement

Dates & Application Deadline

TBA

Mode of study

A combination of on-campus and online teaching with significant self-study components and evaluation.

Summer School Venue

The summer school will have a mixed form of on-site and online. Changes are reserved due to the uncertainty of the development of the situation related to COVID-19. The on-site version of the Summer School will take place in the Faculty of Management, Prague University of Economics and Business in the city of Jindřichův Hradec, Czech Republic.

The Faculty of Management is a proud member of the Prague University of Economics and Business – the largest business school in the Czech Republic. Still, the faculty provides an intimate and local atmosphere of a small south-bohemian town with medieval roots. The hometown of the faculty, Jindřichův Hradec, captivates every visitor. The town tempts everyone to discover its history, which can be seen and felt with each and every step of the way. The nature and the surrounding landscape of the town will dazzle or even swallow you whole.

Study load

- Pre-course assignments/reading 8 hours
- On-site class attendance 10 hours
- Discussions, workshops, brainstorming 16 hours
- Individual Assignment(s) 20 hours
- Presentation(s) 2 hours

Total 56 hours

The workload is expressed in ECTS credits. ECTS stands for European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, widely used throughout the European Union. For this course, you can earn **2 ECTS credits**.

Assessment

- Active participation in Teamwork, discussions, workshops, brainstorming 10 %
- Individual "homework" 1 (Day 2 & 3) – peer evaluation 20 %
- Individual "homework" 2 – after the Summer School, the participants will prepare a „full lecture“ where they should reflect the knowledge/experience/skills acquired (~ one hour, recorded as a video, with learning outcomes, structure, student engagement activity, evaluation of learning goals) 70 %

Course organization

The summer school combines the on-site personal experience of direct lecturing and discussions, where participants have an opportunity to directly exchange ideas and experiences, either with their tutors or their peers. This on-site experience is complemented by self-study as well as independent practical assignments where the participants could reflect on their newly acquired knowledge and expertise.

The on-site part of the Summer School is described in the Preliminary day-to-day programme.

Fees

Free for participants from Prague University of Economics and Business (VŠE) & Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)

€xxx for students and Ph.D. candidates from VŠE and NTNU partner universities

€xxx early bird discount for all other participants

€xxx early after the early bird deadline

Certification

All participants will receive a Certificate of Attendance on successfully completing the programme.

Preliminary day-to-day programme

On-campus

Day 0

The arrival of the participants of the on-site section of the summer school. Establishing of connection with online participants.

| Date and time | | Activity | Methods and forms |
|---------------|------------|--|----------------------|
| Day 0 | 9 am–12 am | Arrival of the participants Registration Establishing of connection with online participants | Technical matters |
| | 2 pm–4 pm | Introduction to summer school Welcoming participants Presentation of the summer school scenario Introduction of participants and lecturers Explanation of basic organizational rules | Frontal presentation |
| | 6 pm–8 pm | Social evening – dinner | Informal event |

Day 1 - "Setting the landscape"

Introductory lectures devoted to the topic of Snowflakes Generation (Frontal teaching)

Teamwork (brainstorming method) – discussing the traditional teaching methods approaches vs. changes within the neo-modern era. Subsequent comparison of findings with the available literature on the given topic.

On-line (hybrid) discussion – lectures and panel discussion on the topic of cultural differences and their influence on the teaching methods in the neo-modern era.

| Date and time | | Activity | Methods and forms |
|---------------|------------|---|----------------------|
| Day 1 | 9–12 am | Introductory lectures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Definition of Snowflake Generation - Sensitivity of the Snowflake Generation - Teaching of Scientific Structures for New Generations - Approaching Snowflake Generation online - Snowflakes as a Ph.D. candidates | Frontal presentation |
| | 12 am–1 pm | Time for lunch and personal break | Technical matters |

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|--|--------------|---|--|
| | 1-3 pm | Discussing the traditional teaching methods in comparison with the changes in the neo-modern era Critical reflection on available literature Evaluation of acquired knowledge | Teamwork Brainstorming Online discussion |
| | 3-3:30 pm | Time for snack and personal break | Technical matters |
| | 3:30-5:30 pm | On-line (hybrid) discussion about cultural differences in teaching methods in neo-modern era - Invited speakers from the different world and cultural areas (3 to 4 speakers from a different culture regions) Reflection of the knowledge of foreign lecturers | Online presentation Hybrid discussion |

Day 2 - "Setting the way"

Frontal teaching – lectures on the topics of the teaching styles, addressing differences in approaching the Snowflakes generation and dealing with the interaction.

Workshop – dealing with the given limitations on the teaching environment. Discussing the effects on the process of delivering teaching outputs (teaching in the different rooms: insufficient equipment of lectures rooms and its inappropriate interactivity).

Teamwork – discussion about the teaching challenges within the given locations.

| Date and time | | Activity | Methods and forms |
|---------------|--------------|--|------------------------|
| Day 2 | 9-12 am | Teaching styles lectures - History of teaching style - Current teaching styles - Teaching methods for students with specific needs | Frontal presentation |
| | 12 am-1 pm | Time for lunch and personal break | Technical matters |
| | 1-3 pm | Teaching styles lectures - Teaching Generation Z - Advocating a Pedagogy of Kindness | Frontal presentation |
| | 3-3:30 pm | Time for snack and personal break | Technical matters |
| | 3:30-5:30 pm | Dealing with the given limitations on the teaching environment - Setting the list of different possible teaching environments and situations - Discussing the possible teaching approaches and methods for given situation | Workshop Discussion |

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|--|--------------|--|--|
| | 5-5:30 pm | Time for snack and personal break | Technical matters |
| | 5:30-7:30 pm | Team discussion about the teaching challenges within the given locations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A short presentation of each team's conclusions - Critical reflection of the outputs gained from brainstorming | Teamwork Brainstorming Team presentation |

Day 3 – "Leaving home"

Space to finish editing homework.

Farewell and departure of participants.

| Date and time | | Activity | Methods and forms |
|---------------|-------------|---|--|
| Day3 | 9-11 am | Team discussion about the teaching challenges within the given locations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A short presentation of each team's conclusions Critical reflection of the outputs gained from brainstorming | Teamwork Brainstorming Team presentation |
| | 11-12 am | Farewell lunch | Informal event |
| | after 12 am | Departure of participants | Technical matters |

After the end of the summer school, there should be an online event with the participants, where the acquired knowledge and experience with their application to the personal learning style of the participants would be reflected.

Online follow-up meetings

In the meantime, the participants will prepare will prepare a „full lecture“ where they reflect the knowledge/experience/skills acquired (~ one hour, recorded as a video, with learning outcomes, structure, student engagement activity, evaluation of learning goals)

Online Day 4 – "Feedback"

This session will be organized approximately two weeks after the end of the on-campus part. All participants will upload their materials (the lecture and complementing materials, i.e., learning outcomes, assignments, evaluation) online and all peers will be asked to provide a feedback.

| Date and time | | Activity | Methods and forms |
|-------------------|------------|--|---|
| Day 4 (online) | 9-12 am | Joint discussion - (Peer) feedback and evaluation of the uploaded materials | Brainstorming Brainwriting Reverse brainstorming Hybrid discussion |
| | 12 am-1 pm | Time for lunch and personal break | Informal event |
| | 1-3 pm | Joint discussion (Peer) feedback and evaluation of the uploaded materials | Brainstorming Brainwriting Reverse brainstorming Hybrid discussion |

Online Day 5 - "Wrap-up @ Reflections"

This session will be organized approximately one week after Day 4.

| Date and time | | Activity | Methods and forms |
|-------------------|---------|--|---|
| Day 5 (online) | 9-12 am | Joint discussion - Wrapping up all the gained knowledge. - Discussion about the significance of the identified differences. - Creating a draft set of general recommendations for teaching style in relation to the generation of Snowflakes. | Brainstorming Brainwriting Reverse brainstorming Hybrid discussion |

Study Materials

I. Generation of Snowflakes

This chapter will lead you deeply to the terminology.

General literature: Zavodna, L. S., & Falch, T. (Eds.) (2022). *Teaching generation snowflakes: New challenges and opportunities*. Prague University of Economics and Business, Oeconomica Publishing House – Prague

A. Literature

Alyeksyeyeva, I. (2017). Defining snowflake in British post-Brexit and US post-election public discourse. *Science and Education a New Dimension*, V(39)(143), 7–10.

Shatto, B., & Erwin, K. (2016). Moving on from millennials: Preparing for generation Z. *The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing*, 47(6), 253–254.

Murray, A. H. (2018). Generation Snowflake?. *RSA Journal*, 164(4 (5576), 44-47.

B. Videos

What Makes "Generation Z" So Different? | Harry Beard

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qyCn3APagyU>

Generation Z: Making a Difference Their Way | Corey Seemiller

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cN0hyudK7nE>

What do we know about the generation after millennials? | Jason Dorsey

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4f16o9Q0XGE>

C. Podcast

Generation Z: Aidan Peck (Generation Z comparisons, criticism and praise)

II. Teaching styles and methods

This chapter focuses on different teaching methods and styles. The aim is to broaden students' horizons and help them keep students' attention in the classroom.

A. Literature

Iftode, D. (2019). Generation Z and learning styles. *SEA–Practical Application of Science*, 7(21), 255–262.

Mosca, J. B., Curtis, K. P., & Savoth, P. G. (2019). New approaches to learning for Generation Z. *The Journal of Business Diversity*, 19(3), 66–74.

Nicholas, A. J. (2020). Preferred learning methods of generation Z.

Seemiller, C., Grace, M., Dal Bo Campagnolo, P., Mara Da Rosa Alves, I., & Severo De Borba, G. (2019). How generation Z college students prefer to learn: A comparison of US and Brazil students. *Journal of Educational Research and Practice*, 9(1), 25.

Yu, E. (2020). Student-Inspired Optimal Design of Online Learning for Generation Z. *Journal of Educators Online*, 17(1), n1.

Seemiller, C. and M. Grace (2017): Generation Z: Educating and Engaging the Next Generation of Students. *About Campus* 22, 21-26.

Shatto, B. and K. Erwin (2017): Teaching Millennials and Generation Z: Bridging the Generational Divide. *Creative Nursing* (23), 24-28.

Machov, R., Korcsmaros, E., Šeben, Z., Feher, L. & Toth, Z. 2021. Developing the Competences of Generation Z with Innovative Teaching Methods in the Context of the Requirement of Labour Market by Industry 4.0. *International Journal of Advanced Corporate Learning*, 14, 17-26.

Popova, S. 2017. Teaching generation z: Methodological problems and their possible solutions. *Training, Language and Culture*, 1, 25-38.

Shatto, B. & Erwin, K. 2016. Moving on from Millennials: Preparing for generation Z. *J Contin Educ Nurs*, 47, 253-254.

Shatto, B. & Erwin, K. 2017. Teaching Millennials and Generation Z: Bridging the Generational Divide. *Creat Nurs*, 23, 24-28.

B. Videos

Teaching Methods for Inspiring the Students of the Future: Joe Ruhl (TED.com)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCFg9bcW7Bk

The 5 principles of highly effective teachers: Pierre Pirard

www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdTtnWMLVM

What makes a good teacher great? Azul Terronez

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrU6YJle6Q4>

Getting at the heart of teaching: Lisa Lee

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJM6WUNDnhA>

Learning styles & the importance of critical self-reflection | Tesia Marshik

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=855Now8h5Rs>

Students need to lead the classroom, not teachers | Katherine Cadwell

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gzQhiB2EOVE>

Presentation tips for teachers (Never give a boring lecture again!)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdtLELVhEQg>

C. Podcast

Teaching in higher ed: Bonni Stachowiak

The Dig: Higher Ed in Crisis: Daniel Denvir, Jacobin

FIY - For Your Innovation: Powering Online Education with Chip Paucek

III. Teaching environment

Your classroom environment is a blend of the social, emotional, and instructional elements of the class. Research shows that many aspects of your classroom environment can affect student motivation and that students who are more motivated, put more effort into learning activities (Ambrose, 2010).

A. Literature

Mohr, K. A., & Mohr, E. S. (2017). Understanding Generation Z students to promote a contemporary learning environment. *Journal on Empowering Teaching Excellence*, 1(1), 9.

Ambrose, S. A., Bridges, M. w., Lovett, M. C., DiPietro, M., & Norman, M. K. (2010). *How Learning Works: 7 Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

B. Videos

Jason Conway - Classroom Environment: It's not about YOU, It's about THEM

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bNcQjnpmFns>

Creativity in the classroom (in 5 minutes or less!) | Catherine Thimmesh

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nASvIgSOCxw>

C. Podcast

The Teaching Space

Teaching by Reaching - 9: Environment and Student Learning with Dr. Yanira Oliveras-Ortiz

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