Digital scholars in mobile world

Symposium exploring work-life balance in academic life

14 December 2016, University of Hull

Programme

10:00 - 11.00 Registration / Coffee & tea

11:00 - 11:15 Welcome

11:15 - 13:15 Keynotes

Dissolving Boundaries: Technologically-mediated Nomadicity and Work-Life (Im)Balance in Academic Settings
Dr Fabiano Pinatti, Universität Siegen

Work-life balance, wellbeing and technology use in UK academics
Prof Gail Kinman, University of Bedfordshire

Conference time: academics aiming (not) to have been there
Dr Emily Henderson, University of Warwick

Becoming academic in the digital university: Digital practices, academic identity-building and the 'work-life balance' of Early Career Researchers (ECRs) in the UK
Dr Jude Fransman, The Open University

13:15 - 14:15 Lunch break and networking

14:15 - 15:15 Break out workshops

15:15 - 15:45 Coffee & tea break and networking

15:45 - 16:45 Plenary session.

Info

This event, led by Dr Josef Ploner and Dr Anastasia Gouseti of the University of Hull, will gather academics working across higher education research, academic mobility and digital technologies in professional contexts. Participants will share current research and work to develop future collaborations. For more information contact J.Ploner@hull.ac.uk or

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Abstracts

Dissolving Boundaries: Technologically-mediated Nomadicity and Work-Life (Im)Balance in Academic Settings

Dr. Aparecido Fabiano Pinatti de Carvalho, Institut für Wirtschaftsinformatik und Neue Medien, Universität Siegen, Germany

Academic work is to a large extent flexible, fluid and inherently nomadic. Most of the work activities that academics engage in, e.g. writing, dealing with admin work, preparing and even delivering lectures can be potentially carried out on an anytime/anywhere basis. With the help of computer technologies, academics find themselves "moving" their workplace from their offices, to different lecture halls, conference rooms, hotels and, naturally, their homes. In so doing, they frequently find themselves working outside the traditional "9 to 5" working hours and in locations beyond their "official" workplaces which were traditionally devoted to socialising or dealing with family matters. The intensification of nomadic practices in the so-called "knowledge economy" and the growing de-differentiation of 'work' and 'non-work' has created different scenarios for academics as to how to negotiate work/life balances. In this talk I will discuss how technologically-mediated nomadicity has created a scenario where work-matters might overcome non-work matters. Drawing on findings from a four-year ethnographic study of a group of academics and their nomadic work-life practices, I will highlight some of the nuances and ambivalences of work-life balance in academic settings. These relate to a sense of empowerment provided by nomadic practices, but also to the trade-offs that come with the blurring of work-life boundaries. Finally, I will illustrate that once such boundaries are dissolved, it is not so easy to (re)draw the line. With this presentation, I hope to raise awareness of the need for further research on the subject, to understand how a growing encroachment of life by work might be tackled and at least attenuated.

Work-life balance, wellbeing and technology use in UK academics

Prof Gail Kinman, Department of Psychology, University of Bedfordshire, UK

This presentation draws on the findings of several studies conducted over the last ten years or so that have examined the predictors and outcomes of work-life conflict and wellbeing in UK academics and the factors that might protect or exacerbate these outcomes. Particular focus is placed on a recent mixed-methods study that explored academics' use of technology for work purposes and the implications for their recovery,

work-life balance, wellbeing and job performance. The role of job stressors, such as level of demand, as well as individual difference factors, such as job involvement, integration preference, schedule flexibility and email management behaviours, is also examined. The implications of the findings for interventions to help academics manage technology more effectively will be considered.

Conference time: academics aiming (not) to have been there

Dr Emily F. Henderson, Centre for Education Studies, University of Warwick, UK

'In Guwahati, I was never checking my mails; I decided that I'm on sabbat[ical] from internet [laughs]'. This quotation from an interview with a conference delegate – and a research participant in an ethnographic empirical study on embodied knowledge production and conferences – speaks to the key question that is addressed by this presentation. Namely, how does conference participation fit into the everyday work of academics? The instant answer to this question is simple: conferences *do not fit*. Rather, they are interruptions that play into and indeed exacerbate many of the power dynamics that already exist in international academia. The second answer to the question is more complex. On the one hand, the idea of the 'everyday work of academics' requires further analysis – the increasingly globalised and interconnected nature of the academic profession problematises dichotomies such as here/there, home/away, routine/interruption. Are conferences an interruption, or part of the 'new normal'? On the other hand, as my research has shown, academics cannot simply be understood as participating at a conference when they are there. In this paper I set out three temporalities that academics engage in when attending conferences, which are related in different ways to managing the interruptive nature of conference travel. Finally I argue that these temporalities can be applied more widely to different forms of short-term mobility.

Becoming academic in the digital university: Digital practices, academic identity-building and the 'work-life balance' of Early Career Researchers (ECRs) in the UK
Dr Jude Fransman, Institute of Educational Technology, The Open University, UK

In this paper I draw on data collected from a recent study on the academic identity-building of ERCs as well as my own personal experience as an academic-activist-mother-student-writer to explore the effects of digital resources on the negotiation of a 'work-life balance' in Higher Education. I start by presenting a 'vignette of failure' and discuss the notions of 'work' and 'life' within the 'digital age' and within the context of the shifting agendas/structures of Higher Education in the UK. I then go on to propose a methodological framework (grounded in material semiotics) for tracing the effects of digital resources on academic practice/identity and the implications for the

work-life balance. Finally, I apply the framework to my data and conclude by outlining some transformative options for policy and practice.

About the speakers:

Dr Jude Fransman is a sociologist currently holding a Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship at the Institute of Educational Technology (IET). Her research focuses on the processes of research/evidence production and use. Jude is interested in questions such as: who participates in research processes? What types of skills and languages count? How do different methods/texts/technologies change the research process and the accessibility/relevance of evidence? How are different kinds of evidence valued by different institutions? Jude has a background in international development and is particularly interested in how evidence about development is produced and used in different ways.

Dr Emily F. Henderson is Assistant Professor of International Education and Development in the Centre for Education Studies at the University of Warwick, UK. She completed an ESRC-funded PhD studentship at the UCL Institute of Education; her research project was an ethnographic study of the conceptual knowledge production of gender at international Women's Studies conferences. Her first book, entitled *Gender Pedagogy: Teaching, Learning and Tracing Gender in Higher Education*, was published by Palgrave in 2015. At Warwick, she is developing a new MA entitled 'Global Education and International Development'. She is co-convener of the SRHE (Society for Research into Higher Education) International Research and Researchers Network and co-convener of the University of Warwick's AMIN – Academic Mobilities and Immobilities Network.

Dr Gail Kinman is Professor of Occupational Health Psychology at the University of Bedfordshire. She is a Chartered Psychologist and an Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society, and a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. Gail is also the Director of the Research Centre for Applied Psychology here at the University of Bedfordshire. Her research interests focus on work-related stress, work-life balance, emotional labour and emotional literacy and how they influence the wellbeing of employees, their clients/customers/students and their families. Gail has conducted research in these areas with various occupational groups with a particular focus on 'helping' professionals such as social workers, teachers, police officers and fire and rescue personnel and 'knowledge workers' such as academics.

Dr. Aparecido Fabiano Pinatti de Carvalho is currently a Researcher at the Department of Information Systems of the University of Siegen working in the EU/NWR Project 'Cyberrüsten 4.0'. He holds a B.Sc. and a M.Sc. in Computer Science from the Federal University of São Carlos, São Paulo, Brazil, and a Multidisciplinary PhD developed within a

joint project between the Interaction Design Centre of the Department of Computer Science and Information Systems, University of Limerick, Ireland, and the Department of Sociology of the same university. Fabiano's interests span Human-Computer Interaction, Interaction Design, Computer Supported Cooperative Work, Ubiquitous and Mobile Computing, Mobile and Nomadic Work and Informatics in Education. He has published several articles on topics related to these fields of research and presented at prestigious international conferences. Before joining the University of Siegen, he was working at the Multidisciplinary Research Group of the Vienna University of Technology as Project Manager of the EU TOPIC Project.

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