

# Conceptual Change SIG Newsletter

## *No 4 – December 2009*

Dear members of the EARLI-SIG on Conceptual Change,

It has been a while since we have met each other in Amsterdam last summer for the EARLI conference. We hope you went home not only with good memories, but also with a lot of inspiration. We, at least, did! One of the memories is of course that we said goodbye to Xenia as a SIG coordinator. We wish to thank her once more for all the work that she has done.

With this newsletter, we want to update you about ongoing plans and activities. The most important one dealt with in this newsletter is probably the 7<sup>th</sup> SIG meeting on Conceptual Change that will take place in Leuven, in May 2010. Paper submissions for this conference are currently open, and it will be possible to register for it soon.

Besides this conference announcement and other issues regarding its scientific program, there are some other topics that deserve your attention, such as our Wikipedia contest. We hope that you enjoy reading the Newsletter, and we look forward to your comments.

Best regards

Michael and Wim

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## 7<sup>th</sup> Conceptual change SIG meeting

### *First announcement*

The [Katholieke Universiteit Leuven](#) in collaboration with [EARLI Special Interest Group 3](#) invites you to take part in the 7th International Conference on Conceptual Change.

The theme of the conference will be “Teaching for conceptual change – In search for instructional design principles”. The development of instructional interventions and learning environments aimed at promoting conceptual change has been a central concern for the conceptual change community over the past years. Nevertheless, there is a general feeling that more research is needed in this domain. What are the principles for developing learning environments that are brought forward in conceptual change research? Are these principles similar for achieving conceptual change in various curricular fields? What kind of empirical evidence is available? How can we gather substantiated empirical evidence for these principles? And what is the relation between the work done in the “general” field of instructional design and the work done on developing learning environment in the field of *conceptual change*? Are the theories in both fields in accordance with each other, and what can they gain from one another?

We are currently in the process of inviting keynote speakers and organising a debate. Keynote speakers who already confirmed are Terezinha Nunes (Oxford University, UK), and Jeroen van Merriënboer (Maastricht University, The Netherlands). More news will follow when available.

The meeting will take place in Leuven, Belgium from May 25th until May 27th 2010, and will be hosted at the [Louvain Institute for Ireland in Europe](#), a beautiful and historical venue that is in the heart of the city centre of Leuven and that is recently entirely renovated.

Registrations for the conference will start at December 15<sup>th</sup>. During registration, you can also book your accommodation in the beautiful surroundings of the conference venue itself.

More information on the conference and updates on the programme can be found at [the conference website](#).

### *Call for papers*

In this year's meeting, we especially welcome submissions on the conference theme described above. Besides this, contributions that address other topics central to the conceptual change community are of course also welcome.

Proposals will be assigned to different sessions:

- **Symposia** offer an opportunity to explore one topic in depth possibly from different perspectives. Symposium sessions will be managed by a chairperson, with four presenters representing at least two different countries, and one or two discussants. Each paper will normally last about 20 minutes.
- In **Paper sessions** each author will present his or her paper within 15-20 minutes. An audience discussion will follow each session during which four or five papers are presented.
- **Poster sessions** combine text and graphic display of materials that are thematically grouped with the opportunity of a very short oral presentation of

each poster (5 minutes) including the chance for indepth discussion between participants and presenters.

Submissions to the conference can be done between November 15th 2009 and January 15th 2010. For more concrete information, see the [submission guidelines on the conference website](#).

### *Organisation of symposia*

If you are considering to organise a symposium, and still are looking for contributors to it, we want to offer you help in communicating with SIG members. Please communicate your plans and any requests for contributions to us, and we will be happy to email them to the SIG members, and post them on the conference website.

## Wikipedia contest

Conceptual change is not only of academic interest but also of a high practical relevance for teachers, parents, and students. These days laypersons oftentimes turn to the free online encyclopaedia Wikipedia first when looking for information, and so it is unfortunate that no entry about conceptual change exists in the English version (and many other language versions) of Wikipedia.

As many of you may already know, [Wikipedia](#) entries can be written and modified by anyone on the internet and any internet user can access Wikipedia for free. Despite this unusual approach [Wikipedia](#) currently contains more than 3 Million entries in the

English version alone, many of them of a high scientific quality, for example the entries on [Pedagogical Constructivism](#) , [multimedia learning](#) , and [Educational Psychology](#).

We are convinced that conceptual change is important and useful enough to deserve its own Wikipedia entry. For this reason we, as SIG coordinators, are starting a contest: Write a proposed Wikipedia entry on Conceptual Change and [submit it to the SIG coordinators](#) WITHOUT posting it online in the Wikipedia! The SIG coordinators and an external reviewer will evaluate all submissions and pick the best. The winner(s) will be named at [the next meeting of our SIG](#) (May 25-27, 2010, in Leuven, Belgium) and receive a bottle of champagne. The name(s) of the winning author(s) and the proposed entry will be published in our next SIG newsletter as well as be put online in the Wikipedia. Submission deadline is April 25, 2010 (i.e. one month before the SIG meeting). Everybody (including laypersons, students, professors etc.) can participate. Proposals should have between approximately 500 and 1500 words. In case someone else posts an entry about conceptual change before the end of the deadline in the Wikipedia, we will carefully merge this entry with the winning entry of our competition. Note that the winning entry can (and should!) be modified and extended as well as translated to other languages by other Wikipedia users once it is online.

## Junior (JURE) SIG coordinator

Recently, EARLI has given us the opportunity to appoint a Junior Assistant Coordinator to help with the organisation of activities of our SIG. Regulations state that this JURE coordinator should be a member of JURE at the start of his/her term and should stay on for a minimum of two years and a maximum of 4 years.

We think that becoming a junior SIG coordinator provides great opportunities and interesting experiences. Anyone who considers to apply for this position can contact us for more information.

## Special issue on “Skills, Values, and Beliefs for Today’s Democratic Citizenship”

A vital aspect of democracy is the ability of individual citizens to engage in knowledge creation and evaluation in a critical manner. In today’s information- and controversy-rich society developing one’s own beliefs and values, evaluating a constantly growing body of new knowledge, and having an understanding of current politics is becoming an increasingly complex and demanding challenge. In this context, education for citizenship is an important undertaking to provide individuals with skills, values, knowledge, and beliefs needed to successfully participate in democratic processes and to foster a culture of active civic engagement.

Under this conceptual umbrella, this special issue of *In Factis Pax* will bring together empirical and conceptual articles that focus on questions related to democracy and education, such as: What is the nature of the skills, values, and beliefs necessary for democratic participation, and in what situations do they occur and matter? What role does (citizenship) education play in addressing such skills, values, knowledge, and beliefs? What pedagogical methods best develop these democratic capacities? Do current educational frameworks account for the demands of today’s democratic citizenship? Submissions that are consistent with the theme of the issue are encouraged.

Both empirical and theoretical articles are welcome. Each contribution should include a discussion of educational implications. The submissions from a broad array of disciplines are encouraged.

Manuscripts should not exceed 10,000 words, follow Chicago style, and be submitted as files in Microsoft Word (.doc) or a compatible format. For more details please see [http://www.infactispax.org/ submission-guidelines/](http://www.infactispax.org/submission-guidelines/). Each contribution will undergo double-blind peer review.

**Deadline for submission: February 1, 2010**

Please email inquiries and submit articles to **Florian Feucht, guest editor, [florian.feucht@utoledo.edu](mailto:florian.feucht@utoledo.edu)**, Assistant Professor for Educational Psychology, Department of Educational Foundations and Leadership, The University of Toledo.

## Call for contributions to the Newsletter

We invite you to support this initiative, and to send us any feedback on this newsletter. Also, submissions for the next SIG Newsletter (which will appear somewhere in the beginning of November) is more than welcome.

Please, [send us any information](#) you wish to share with the SIG members, such as

- New publications (books, journal articles) related to our SIG
- Other announcements (conferences, meetings, workshops etc)
- Calls for submissions to special issues, books etc.
- Job announcements, calls for collaboration that may be of interest to SIG members

We are open to any new items in this newsletter. Any personal news (awards, honorary doctorates, change of position, ...) can certainly be included. We are also looking for people who want to contribute with conference impressions, or reviews of books and articles.