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The Education for Sustainability Jig-Saw Puzzle: Implementation in Universities

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ABSTRACT

Why is it taking so long to implement curriculum change for Education for Sustainability (EfS)? Despite a wealth of literature and government reporting about the need for EfS, we have seen few moves to include EfS across the curriculum in universities. Importantly, the sort of curriculum change we are seeking represents a complex process in complex organizations. No single factor affects this type of change. Rather there are several interconnecting aspects of organizations, disciplines, individuals, and beliefs. Hence, in discussing curriculum change we identify the roles of: organizational change; institutional strategies; academic development; curriculum development; learning and teaching practice; pedagogy; the campus; graduate attributes; and professional associations. Overall we do not offer a quick solution, rather we identify the need for a systemic approach to recognizing the range of elements that make up the EfS picture, and how they relate to one another. In parallel we recognize the role that the values of disciplines, and the academics themselves, play in influencing all the elements we have discussed. Our proposition is that if we all recognize the issues discussed, and tailor our responses to the situations of the university (and disciplines) we have targeted, then we can facilitate implementation of EfS.

KEYWORDS

Sustainable Development; Sustainability Education; Universities; Implementation

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