

Teaching ethics in the university through multicultural online dialogue

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This paper presents the results of an international collaboration on ethics teaching for personal and professional values within the area of formal higher education using new communication technologies. The course design was based on the dialogic technique and was aimed at clarifying the students' own values, defining their own positions related to ethical dilemmas, developing argumentative strategies and an ethical commitment to their profession and contribution to society. The online dialogue between heterogeneous groups of students based on their cultural background -the main innovation of this training- was possible thanks to the technological and administrative support of the participating universities. To analyze the effect of this innovative training we employed a quasi-experimental design using a control group, i.e., without the option of online dialogue with students from another culture. University students from Spain (University of Cantabria) and Chile (Universidad Autónoma de Chile) participated in this study. The positive results, which included better scores and positive assessments of both debate involvement and intercultural contact by students who participated in the new teaching program, support the main conclusion that the opening of international dialogue on moral dilemmas through new communication technologies contributes significantly to improve ethics training in higher education.

Critical thinking

Cultural interaction

Educational innovation

Ethics

High education

Online dialogue

Teaching values