

Explicating the "Implicit Curriculum:" A Taxonomic Analysis

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Abstract:

The last decade has seen increased criticism of and pressures on higher education, and analyses of university bulletins or assessments of program learning outcomes fall short in communicating the value(s) of a tertiary education. Perhaps that is because they don't acknowledge the "implicit" or values-based curriculum. Research supports the importance of a values-based education and transparency in pedagogical practices to student learning; yet much remains implicit (or unstated).

At a time when many outside the institutions are questioning higher education, faculty, forced to adapt to Covid-19 modalities and pedagogies, have become more reflective of their explicit curriculum-what to keep, what to truncate, what to abandon-and perhaps aware (for the first time) of their implicit curriculum (e.g., overcoming technological challenges, persistence, self-reliance). Given the need for and the timeliness of this issue, this research study purports to answer the following questions:

1. What are the dimensions or elements of higher education's implicit curriculum?
2. How is the implicit curriculum communicated or enacted within higher education's classrooms and institutions?

This qualitative study will utilize reflective practices (Dickel, 2017), with faculty focus groups, to develop an implicit curriculum taxonomy.