

zhb Higher Education Research Colloquium Series



Guest Talk: Prof. Frédéric Darbellay

The end of disciplinary identities? Interdisciplinarity to rethink knowledge production

Interdisciplinarity research has become a major preoccupation of education policy, universities and research funding agencies, at national, European and international levels. This preoccupation is related to the ambitions and expectations of many researchers who question the potential and limits of their own discipline. They want to establish new connections with other disciplines and to engage in a constructive dialogue in order to analyze, understand and solve the complex problems of our time that go beyond the scope of a single discipline. These issues call for the decompartmentalization of disciplinary knowledge production, which often remains locked within the boundaries of disciplines still constrained by the hierarchical and discipline-based organization of universities. In this context arises the crucial issue of the disciplinary identity of researchers who are between and beyond disciplinary boundaries. Who are they? Where do they come from and where are they going? Can they exist and durably survive in the university; are they supported or penalized in their academic careers? Are they inventing a new profile of researchers more or less creative and undisciplined? Are they process agents of disciplinary identities and renewing academia or are they only the fashion of the day? We specifically address these burning issues that animate both specialists and unclassifiable researchers.

Frédéric Darbellay is Associate Professor at the University of Geneva (Valais Campus) and Head of Inter- and Transdisciplinarity Unit in the Centre for Children's Rights Studies. His research focuses on the study of interdisciplinarity as a creative process of knowledge production between and beyond disciplines. He is author of several publications on the theory and practice of inter- and transdisciplinarity through multiple scientific fields in higher education. Among his main (authored and co-edited) publications are *Interdisciplinarité et Transdisciplinarité en Analyse des Discours*, Slatkine, 2005; *Le Défi de l'Inter- et Transdisciplinarité*, PPUR, 2008; *A Vision of Transdisciplinarity. Laying Foundations for a World Knowledge Dialogue*, EPFL Press/CRC Press, 2008; *Repenser l'Interdisciplinarité*, Slatkine, 2010; *Common Knowledge: The Challenge of Transdisciplinarity*, EPFL Press/CRC Press, 2011; *La Circulation des Savoirs: Interdisciplinarité, Concepts Nomades, Analogies, Métaphores*, Peter Lang, 2012; *L'interdisciplinarité racontée. Chercher hors frontières, vivre l'interculturalité*, Peter Lang, 2014.

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