

**Book review**

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***CREATIVITY IN UNIVERSITY TEACHING BY SNJEŽANA  
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*Creativity in University Teaching* is a university book written by Snježana Dubovicki who is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Education in Osijek. The author's scientific contribution focuses on curriculum research, teaching, self-actualization, emotions in teaching, research methods and creativity. The author has been dealing with the creativity issues in teaching for some years and has participated in different projects on creativity. The main project on creativity that the author participated in was conducted from 2009 to 2014 and was called *The Development of Creativity in Lifelong Learning*. The research of creativity as one of the predispositions for healthy and prosperous communities is a challenging interdisciplinary topic, especially in terms of university teaching, where it has an important role of ensuring creative and self-actualized individuals. The author deals with this topic in her book and provides theory and findings about it.

The book *Creativity in University Teaching* was published in 2016 by Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, Faculty of Education in Osijek. The book contains 188 pages which are thematically divided into three parts: *Creativity in general, University teaching and Creative methods* based on theoretical and empirical analyses. Headings in the book are: *Introduction, Theories of creativity, University teaching and creativity, Methods of creativity encouragement, Final thoughts, Curriculum vitae, References, Little glossary and Summary*.

The first part of the book deals with creativity, different definitions and theories, creative process and the importance of creativity in general. It also includes previous research on creativity. Subheadings of the first part are: *Creativity, creative process, creative person, creative product, Self-*

*actualization and creativity, Self-actualization and creativity research and Research of creativity and self-actualization in students.* The author provides several definitions of creativity, as well as different theoretical approaches to creativity: psychoanalytic theory, behaviorist theory, Gestalt theory, theory of intellectual development and sociocultural theory. Creativity is in the book seen as an important factor of self-actualization which enables an individual to reach his/her potential. Some of the most important elements of creativity that are mentioned are: high motivation, imagination, intuitiveness, joy, spontaneous flexibility, curiosity, originality, sensitivity, elaboration and others. The author states the difference between creativity and creation. There is a need for a physical result in creation, whereas in creativity there is no need for visible creative products. The author also mentions the difference in creativity in young children and adults. Creativity in children is focused on the creative process itself, whereas creativity in adults is focused on work and working styles. Creative process is described in four stages: inspiration, achievement, finalization and communication. In the end of the first part the author gives a short overview of the research on creativity and intelligence and provides data of her research on creativity and self-actualization in university teaching conducted in 2011./2012. In the research the author wanted to estimate if the curriculum of the Faculty of education is connected to students' creativity and self-actualization. The tests used in the research were *How kreative are you?* by Raudsepp and a self-actualization test by Boyum. Students of the first and the final year at the Faculty of education in Osijek took part in the research. The research results show that the level of creativity and self-actualization is higher in final year students, than in first year students and that there is a positive correlation between the curriculum and self-actualization and creativity. The author concludes that the curriculum of the Faculty of Education, as well as faculty courses and professors who implement them influence students' development, creativity and self-actualization. University teaching contributes to the development of the whole and self-actualized person. Each subheading includes possible tasks for teachers and students, therefore the book can also be used as a textbook in university teaching.

The second part of the book *University teaching and creativity* refers to university teaching and encouraging creativity in it. It consists of the following subheadings: *Importance of creativity in university teaching, Role of a university professor in teaching, Educational climate in teaching, Emotions in the class, Humor in the class, Educational function of university teaching, Evaluation of university teaching, Quality of teaching and The research of creativity in university teaching.* In this part the author analyses

factors that enable and encourage creativity and factors that interfere and disable creativity in university teaching from professors and students' points of view. Positive factors are a smaller number of students, adequate work space, positive social relations, encouraging student initiative, professor's positive attitude towards students, etc. Negative factors are overloaded timetable, the inadequate work space, a large number of students, professor's negative attitude towards creativity in the classroom, etc. The author also emphasizes the importance of the change of professor's and students' role in teaching. A professor should encourage unusual questions and imaginative ideas, he or she has to be an organizer, creator and motivator of student activities in order to encourage students to think critically, cooperative learning and creativity. Moreover, university professors are also scientists, therefore they are creative scientists who make analogies in their discoveries. Emotions and educational climate are also important for encouraging creativity because emotional blockades are not good for creativity, they suppress it, therefore a professor needs to ensure positive educational climate and use humor in the classroom in order to make students feel relaxed and free. The author stresses the lack of creativity in evaluation in university teaching and provides different evaluation systems. She also names elements of evaluation in the specific university course *Didaktika (Didactics)*: the essay, group activity, portfolios, projects, a book review, written exams and attendance. What is more, the author lists characteristics of quality teaching according to students' opinion, such as interesting and different lectures, an encouraging professor and positive communication.

Another valuable scientific contribution of this book is an overview of the research conducted at the Faculty of Education in Osijek, aimed at encouraging creativity in university teaching, examining students' and professors' attitude towards the importance of creativity in university teaching and encouraging students' creativity. Moreover, the aims of the research were to examine professors' and students' activity in university teaching, the dominance of activities in the class and which methods contribute to students' activity. The respondents were students of the second year of the Faculty of Education in Osijek and the research was conducted during the faculty courses *Didaktika (Didactics)* and *Teorija kurikulumuma (The Theory of Curriculum)*. During these courses students' and professors' activities were measured and the final results proved that by using more creative methods of teaching and didactic material, rather than non-creative ones, such as the method of *six hats*, the theatre of shadows, crosswords, acting and others, students were more involved in the educational process.

Students were encouraged to think creatively, ask questions, make positive emotional climate and democratic relations.

The author also examined students' opinion on the importance of the courses at the faculty. The majority of students ranked the courses in the following way: *Croatian language, Pedagogy of Children with Special Needs, Integrated Teaching, Didactics, the Methodology of Croatian language, the Methodology of Music Education, the Methodology of Science and the Methodology of Maths*. Therefore, they believe that methodical and didactic courses are very important for their future profession. Among elective courses they find *Non-violent Communication, Intercultural pedagogy* and *Parenting* the most important ones for their profession.

The research proved that professors have a positive attitude towards the creativity in university teaching and that many of them introduce creative methods of teaching in their courses. The author also analyzed the influence of the course *Creativity in Teaching*, introduced to students as an elective course in academic year 2010./2011., and its influence on students' creativity. The research results showed that the course significantly influenced students' creativity, their originality, flexibility and humour.

The third part of the book offers different creative methods for encouraging creativity in teaching during every teaching stage: introduction, realization and evaluation. The author provides a thorough description of each method, such as brainstorming, six hats, morphological analysis, socio-drama, mental maps, guided meditation, etc. In her final thoughts, the author states that there is no successful university teaching if students do not develop their imagination and new ideas in it.

The book *Creativity in teaching* provides valuable scientific data on creativity in teaching in general and specifically in university teaching. It proves the importance of creativity in teaching and how it can encourage students to be more active, creative and to enhance their social and learning skills. The creativity as a precondition for self-realization is very important and the author proves it through the research in university teaching. The book also consists of practical ways how to encourage creativity in the classroom, and gives an overview of the research of creativity in the university courses, which again confirms the important role of creativity in teaching. The book is highly recommended to all of those who deal with creativity, especially to teachers, professors and students at the faculties of education and others.