

1st Liberal Education Student Symposium (LESS)

Concept Paper

Outreach Committee, University College Freiburg

“Education F(r)ees or Freeing Education?”

The Interdependencies Between Liberal Education and Politics in Theory and Practice

— Kandeblickhütte Vöhrenbach, 13-15 April 2018 —

The Liberal Education Students Conferences (LESC) held in 2015 and 2016 brought students from different interdisciplinary programs all over Europe together to discuss different aspects of Liberal Education. Based on this success, the initiative will continue this year with another LESC in Utrecht. Both previous conferences were able to successfully create lasting products in the form of an ebook and a special issue of an academic journal. However, we would like to amplify the collaborative and communal aspect of such gatherings.

Having experienced the benefits of an exchange in such a diverse body of students during these conferences, we – the Outreach Committee of the University College Freiburg – aim to continue this exchange in a new format. Therefore, we are organising a symposium on “The Interdependencies Between Liberal Education and Politics in Theory and Practice” in a Black Forest hut near Freiburg im Breisgau (South-West Germany). This conference aims to enable students from different universities to interact in a personal setting and continue their academic reflection and exchange on Liberal Education from various perspectives.

The academic gathering will encompass a range of student-organized discussions and workshops about the political consequences and impacts of Liberal Education in Europe. In short, our theme will revolve around the question of “Education F(r)ees or Freeing Education?”. We aim to enhance the understanding of the role Liberal Education can play in society and its significance for creating responsible actors. Additionally, we will focus on the political implications and consequences for the larger public.

The questions debated upon may concern the concepts of freedom in political and educational theory and their different implementations within our study programs; the analysis of different political systems and their educational agenda; the role of (liberal) education for the relationship between citizen and state; or the impact of Liberal Education on political protest. However, the concrete topics and possible events will be selected by the participating students.

Applying our principles of liberal and self-responsible education, all events and projects will be organized and led by participating students. General events introducing the topic and building a common ground for the following discussions will be organized by students of the Outreach Committee. The Committee will also coordinate and schedule all of the events. The discussions, projects, and workshops on specific topics as well as various other events or social activities will be organized by the participating students in order to collectively create a diverse and interesting program. These projects are not limited to academic debates or workshops and might range from creative games or role plays to movies or discussions. Thereby visualizing the diverse implications and manifestations of freedom in politics and education. Since all of us experience them in different ways in our daily life, personal experiences and reflections might serve as a starting point for ideas and projects.

Key facts:

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| Where? | Kandelblickhütte, 78147 Vöhrenbach [†] |
| When? | 13-15 April 2018 (Friday afternoon till Sunday lunchtime) |
| How to get there? | By public transportation or car from Freiburg im Breisgau |
| Who can participate? | Open to 25-40 Liberal Education students from all over Europe |
| How to apply? | Binding registration via online form by February 25 |

Further information on what to bring and more details about travel arrangements, etc. will be sent out after the sign-up is complete. Be prepared to pay for your own travel, for a small deposit and (potentially) a participation fee to cover food and drinks.

