

Terschuur, 21 February 2017

To the participants of the UvA Life Long Learning course

Dear Lifelong Learners,

For me it is a great pleasure meeting with you during our class on Wednesday March 15, from 15:00 – 18:00 h in Amsterdam.

When preparing our meeting with Thomas Jaarsma and Joost Jansen in de Wal, we concluded that it would be meaningful to address the following two major topics:

1. Where does motivation start for becoming a lifelong learner? Initial education not only has a strong influence on the kind of profession and job you will perform in adulthood, but also on the motivation for further learning. Low achievers in school mostly end up in low paid jobs and often with low control over their lives. How can we design an educational system for young people that encourages lifelong learning for all?
2. As lifelong learning not only serves economic objectives but also personal goals and democratic values (Biesta, 2006) this raises the question: who sets the agenda for lifelong learning? When lifelong learning gradually becomes a duty for national economic growth, what happens to the personal goals and the democratic values? Let us discuss this question in combination with the recent report of the prestigious Roosevelt Institute: *Lifelong Learning in 2040* (Smith & Meany, 2016)

As we all share a strong interest in designing learning environments for education, professional development and personal growth, it is worthwhile to also reflect on our personal experiences in university education; when we consider not only the content, but also the way it is organized, assessed and controlled, which dimensions in Biesta's triangle are emphasized?

Overlooking the above topics and questions, it is meaningful to read the following two articles (9 and 8 pages) before our meeting:

Biesta, G. (2006). What is the point of lifelong learning if lifelong learning has no point? On the democratic deficit of policies for lifelong learning. *European Educational Research Journal*. 5 (3/4) 169-180.

Also take a look at the Roosevelt Institute report on *Lifelong Learning in 2040* (Smith & Meaney, 2016). www.rooseveltinstitute.org
How will your analysis of this text look like when applying Biesta's Lifelong Learning triangle as a lens for reading?

If this letter or the two proposed articles raise questions or thoughts that you would like to share with me before our meeting, do not hesitate to drop a note: joseph@josephkessels.com

Looking forward meeting you fairly soon,
Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joseph Kessels".

Prof. dr. Joseph W.M. Kessels