

# INVITATION

## Growth mindset in university lecturing



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

**24 - 26. November 2021 (Wed - Fri)**

**Free online Learning, Teaching, Training Activity (ST4)**

**Project:** This activity is part of the Erasmus+ project GrowthMinds, which aims at developing a growth mindset by university-level teaching personnel (university educators) and consequently their students. More information about the project at <http://www.unigrowthminds.eu/>.

**Background:** According to psychologist Carol Dweck, there are **two basic mindsets: fixed and growth**. In a **growth mindset**, individuals understand that their talents and abilities can be developed through effort, good teaching, good strategies, and persistence. They do not necessarily think anyone can be Einstein, but they believe everyone can improve their abilities if they put enough effort into it. In contrast, individuals with a **fixed mindset** believe their basic abilities, intelligence, and talents are just fixed traits or innate gifts carved in stone. They possess a certain amount and that's that, and then their goal becomes to look smart all the time and never look dumb. Dweck summarizes: "My research has shown that *the view you adopt for yourself* profoundly affects the way you lead your life. It can determine whether you become the person you want to be and whether you accomplish the things you value." (from her book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (2006)). The good news is: **mindsets are changeable**, meaning that everybody can adopt a growth mindset. Especially **teaching** can play a pivotal role in forming and changing mindsets.

**Purpose:** This final teaching activity will summarize all the previous activities in the project and will open the gate for transferring knowledge among partner organizations. By including the results of teaching activities, reflections from students, university lectures and partner organisations, projects, portfolio of cases, before-after growth mindset research in the course, teaching best practice, quotes, evidence of satisfaction with different activities, this workshop will present the best possible evaluation of the materials produced during the project. This can later be used as strong evidence to promote the use of methodology to other lecturers, universities, and stakeholders such as policymakers.

**Call for best practice examples (optional):** Within the project, we gather best-practice examples of growth mindset teaching at university level intended to be published in an open-access compendium. We kindly invite all participants to submit such examples. More information and submission at <https://survey.aau.at/index.php/472291> (short URL: [cutt.ly/GMexamples](http://cutt.ly/GMexamples))

**Venue:** Online (link will be shared via email after registration deadline)

**Who is welcome to join:** University teachers and other staff involved in teaching/training of students from participating organisations (*Balkesir University; University of Klagenfurt; George Emil Palade University of Medicine, Pharmacy, Science and Technology of Targu Mures; University of Primorska, STEP Institute*)

**Registration:** <https://survey.aau.at/index.php/971571>  
(short URL: [cutt.ly/KluST4](http://cutt.ly/KluST4))

**Registration deadline:** 21.11.2021 (Sun) 23:59 CET

If you have any questions, feel free to contact the hosts at [samuel.hafner@aau.at](mailto:samuel.hafner@aau.at).

# Agenda

**Time:** 9:00-12:00, 13:00-16:00 (CET; breaks as necessary)

## 24. November (Wednesday)

09:00 – 09:15	Welcome and warm-up
09:15 – 10:00	Status quo: presentation of all partners on their progress/project goals/IOs Project lead: presentation of the overall project progress
10:00 – 10:20	short break
10:20 – 12:00	Some background about the Growth Mindset indicators
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch break
13:00 – 16:00	workshop and keynote with Florian Müller (University of Klagenfurt): Self-determination Theory meets Growth Mind – Growth Mind meets self-determination Theory (Abstract below)

## 25. November (Thursday)

09:00 – 12:00	Warm-up workshop and keynote with Gabriele Frankl (Austria): “Didactics to go, didactic to grow” (Abstract below)
12:00 – 13:20	Lunch break
13:20 – 14:00	Reflection on keynotes: Which contents are most easily transferable into different national contexts, practices and disciplines? (group work)
14:00 – 14:30	Discussion of the results
14:30 – 14:45	short break
14:45 – 15:20	Piloting the feedback criteria/questions (group work)
15:20 – 15:50	Discussion on the feedback form

## 26. November (Friday)

09:00 – 09:15	Warm up, welcome
09:15 – 10:15	Feedback session on submitted examples (group work)
10:15 – 10:30	Status quo: how far have you come, questions
10:30 – 10:45	Short break
10:45 – 12:00	Feedback session cont. (group work)
12:00 – 13:20	Lunch break
13:20 – 14:30	Suitability of the examples for the compendium (every group presents their results)
14:30 – 14:45	short break
14:45 – 15:15	Best-practice compendium: what to include, how to organise, where to publish, how to disseminate
15:15 – 15:45	Evaluation (Romania)

### Abstracts of the keynotes

**Keynote 1: “Self-determination Theory meets Growth Mind – Growth Mind meets self-determination Theory”**  
- Florian Müller (University of Klagenfurt) (<https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Florian-Mueller-18>)

The lecture introduces one of the most prominent motivation theories, the self-determination theory (SDT), and tries to build conceptual bridges to growth mind. In addition, findings from our own research of the last few years, which were conducted on the basis of SDT, will be presented as examples.

Self-determination theory (SDT, Ryan & Deci, 2017) is a functional theory of motivation that can describe and explain in detail the interaction of motivational conditions in the environment and motivational regulation. In contrast to other theories of motivation, SDT distinguishes four regulatory styles of extrinsic motivation in addition to intrinsic motivation, which can be arranged on a continuum from heteronomous control to self-determination. Self-determined forms of motivation are associated, for example, with higher retention in educational institutions, satisfaction, or wellbeing and vitality (Vallerand et al., 1997). In SDT, the satisfaction of the so-called psychological basic needs for autonomy, competence and social relatedness is essential for the maintenance or development of self-determined forms of motivational regulation. In addition, the basic needs provide information and feedback on the quality of the person-environment interaction (Krapp, 2005). This quality is particularly important in the educational context, since learning and teaching are directly linked to people and their (learning) environment.

In accordance with the rationale of SDT, we investigated in our lab for example

- conditions and manifestations of the quality and quantity of students' motivation to learn or
- the connection between working conditions and motivation of school teachers

It was shown that the satisfaction of the basic psychological needs is fundamental for the maintenance and development of the quality of learning motivation and motivation to work. Depending on the setting, the respective needs have different explanatory impact for motivation.

Recently, we have particularly investigated the learning motivation of students under the constraints of the pandemic. We found a striking difference in university students' motivation compared to before forced distance learning. Similar results were also shown in a recent study on instrumental teaching for need satisfaction and motivation of teachers and students.

I am looking forward to discussing the theory, our findings, and the relationship between SDT and growth mind with you.

Krapp, A. (2005). The concept of basic psychological needs: An explanation for the positive effects of well-being and intrinsic motivation in teaching and learning. *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik*, 51(5), 626–641.

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2017). *Self-determination theory*. The Guilford Press.

Vallerand, R. J., Fortier, M. S., & Guay, F. (1997). Self-determination and persistence in a real-life setting: Toward a motivational model of high school dropout. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72(5), 1161–1176.

Martinek, D., Carmignola, M., Müller, F.H., Bieg, S., Thomas, A.E., Eckes, A., Großmann, N., Dittrich, A.-K., & Wilde, M. (2021). How can students feel more vital amidst severe restrictions? Psychological needs satisfaction, motivational regulation and vitality of students during the coronavirus pandemic restrictions. *European Journal of Investigation in Health, Psychology and Education*, 11, 405–422.

Müller, F. H., Thomas, A. E., Carmignola, M., Dittrich, A.-K., Eckes, A., Großmann, N., Martinek, D., Wilde, M., & Bieg, S. (2021). University students' basic psychological needs, motivation, and vitality before and during COVID-19: A self-determination theory approach. *Frontier in Psychology: Educational Psychology* (2. Nov.2021).

## **Keynote 2: “Didactics to go, didactic to grow” – Gabriele Frankl (Austria)**

(<https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Gabriele-Frankl>)

“We can't solve today's problems with yesterday's solutions”, Albert Einstein said. The same is true for teaching. If we want to promote new skills in our students, we also need to adapt our didactical methods and learning environments accordingly.

This keynote with integrated workshops will provide some ideas and examples of how to foster problem-solving skills, creativity, the ability to be a lifelong learner, and self-determination, to name a few. We will start with formulating learning objectives that are suitable to promote a growth mindset and the selection of types of tasks and assignments to achieve these learning objectives. Since every problem is a nail if you only have a hammer, a tool box with different (digital) methods is presented. Further, we will also have a look at how we can promote (and digitally support) a class mindset based on building trust, define purpose, appreciating contributions and giving encouragement. Finally, we will turn to the topic of how to design a learning environment that promotes the experience of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, according to Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory. All in all, the morning offers space for exchange, discussion, reflection and lots of fun and at the end all participants should be able to take away a few didactic suggestions - to go.