

ADDRESS FROM THE PATRON

“Everything is based on maintaining the principle of looking at science as something that has not yet been found and can never be found, and of constantly searching for it as such.” We can apply these words, used by Wilhelm von Humboldt in his memorandum for the foundation of the University of Berlin in 1810, to describe the basic idea of academic teaching in general. The same holds for universities in the 21st century, especially when they are committed to Liberal Arts and Sciences education. Here teaching and learning is in different ways focused on solving fundamental and important problems and must therefore be based on or at least related to science and scholarship. Thus, the basic idea of the university becomes visible, namely the unity of research and teaching.

As a newly founded institution that is committed to innovative, interdisciplinary, and international academic training, University College Freiburg (UCF) is particularly oriented to research-based teaching and learning. We share this concept with many comparable institutions, some of them being our partners. One of the most agreeable features is the collaboration among our students who are eager to establish a European Liberal Education community. So it may not come as a surprise that some of them, especially UCF’s Students’ Outreach Committee, inspired by and collaborating with their fellows from other colleges, started a scientific-scholarly journal, taking into account all necessary requirements: the articles (on different topics in the Humanities, the Social, and the Natural Sciences) to be elaborated according to the rules of the respective disciplines, reviewed by peers, reliable and methodologically sound. And here it is: The first issue of angLES, the Liberal Educations Students Journal.

As UCF’s Director of Outreach, I was asked to take on patronage for angLES, which I gladly did. Now I am truly proud of having this first issue before me. Having done research and teaching at several universities and scientific institutions in Germany and abroad for decades, I am deeply impressed by the quality of the articles and the wide range of topics they cover – all according to the state of the art, interesting and important, innovative and interdisciplinary. The beginning could not have been better. I would therefore like to thank all students who took this initiative, especially Ruth Rohde, Jonas Skorzak, Mathias Hempfling, and Laurin Ganser. I am also grateful to everyone who contributed to this first issue as authors and reviewers. For the future, I wish that angLES will continue on the same path and at the same level. May it be helpful in establishing a community of Liberal Education students and thus contributing to mutual understanding and international collaboration, in Europe and beyond.

Prof. Dr. Hans-Joachim Gehrke
Director of Outreach, University College Freiburg

EDITORIAL

Good ideas rarely fall from heaven to land neatly in an individual person's lap. Rather, good ideas arise, are developed, and prosper through discourse and argument with others, and engagement with the world around us. Debating, offering our perspectives and challenging one another becomes more than simply the display and exchange of ideas. Rather, engagement becomes fertile ground where new ideas can flourish. This is very much the spirit of Liberal Arts and Sciences education, and the way we structure our learning: as a communal process. Yes, as students we may sometimes feel like hermits in the desert, pondering over the meaning of a particular text, a difficult research question or unanswered problem, spending days (and nights?) in the library and surviving on coffee and book dust. But then we go back: we take what we have gathered and we bring it into community, into problem based learning, into seminar discussions, into common rooms, dorms, student committees, and late night debates at College pub crawls, and parties – depending on our specific program set-up or individual preferences.

The journal in your hands embodies all the good (and some of the chaos-creating) qualities of communal learning. As the first pan-European liberal education students journal it would likely never have been created if we as students remained unaware of how much amazing work is being done all around us: we see this work presented in our local classrooms but also internationally at our Liberal Education Students Conferences (LESCs) and Symposia (LESSs). In founding angLES we aimed to carry forth the spirit of interdisciplinarity and international collaboration and thinking which are at the basis of these institutions. As we present the first issue of angLES today, I believe we have achieved this goal. After receiving 21 diverse submissions from 10 universities in seven countries, a positively challenging peer-reviewing and editing process, today we are presenting seven contributions. These span a variety of approaches and fields ranging from the critical analysis of Shakespeare's "Caesar and Cleopatra" to a GIS supported analysis of the German trade in scarce water resources. The journal has benefitted immensely from the learning students have already undertaken in their home universities: the authors and their scientific curiosity, the editors and their spirit of collaboration, the peer-reviewers with their skills to be open-minded and give meaningful feedback, and, hopefully, the readers who may find inspiration in these pages. This journal is a way for all of them to learn together in a new way, to put all their skills and knowledge together to create an outcome that may inspire others as well as themselves.

Yet, if it is rare for ideas to fall from heaven, their execution never does. And so, we must thank the community who gave life to this one. Special thanks go to the amazing staff of the University College Freiburg, specifically Hans-Joachim Gehrke, Reto Schölly, Paul Sterzel and Elina Schleutker, for encouraging and supporting the project. We want to thank the students, organizers and faculty members who supported and connected us on a European level, particularly the LESC 2019 committee at Bard College Berlin and Daniel Kontowski. We want to thank the authors and peer-reviewers for generously sharing and developing their ideas with us and their willingness to give and work with feedback and criticism. Personally, I would like to thank the wonderful members of the editorial board and the outreach committee of the University College Freiburg. Without them, their patience, dedication and creativity this project would not have been possible.

In this spirit, we are looking forward to the next issue of angLES, the expansion of the ECOLAS students network advanced by Samuel Abrahám of the Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts and our fellow student Hannah Bunt from UCL, the next LESS and LESC conferences in Vilnius this year, as well as new ideas that may come from them.

We wish you a happy new decade, and good reading!

Ruth Rohde
Chair of the Editorial Board