СЕКЦІЯ 2
СПЕЦІАЛЬНІ ТА ГАЛУЗЕВІ СОЦІОЛОГІЇ

OPEN EDUCATIONAL PLATFORMS IN THE PROCESSES OF INDIVIDUALIZATION AND PERSONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION: THE CASE OF V.N. KARAZIN NATIONAL KHARKIV UNIVERSITY

ВІДКРИТІ ОСВІТНІ ПЛАТФОРМИ В ПРОЦЕСАХ ІНДИВІДУАЛІЗАЦІЇ ТА ПЕРСОНАЛІЗАЦІЇ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ: КЕЙС ХАРКІВСЬКОГО НАЦІОНАЛЬНОГО УНІВЕРСИТЕТУ ІМЕНІ В.Н. КАРАЗІНА

Lytovchenko A.D.
PhD in Sociology,
Associate Professor at the Department of Political Sociology
V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University

Nekhaienko O.V.
PhD in Sociology,
Associate Professor at the Department of Political Sociology
V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University

Zaporozhchenko R.O.
PhD in Political Sciences,
Senior Lecturer at the Department of Political Sociology
V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University

The article is devoted to the study of the opportunities and challenges of integrating open educational platforms into university teaching, in the context of interfaculty disciplines as a tool for individualization and personalization of students' educational trajectories. Against the backdrop of current social disasters – the COVID-19 pandemic and the full-scale war in Ukraine – the transformation of educational processes that took place under the pressure of the need for distance and hybrid learning is considered.

Open educational platforms (Coursera, edX, Prometheus, EdEra, etc.) are considered in the article as a technological and semantic resource for expanding students' educational choice, strengthening their agency in learning, increasing the flexibility of the educational process and enriching the critical perception of academic material. It is emphasized that open courses contribute to the formation of skills of interdisciplinary analysis, career adaptability, as well as individual design of the educational path. At the same time, the author reveals key contradictions between the logic of market individualization (orientation on consumer preferences) and meaningful personalization (orientation on the development of the student as a responsible subject).

The strategic importance of open educational platforms for the transformation of higher education is emphasized. The author is convinced that their productive use is possible only under the condition of a pragmatic-critical approach: platforms should not replace the teacher, but should complement and enrich the educational process. Only under the condition of a conscious approach can open educational platforms become a tool for deep, meaningful personalization, and not a superficial imitation of digital flexibility. Interfaculty disciplines in this context are considered as a promising model for the implementation of innovative approaches that can form a responsible attitude towards their own learning in students.

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Key words: open educational platforms, personalization of education, interfaculty disciplines, digital transformation of education, distance learning.

Статтю присвячено дослідженню можливостей і викликів інтеграції відкритих освітніх платформ в університетське викладання, зокрема в контексті міжфакультетських дисциплін як інструмента індивідуалізації й персоналізації освітніх траєкторій студентів. На тлі актуальних соціальних катастроф – пандемії COVID-19 і повномасштабної війни в Україні – розглянуто трансформацію освітніх процесів, що відбулася під тиском необхідності дистанційного й гібридного навчання. У статті відкриті освітні платформи (Coursera, edX, Prometheus, EdEra тощо) розглядаються як технологічний і смисловий ресурс для розширення освітнього вибору студентів, посилення їхньої агентності в навчанні, підвищення гнучкості освітнього процесу та збагачення критичного сприйняття академічного матеріалу. Підкреслюється, що відкриті курси сприяють формуванню навичок міждисциплінарного аналізу, кар'єрної адаптивності, а також індивідуального проєктування освітнього шляху. Водночас автор виявляє ключові суперечності між логікою ринкової індивідуалізації (орієнтація на споживчі вподобання) і змістовою персоналізацією (орієнтація на розвиток студента як відповідального суб'єкта). Відзначається стратегічне значення відкритих освітніх платформ для трансформації вищої освіти. Автор переконаний, що їх продуктивне використання можливе лише за умови прагматично-критичного підходу: платформи не повинні підміняти собою викладача, а мають доповнювати й збагачувати навчальний процес. Лише за умови усвідомленого підходу відкриті освітні платформи здатні стати інструментом глибокої, змістовної персоналізації, а не поверхового наслідування цифрової гнучкості. Міжфакультетські дисципліни в такому контексті розглядаються як перспективна модель упровадження інноваційних підходів, здатних сформувати відповідальне ставлення до власного навчання в студентів.

Стаття підготовлена в рамках реалізації проєкту Erasmus+ KA2 CBHE "Students' Personalised Learning Model, Based on the Virtual Learning Environment of Intellectual Tutoring "Learning with No Limits" – SMART-PL" (project number 101082928).

Ключові слова: відкриті освітні платформи, персоналізація освіти, міжфакультетські дисципліни, цифрова трансформація освіти, дистанційне навчання.

Introduction. The development of open educational platforms gained particular momentum when, as a result of quarantine measures to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of distance learning formats expanded. In the Ukrainian educational field, the relevance of distance education was tragically intensified by the armed invasion; this was especially true for frontline regions, particularly Kharkiv. The introduction of open educational platforms by some Ukrainian universities long before the pandemic and the war partially prepared them for this challenge; however, there is undoubtedly a significant difference between selective, initiative-based usage and the necessity to respond to inevitable challenges.

University-specific characteristics bring open educational platforms into focus in a special dimension – as a result of the steady movement of modern higher education towards the individualization of educational offerings and the personalization of the educational process. This movement is a natural reaction of higher education to the demands of the labor market at the stage of late capitalism, which emphasizes the construction of a simulated image of reality that should be perceived by each individual actor within the capitalist consumer space as "personally tailored". Higher education, with its inherent functions of socialization, plays a crucial role in personalizing this image of reality. The process of personalization is not limited to the level of social consciousness but penetrates deeply into the level of activity, stimulating various instrumental and semantic changes in corresponding social fields.

The *relevance* of our article is due to the peak growth in social demand for the development of open educational platforms as tools for the individualization and personalization of higher education. The market-based nature of this demand generates a *problem* of contradiction between individualization and personalization, which, unfortunately, are often articulated in official discourse solely in an apologetic key. The contradiction manifests itself in the conflict between market-driven applications of advertising and marketing templates and the meaning of individualization and personalization; this meaning also clashes with the inevitable template-based formalization of the educational process inherent in the late-capitalist system of higher education. The *purpose* of our article is to characterize possible ways of resolving this contradiction within the framework of the classical university model.

Higher education is initially oriented to some extent towards individualized educational and professional trajectories. Ukrainian classical research universities try to build their educational models equidistant from mass higher education ("education as a forge of personnel") of industrial society and market higher education ("sale of educational services") of late capitalist society. The example of V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University shows that intra-university stable ideas about the university mission play a special role in setting the goals of a classical university: to satisfy the strategic needs of society in the interdependent development of scientific research and a modern personality. The combination of a mandatory educational framework with the possibilities of its individual interpretation, personal construction of one's educational trajectory is a university version of the strategy for transforming society. From our point of view, this is where the possibility of overcoming the inconsistency of the tendency of individualization and personalization of the educational trajectory lies. One of the tools for overcoming this problem is the elective component of university programs: in our case, this includes not only the internally chosen subjects of each individual faculty, but also interfaculty elective courses.

We are talking about courses open to students from different faculties of the university with the aim of expanding their educational experience beyond their main specialization. Such courses integrate knowledge from several fields of science; students can choose courses based on their own interests, professional needs, or career goals. Interfaculty courses play a significant role in developing interdisciplinarity and critical thinking. Students learn to combine knowledge from different fields, which contributes to a comprehensive understanding of complex problems; acquire additional competencies that are attractive to employers; develop career adaptability; and finally, develop in personal and general social senses.

The world's leading universities – MIT, Harvard, Stanford, Oxford – offer students a wide choice of courses from different faculties. The University of Melbourne is the most active in promoting interdisciplinarity within interfaculty disciplines in its model of the same name, introduced in 2008. However, the example of the Melbourne model is interesting to us not only for the boldness of its decisions, but also for their ambiguity: for example, its provision sharply increases the workload of teachers, and at the same time reduces the depth of students' specialized knowledge. In this, we see an echo of the fundamental contradiction that we updated at the beginning of the article. The conflict between the focus on the demands of the market, consumers (students and employers) and the substantive tasks of personalization is partly a conflict of profane populism and professional exactingness. At V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, interfaculty disciplines, introduced in 2017, are already an integral part of the educational process today. Applicants for the first (bachelor's) level of the second and third years choose one interfaculty elective discipline per semester. The volume of such a discipline is three credits (90 hours), and the final assessment is carried out in the form of a test[1]. The list of interfaculty courses is updated every semester. The topics of the courses are quite diverse, covering topics from vitaminology to the basics of crypto trading. Under the influence of the pandemic and military isolation, the university switched to using platforms such as

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[1] URL: https://karazin.ua/osvita/vibirkovi-distciplini/?utm_source.

Moodle, Zoom and Google Classroom, and also partially (in the first months of the war) introduced an asynchronous learning format, thanks to which students were able to join interfaculty courses regardless of their physical location and time. Some courses integrated interactive elements – video lectures, webinars, online tests and practical assignments in the case format. It was in such conditions that the use of open educational platforms became relevant. Platforms such as Coursera, Khan Academy, edX, FutureLearn, Udemy Prometheus, EdEra, etc. not only create the opportunity to study anywhere and anytime, but also provide a certain degree of personalized approach. Open platforms use artificial intelligence algorithms to adapt content to the level of knowledge of each student, offering them relevant assignments, videos, and interactive exercises. In addition, modern open platforms offer a wide range of courses from different fields that can be integrated into interfaculty disciplines, and at the same time, interfaculty disciplines can use these platforms as a tool for popularizing university education, integrating them with both individual lectures and entire courses.

The *advantages* of open educational platforms include a wide range of courses, flexibility of format (the ability to combine the platform with traditional education), accessibility (many courses are free), and interactivity. Among the disadvantages, we note access barriers that arise in the absence of a stable Internet connection or modern devices; lack of localization – some courses are not adapted to the Ukrainian context; limited interaction with the teacher in massive online courses; risk of loss of motivation – a high level of independence is difficult to achieve for students without self-organization skills; fragmentation of content – sometimes courses are developed without clear integration into the university's educational program. Author's experience of teaching eight interfaculty disciplines – "Election Campaigns: Organization, Marketing, Technology", "Critical Analysis of Modern Society", "Manipulative Technologies in the Modern World", "Things. Power. Violence", "Dissection of Mass Culture: Rage Against the Masscult", "Fantasy and Ideology", "Postcolonial Studios" and 'Globalization: How to Become a World Boss" – seven years since the introduction of this format at V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University. With a focus on Ukrainian open educational platforms – Prometheus and EdEra – the most significant aspects of their use in teaching interfaculty disciplines as tools of individualization and personalization include the following:

– Students can assimilate part of the offered material through an alternative transmitter, without the obligatory mediation of the instructor; this additionally diversifies the mode of teaching.

– Opportunities for individual and instructor-independent interpretation of course material expand, encouraging critical reflection on both the content and the instructor's perspectives presented in interfaculty lectures; in turn, this enhances students' ability to participate meaningfully in discussions.

– The lack of effective supplementary and overview materials is mitigated: interfaculty disciplines are almost always intended for a non-specialist audience, have an introductory and educational character, and are primarily aimed at expanding (and stimulating) individual potential for independent exploration of relevant topics. However, there is a notable lack of teaching aids and textbooks offering interdisciplinary content at a level accessible to non-specialist students. A significant portion of open platform courses are designed precisely for non-specialist, introductory learning, making them especially suitable for mastering interfaculty disciplines.

– Independent student reflection on educational technologies, the learning process, and the entire system of late-capitalist education is encouraged in all its diversity, beyond merely the official formal level. For instance, the use of similar templates and manipulative techniques in open platform courses and formal university courses prompts students to critically evaluate stereotypical explanations that attribute all problems in education solely to the inefficiency of outdated standards and inert university systems.

These effects significantly enhance the personalization of the learning process for students in interfaculty disciplines and promote awareness of constructing individual educational and professional trajectories as a socially responsible behavioral task. It is worth noting that using open educational platforms in teaching interfaculty disciplines also diversifies instructors' experience: based on feedback from students who engage with independently chosen courses, instructors may realize that they were teaching a somewhat different subject than they had intended – of course, if the instructor is capable and willing to reflect on this.

However, it is also necessary to acknowledge the *negative effects* encountered when using open educational platforms in the teaching of interfaculty disciplines.

Firstly, critical evaluation of the quality of platform materials by students may not occur. In such cases, the popularity and trendiness of open platforms may have only a superficial impact, leading students to perceive all platform content as uniformly high-quality – which is far from reality.

Secondly, the use of open educational platforms within interfaculty disciplines may further reduce the already limited volume of educational communication between students and instructors, reinforcing the technocratic attitude toward education as merely a process of "transmitting information packages". This could deepen the alienation and fetishization of education.

Thirdly, students already find it difficult to absorb unusually broad thematic content lacking a clear unifying framework, and the use of open platforms tends to increase this confusion.

Nevertheless, even considering these risks, the integration of open educational platforms into the

teaching of interfaculty courses appears to be an effective tool for reducing the contradictions universities face in responding to market-driven demands for individualization and personalization of educational trajectories. In this regard, we should draw attention not to a fragmentary but a systemic version of the integration we are discussing.

A special type of functional exchange between universities and open educational platforms involves university instructors developing courses entirely "for the platform". The primary goal of courses created on open platforms is to provide diverse learning opportunities for students engaged in distance education. Of course, integrating interfaculty disciplines into open educational platforms requires careful planning and coordination on the part of both the university and the platform's support services. The process of joining a platform includes several key steps to ensure effective and high-quality learning.

The first step is needs and capacity analysis: for example, instructors or administrators may conduct surveys among students and colleagues to identify their needs and interests regarding interfaculty disciplines. This approach helps determine which subjects and learning materials are in highest demand and most relevant. Then, existing resources should be assessed to determine which can be used or adapted for interfaculty courses.

An important next step is selecting an appropriate platform. At this stage, instructors must research available platforms and assess their functionality, user interface, support for various formats of learning materials, and integration capabilities with university systems. It is also essential to consider partnership opportunities and support from the platform. For instance, Prometheus offers free opportunities for universities, organizations, and companies to publish and distribute courses.

Within the platform, instructors can independently record and edit video lectures and then freely upload the course to an online platform that offers powerful tools for course configuration, task creation, and forum-based communication with students. This diversity is particularly relevant for interfaculty disciplines, which often require a truly postmodern "patchwork" approach to organizing and presenting material. There is also the possibility of creating courses by commission: in such cases, the platform may take on the full production cycle of a massive open online course (MOOC).

After selecting a platform, learning materials must be developed and adapted. The development of interfaculty courses should include several stages. First, determine course topics that will be interesting and useful for students. Then, detailed course plans should be created, including objectives, methods, and assessment criteria. It is also important to ensure access to necessary resources and tools for implementing the courses. Finally, regular meetings and discussions should be organized for progress monitoring and feedback.

After course development, technical integration with university systems is necessary, including the integration of open educational platforms with university Learning Management Systems (LMS).

It is important to develop skills for using open educational platforms among those with no prior experience. If necessary, training sessions for both instructors and students can be organized, along with guides and video tutorials to facilitate adaptation. Creating a feedback system for promptly addressing technical issues is also advisable, as instructors independently integrating their courses may need to resolve part of the technical aspects on their own. Overall, (post-)monitoring and evaluation serve as crucial tools to assess the effectiveness of the course and identify areas and modules for improvement. Platforms provide monitoring and analytics tools to track student progress. Regular updates and improvements based on collected data and feedback help ensure the course remains effective and relevant over time. Course development is painstaking work but offers significant advantages that contribute to the development of students' interdisciplinary knowledge and skills.

Conclusion. Open educational platforms have become a powerful tool for the modernization of education in general. Today, they are being integrated into educational programs as a means of ensuring flexibility, accessibility, and individualized learning. In times of global crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, these platforms provide a foundation for maintaining educational continuity, even under extremely difficult circumstances. The globalization of education made possible by open platforms allows Ukrainian universities to integrate into the international educational space while preserving the ability to localize educational content.

Open courses can serve as a showcase for the innovation and quality of educational programs, which is especially relevant in the competition for talented students – particularly under conditions of mass youth migration.

Universities can achieve maximum effectiveness if they develop partnerships with platforms not only to adopt external courses but also to create their own. This approach allows instructors to share their expertise with a broader audience while encouraging students to engage in active learning through modern technologies.

It is essential, however, that this process does not result in additional burdens and responsibilities for instructors alone. One must understand that the creation of a course for an open educational platform should not be the sole task of an individual instructor. The instructor should focus on creating the course concept and content but not spend time on technical configuration – the inefficiency of such a holistic approach is well known to instructors at V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University through their work with Moodle.

Despite the considerable potential of open educational platforms, their use also entails several challenges. Uneven access to technology, lack of digital literacy among some students and instructors, the risk of formalizing the educational process due to automated assessment, and the threat of turning the very format of open platform courses into mere superficial pandering to students' preferences – all these challenges must be anticipated and addressed in advance. Only under such conditions can the use of open educational platforms become a tool for meaningful rather than populist-formal personalization of students' educational trajectories. By maintaining a pragmatically critical approach to the role of open platforms in the learning process, they can become a strategic tool for transforming and improving modern university education. And interfaculty disciplines appear not only to be a suitable testing ground for refining this strategic tool but also a promising format for fostering in students a "taste" for meaningful and responsible personalization of their educational activity.

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